68/08 The Inheritance of Politics and the Politics of Inheritance
A LOCAL READER ON THE LEGACY OF 1968 IN CHICAGO
This issue was co-edited by Aaron Sarver, Daniel Tucker and Rebecca Zorach

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AREA Chicago

***AREA Chicago:* Navigating the City through Art, Research, Education and Activism**
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THANK YOU to Lisa Lee, Dakota Brown, Lauren Cumbia, Claire Pentecost, 49th St Underground, David Eads, Bill Ayers, Platypus, DOVA Gallery, Backstory Cafe, The Public Square, Civic Cinema/ITVS/Naomi Walker, Southside Community Arts Center, *In These Times* Magazine, Dara Greenwald, Alice Kim, Allan Gomez, Josh MacPhee, Ben Helphand, Paseo Prairie Garden in Logan Square for hosting the release of *AREA #6*, Mike Phillips, Becca Hall, Sara Black, Veronica Schubow.

Support *AREA*: This issue of *AREA* was funded entirely through the generous support of the Jane Addams Hull House Museum Project in Residence fund. The next issue of *AREA* is at this time entirely unfunded, and we are looking for donations. Each issue requires a minimum of $7,000 to produce. Every little bit counts. To make an online donation see *http://areachicago.org/donate/*. To write a check, please may payment to "Experimental Station" (write *AREA Chicago* Donation in the memo line) and mail to *AREA Chicago*, P.O. Box 476971, Chicago, IL 60647 Share other resources like printing, computers, food, your skills, cars for delivering the publication and many more things we cannot anticipate until you step up and propose them.

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Another Chicago: Our email newsletter is newly named *Another Chicago* and is a great way to keep up to date with this project and tons of other events and initiatives throughout Chicago. Email *areachicago@gmail.com* to subscribe.

AREA Chicago is typeset in *Apex New*, *Apex Serif* and *Apex Compact* by Chester Jenkins and *Newzald* by Kris Sowersby. Both font families were generously donated by the Village type foundry, *www.vllg.com.*

Left: Harvard University Strike Fist, Harvard MA USA 1969

Right: Emunah Yuka Edinburgh, San Francsico CA 2005.

Reproduce & Revolt (edited by Josh MacPhee & Favianna Rodriguez; Softskull Press, 2008) is a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics for activist use. We have used three of the graphics from this book in the section introductions for this issue. If you would like to get a copy of this book, check out *Justseeds.org*

This issue of *AREA* was released on December 6, 2008 at the **Jane Addams Hull-House Museum.** 5,000 copies were printed. This issue was entirely funded by the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum while *AREA* served as a **Project In Residence** at the Museum from July-December 2008. Thanks to the Museum's Director, **Lisa Yun Lee**, and staff for coordinating this residency.

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Rebecca Zorach, like many utopian dreams, was conceived but not yet born in 1968.

Inheriting the Grid #7 by Daniel Tucker, Editor

"History does not usually suit the convenience of people who like to divide it into neat periods, but there are times when it seems to have pity on them. The year 1968 almost looks as though it had been designed to serve as some sort of signpost. There is hardly any region in the world in which it is not marked by the spectacular and dramatic events which were to have profound repercussions on the history of the country in which they occurred and, as often as not, globally. This is true of the developed and industrialized capitalist countries, of the socialist world, and of the so-called 'third world'; of both the eastern and western, the northers and southern hemispheres." —Eric Hobsbawm, *1968: A Retrospective*

In early 2008, *AREA Chicago* released the following statement about our intentions for a year-long project which would examine the legacy of the time period surrounding 1968:

"1968/2008 will be a hybrid cultural project gradually unfolding for one year on the occasion of 40 years passing since the "signpost" year of international political turmoil, social upheaval and the dramatic transformation of what we know as the left. Sponsored by the local research and culture publication, AREA Chicago, in order to explore the legacy of the late 1960s/early 1970s on contemporary cultural and political organizations in their city, the project will also have nodes outside of Chicago. It will include events, publications, reading groups and a website. This will be a time for "critical commemoration," examining the meaning of the late 1960s for present-day social movements in the U.S.: its aftereffects and ongoing legacies; its failures, discontinuities, and pyrrhic victories; and our current attitudes — of nostalgia, forgetting, appropriation, denunciation, and revivalism.

This project will attempt to engage with social movement historians, liberals who went to college in the 1960s, old leftists that are still alive, those who organize and those who are organized, frothing and non-frothing leftists, self-identified revolutionaries, oral historians, the educators/parents/mentors of radical activists, new leftists who rejected the old left, new leftists who embraced the old left, baby boomers who are disappointed in today's youth, youth who blame the baby boomers for everything, people who thought there was going to be a revolution, youngsters who want to learn from people with experiences, politicians who used to hate politicians, the children of liberal baby boomers, the children of militants, the artists who want to revisit counterculture, the people who made the 1960s counterculture cooler than the political ideas of the times, CEOs who were in the SDS, new Black Panthers and new SDSers, people who like what they know about the 1960s but didn't live in them, people who were born in 1968, people who lost loved ones in political violence in the 1960s/70s, people who want to know where they are going after they know where they are from."

In reality, the year-long project had begun a year earlier, in the cold early months of 2007. At that time I had initiated a reading group that was to read two key texts relating to 1968: *Power and the Idealists: Or, The Passion of Joschka Fischer, and its Aftermath* by **Paul Berman** (**Softskull Press**, 2005) and *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* by **George Katsiaficas** (**South End Press**, 1999). The book by Berman embodied my primary interest in the topic of '68—this was the question of legacy and of the translation of ideas from one moment to another. Berman's analysis--while not something I agree with entirely—looks at militant left-wing (mostly student) activists of 1968 and follows their careers as they enter government and generally less-marginal forms of politics than that of their youth. What I take away from his study of these characters is that there is continuity in their visions of how the world should work when they fight cops in the streets and when they make policy in the houses of government—sometimes even when it has consequences which would be hard to see as "Leftist." It complicates the narrative of the "sell-out." The book focuses significantly on a case of media sensation that erupted when Joshchka Fischer, then **Gerhard Schröder's** Foreign Minister in **Germany**, was scandalized by the wide circulation of a photo of him fighting police at a protest in the early 1970s. The image's circulation caused a cultural backlash when people came to associate Fischer with the turmoil of '60s and '70s student protest and left-wing militancy.

At the time we discussed that this book would be more difficult to write in the U.S because there is less cross-over between the far-left and electoral politics, whereas in many other parts of the world it is not uncommon to have people move in and out of activism, organizing and government over the course of their life and treat them as distinct but interrelated spheres for implementing long term strategies or change. Still, you could have a similar investigation of the legacy of '68 in Unitedstatsian politics by looking at figures like the **Clintons** (student activists), **Tom Hayden** (**SDS**) and our own **Bobby Rush** from Chicago (former **Black Panther**). These readings formulated the emphasis on 1968 not in terms of rehashing old debates or telling the history of **Free Speech**, **Civil Rights**, SDS, The Black Panther Party or the **Weather Underground**—stories which have an entire literary and documentary industry built around them... But as a way to inquire into the, albeit abstract, question of "legacy." What is the relationship between then and now and how does it influence our lives, work and culture?

Little did we know that the 2008 election would come to focus so much on Chicago's 1968 legacy. In the form of **Reverend Jeremiah Wright**, the social and political conservatives tried to re-ignite fears of the **Black Power movement**, and in the form of **Bill Ayers** and **Bernadine Dohrn**, they tried to rekindle people's fears of an antiwar movement that seemed to have gone too far. What nobody took the time to recognize is that here in Chicago, the legacy of the so-called New Left is all around us—in the pulpits, in the lecture halls, on the bookshelves, on the streets, and in the board rooms and in the halls of government. Of course this isn't the case across the country, but here it is not uncommon to see cross-fertilization produced by interactions between militant social movement figures of the past and other segments of civil society. This is a major urban area in which the thought of yesterday lives on, though changed, in today's institutions

Between the constant references to that era in the presidential election and the nostalgic love for anniversary, we found ourselves wondering "How can *AREA* produce a Critical Commemoration?" As soon as 2008 rolled around the floodgates of 1968 anniversaries opened up—there were conferences across the world, there were magazines (from *Time* to *Artforum*), and exhibitions. All of this culture, scholarship and media was trying to make sense of what had happened then and why it was important—in some cases it was asking "what does this mean for us today?" As we prepared this issue we found ourselves concerned not only with the history but really with the phenomenon of 1968, leaving us wondering, in the face of a general cultural obsession with a watered-down understanding of the 1960s and a sub-cultural obsession in activist groups, art scenes and in the university, with the politics and history of 1968—what can *AREA* add to the conversation?

Around the same time as this issue was getting formulated, *AREA* began discussions with **Lisa Lee** from the **Jane Addams Hull-House Museum** about the challenge of working with history as your subject matter. At the Hull-House Museum, they were used to dealing with this challenge, because they are a history museum. However, under the leadership of Lisa Lee the museum has come to approach history not as static content, but as a set of ideas and methods which can be embodied. So as opposed to having panels about the history of Immigration and the Hull House, they hold workshops for activists engaged in the **Movimiento 10 de Marzo** (**March 10 Movement**) and other immigration struggles around sanctuary from deportation and workers rights. This strategy for approaching the history they are charged with preserving is inspiring and completely in-line with hybrid and participatory methods *AREA* seeks to employ. With support from Hull-House, *AREA* was able to rove throughout the city for the year and work on various events, commission research projects and develop organization collaborations with the folks from ***Looks Like Freedom*** (an art show at **DOVA Temporary Gallery** in **Hyde Park**), the **Southside Community Arts Center**, **Backstory Cafe**, **Public Square**, **ITVS**, and **Alternative Press Center**. We focused our energy on developing the biggest and most complex issue of *AREA* yet, and used part of the budget to commission ambitious magazine contributions.

Over the course of this year there are some recurring patterns I have noticed that have bearing on the project you hold in your hands:

* There is much to be learned in terms of strategy and history from the people who were organizing culture and politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

* People really aren't easily grouped into generational categories and you cannot isolate the moment of 1968 from other moments in time.

* Groups, scenes and communities are not and were never monolithic.

* Some of the most useful lessons to be learned from the generation of 1968 we will never learn because they are too protective of it—either because it represents emotionally challenging hardships, failures or betrayals, or because it still stands to implicate them or others in extra-legal events or history they would rather not be associated with.

* The conflicts and disputes from the generation of '68 are still reverberating on the left. The fragmented Left we have today is largely the result of splits produced by some combination of government repression, disruption and intervention and/or irresponsible and dishonest posturing by leadership figures faced with moments of crisis.

* A great many of the ideas we hold dearly today were developed and tested in the period surrounding 1968. It is our responsibility to learn from them.

* The generation of 1968 was faced with media culture like the world had never seen before. There were several varieties of responses to that. On one hand you have people critiquing the spectacle and on another you have people feeding the spectacle with their own images. More people talk about the folks that fed the media culture images of protest, counter-culture and resistance.

* History is written in many different ways and sometimes those that control the archives and have the best book deals don't tell the best stories or the stories we really need to hear.

* There is a lot of mythology and misinformation about what the New Left and the late 1960s were all about and that is perpetuated from all sides.

* It is convenient to write the history of the 1960s as that of mealy "counter culture", because the politics from right and left were so intense and ideologically at odds that dumming the history down is a way of keeping younger generations from learning critical lessons.

* Many of the political claims made my leftist groups in the 1960s and early 1970s have had unintended consequences.

* Young people have a hard time talking about inter generational dynamics.

The collection of ideas that you hold in your hands is diverse, rich, complex and even sometimes contradictory. My co-editors and I have made an attempt to assemble contributions that reveal the spectrum of lessons we need to learn and provide as many points of entry as we could. We don't think by doing this that we are through with this history or have resolved all that needs to be resolved. We cannot move on from 1968 no matter how much we might think that it needs to be left behind or that today does not relate to then. Our lives, families, organizations and cultures are entertwined with what happened then and what has been said, what has been celebrated and what has been hidden. It is our task to make sense of this history and the politics we have chosen, learned and inherited.

This issue of AREA, like the six that came before it, represents the collective labor of dozens of people and organizations. As we move into 2009 we are attempting to make a shift towards an economic model that is primarily based on individual donors. Please consider giving a donation of your own hard-earned money to support all of these people's labor in the future *http://areachicago.org/donate/*. If you represent an institution that can offer $10-20k of support for *AREA* to be a project in residence while we develop a new issue of the magazine, please get in touch. We also encourage readers to get in touch about becoming contributors to the publication itself and are always looking for proposals. Send one in for our ***Money*** issue by February 1st, 2009. ◊

68/08 by Rebecca Zorach

When people who weren't there, and some who were, think of Chicago in 1968, they generally think of one thing: dramatic televised scenes of protest and police riot outside the **Democratic National Convention**. These scenes had an unprecedented immediacy for millions of American TV viewers. But Chicago in 1968 was much more (and perhaps in some ways less) than what could be seen on TV. It was people going about their daily lives—whether or not they were politically involved—working hard to make ends meet, raise a family, or succeed in school. For many, it meant facing discrimination, coming together in struggle, as in the important but nearly-forgotten first **Rainbow Coalition** that brought together the **Black Panthers**, the (white) **Young Patriots**, and the (Puerto Rican) **Young Lords.** It also meant working creatively to imagine alternatives.

Kristin Ross points out that as French historians from the '68 generation write the story of **May '68** in **France**, they tend to focus narrowly on their own experiences, emphasize generational rebellion, cultural change, the role of students, and **Paris** to the exclusion of all else. They thus write the workers and, in a sense, politics, out of the picture. A parallel phenomenon can be seen in the U.S., in our pop-cultural understanding of the late '60s. But younger activists now are in a position to sift through the legacy: what can we discard, what can we retain? What are the moments of relevance for us today; what are its moments of stunning irrelevance? What is the unfinished business of '68?

The 1960s left deep traces in the American psyche, in more than one way. There were real political gains as well as setbacks. The **Civil Rights** movement's disciplined and passionate political work has had a lasting impact, and the legacy of civil rights continued into the '70s with the women's and gay liberation movements. The counterculture overturned the rules for how we dress and who we have sex with; the student movement challenged the authoritarian classroom and changed relations between students and faculty; the antiwar movement helped end the war in **Vietnam**.

But the legacy of the period is incomplete and contradictory. First, it's been erased. Scholars have argued that **Ronald Reagan's** entire presidency, brown suits and all, was built on the erasure of that decade from our collective consciousness, or its replacement with repressive myths. **Rambo**, remember, created a very popular myth of returning veterans being spit on by antiwar protesters, a myth that has been integrated into people's own memories, to the exclusion of the true histories of some soldiers' activism against the war. (The erasure may have been so complete that when **Republicans** in 2008 tried to mobilize the specters of '68 to frighten the electorate, those memories finally struck most voters as less than terrifying.)

And nostalgia for the past may hamstring thought and action. Younger people tire of hearing about the uniqueness of one special generation, and that exhaustion can sometimes permeate our sense of the histories of political action. The positive and ongoing aspects of the legacy of '68, sometimes perversely, themselves impose limitations on the present. A case in point is the legacy of how revolutionary energies were channeled into institutions (what's been called the "**Non-Profit Industrial Complex**"). Obviously, nonprofit groups do important work, but they also have limitations imposed on them by their structural status; they have not always succeeded in passing leadership down to the young; and their very existence may at times make it harder for newer, more contentious groups to flourish.

Finally, what we have retained from the rebellions of the period are not necessarily its most progressive aspects. Later generations of Americans inherited the individualism and obsession with youth, not the political coalition-building. Compelling insights into this history appear in **Adam Curtis's** 2002 BBC documentary, *Century of the Self*. The film examines the impact of psychoanalysis, and specifically the theories of **Sigmund Freud**, on marketing strategy and government crowd control. Until the 1950s and '60s, psychologists assumed that primal drives had to be repressed in order for society to function, and directed their efforts accordingly. This coincided with an American society in which people were asked to make sacrifices, to conform to social norms, to trust authority, to repress their impulses and unruly emotions. In the postwar period, however, new theories arose that emphasized the need to let feelings and impulses out. Psychologist **Alexander Lower** describes his own practice and the general revolt against Freudianism: "What goes on here is the liberation of feeling." The voiceover states, "Those in power would now control the self, not by repressing it, but by feeding its infinite desires."

This is what **Herbert Marcuse**, a favorite philosopher of the **New Left**, referred to as "repressive desublimation": liberation of desire, yes, but channeled not toward more meaningful forms of human freedom, but toward satisfaction in material comforts and consumer excess. In the 1960s, a form of desublimation or derepression was expressed in part in the emphasis of the counterculture on individualism: "do your own thing." But "do your own thing" became **Nike's** command: "just do it."

In our sense of the '60s as a time of freewheeling, self-indulgent individualism, we've lost the memory that many groups were inventing new forms of collective action, from the rap groups and consciousness-raising sessions of feminists, to hierarchical revolutionary organizations, to coalitions among the youth micro-organizations known as gangs, to, even, to the media-fueled trickster **Yippies.** Though there was broad agreement about belonging to a Movement, and even, for a time, a shared sense that the **Black Panthers** were its vanguard, at the same time there were rifts, visible between and within groups and also, especially, between political activists and countercultural folk (in other words, hippies). Some made serious attempts to bridge this gap. **Abbie Hoffman**, interviewed by the video collective **Videofreex**, expressed his surprisingly pointed political opinion that the benefit of the heavily televised **Chicago 8** trial was to "divide the ruling class." The rift persists: can organized political struggle combine with libidinal rebellion—is the one too humorless to persuade "hearts and minds"; the other too frivolous to get anything done? Efforts to bridge the gap have also resurfaced in **HIV-AIDS** activism, in protest street theater and the work of "interventionist" artists. Many other divisions that we sometimes attribute to the identity politics of the '80s were already fully on view in the 1960s. What surprises us now is how smart and sophisticated the analyses were and the fact that how hard work sometimes overcame the divides.

To **Estelle Carol**, a founding member of **Chicago Women's Graphics Collective**, political and social circumstances may change, but the four components of a grassroots activist organization don't: "service, education, direct action, and theory." Direct action and theory seem to have remained fairly robust, and education moves in and out of focus, but most of today's small political grassroots groups—as opposed to more established nonprofits—seem less inclined to the "service" component. Understood not as charity or paternalism but as sustained participatory action, we might now be rediscovering a commitment to it, for example in food projects [*See AREA #2*]. For **Abdul Alkalimat**, Professor of African-American Studies at **UIUC**, and moderator of **H-Afro-Am**, the present hands us new challenges. He was a sociology graduate student and a member of the **Organization of Black American Culture** (**OBAC**) in 1968, and is now a scholar of the digital divide and digital Black studies whose earlier work informs his engagement with a new political and aesthetic landscape. "In the late 1960s," he told me, "OBAC was part of a movement to transform consciousness via a paradigm shift in aesthetics and the relationship between art and social movement, fighting for social justice and the promotion of self determination for African-Americans. In the first decade of the 21st century H-Afro-Am is promoting another paradigm shift from the actual to the virtual, taking the new consciousness into cyberspace. This is aiming for a higher level of self-determination as it is the greatest tool yet for mass literacy. In the 1960s we thought we were engaged in a revolution, but we were not, and now that we are in the information revolution, many of us are missing it. We transformed consciousness with the **Black Arts Movement**, but now the stakes are much higher and our tools are much more power-full."

To return to the televised scenes of violence that riveted viewers in 1968, we can ask an updated question: Why didn't the TV news pick up similarly chilling scenes outside the conventions—particularly the **Republican Convention**—in 2008? We have the internet now, so the news traveled fast among people primed to pay attention. But we have gone from monoculture to microculture; the news media have become willing servants to power; the whole world

PANTHER SISTERS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

back because of this. This is one reason why the revolutionary practitioners, because of the oppression we're suffering, can't take time out to go off by ourselves to solve some of our backwardness. This would be just another dividing tactic so for us it can not.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN PRACTICE

I think it's important to recognize the dangers that separate women's groups face immediately, just because of the nature of the work that they have chosen that they're going to set off base in terms of what the primary struggle is. However, I think we have to be very careful in terms of condemning forms that are used in the movement. I think that there are a lot of forms that are used in the movement. There are positive things that these kinds of groups can do for example, consensus, special plants where-in the whole question of male chauvinism can be put into in terms of working class organizing, in terms of organizing cooperative ourselves to liberate the working class women.

The only real danger always facing certain dangers is in terms of turning in on themselves, in terms of becoming a very petit bourgeois little clique where they just talk about how they have to take care of the kids all the time. And that's a contradiction that we have to live with in there, while we integrate the struggle of the brothers and sisters within the Party, we still will see how these contradictions will develop in terms of our day to day practice. And that's where our judgment of them will come in.

We have a phrase that says that the only sisters worth keeping in a revolutionary culture. Now, our culture dictates that we become revolutionaries. Irregardless of what the brothers say, the Secretary of Defense is the first revolutionary in terms of world revolution and revolutionary culture. The women's liberation groups that are separating away from the Party, that are forming groups that are not related to them, and we can't continue on whether there is or not, we have to judge them on their practice; should take into consideration that we're here to liberate the people and like we said, it's a socialist liberation that we're struggling for and not just for women.

If women's liberation is going to exist, it should exist with the goal in mind to channel the energies of women into the struggle for liberation of all the masses together—and as a bourgeois cell, because this has happened many times. They've become revolutionary organizations of female superiority and not totally integrated into the people's struggle and oppressed people and have, themselves become oppressors.

PANTHER PROGRAMS

MOVEMENT: In the Panthers have any specific programs directed at women in the community to get them involved in the struggle.

PANTHER WOMEN: The Black Panther Party does not have any programs that are directed toward women per se. There is, on the National Committee to Combat Fascism, a committee on the national steering committee of women, but the primary function of this committee is to channel those women who are interested in the struggle into the various areas of work integrated into the liberation movement.

Even though the Panther Party doesn't have a women's program per se, (I don't know whether we will in the future or not) I think that women in the Panthers have been given the opportunity to liberate themselves in many ways. The brothers can be very male chauvinistic on the part of the brothers that they can't practice male chauvinism, but even more important, it comes from a conscious level on the part of the brothers and sisters to recognize and to accept sexual positions or recognize themselves in submissive positions. The brothers can be very male chauvinistic, but on the part of the sisters, realize that they have to accept an equal position or act as a revolutionary), then this isn't going to do any good. So I think the best criterion for that is practice.

In addition to that—simply because of the fact that we are members of the Black Panther Party and are therefore in the vanguard, does not necessarily mean that we will be the vanguard in terms of women's liberation. We believe that male chauvinism must be stamped out, because we have come to realize that it is counter-revolutionary. We see those which are progressive class struggle by the bourgeois class and in accordance with the principles of socialism, we must come to realize all these things just recently, we've very new at it, in that whether or not we will become the vanguard in terms of women's liberation, we will be able to provide the example to lead other organizations towards women's liberation will come through our practice.

WOMEN'S CAUCUSES

MOVEMENT: What do you think about all women's caucuses inside the organization. Some people say that within movement organizations there's male chauvinism and women must lead with it from a position of strength. Do you agree with women's caucuses. They also say there's a parallel between women's liberation and black liberation and just like black people had to get themselves together without whites first, so women have to get themselves together without men. Movement organizations have always been dominated by male chauvinism. What's your feeling about that?

PANTHER WOMEN: Well, that may be true, but still, if you're interested in the struggle of oppressed people, you can come into an organization and bring that question to yourself, instead of sitting away from it. Because I feel that women can't be liberated separate from, nor on the basis of, "well, they're not dealing with the women's question and they're not dealing with the specific oppression." I mean, it therefore I'm not going to participate". They're still being oppressed.

Well, I think that's one place where women who are already advanced are going to have to start thinking about it. The fact is because of objective conditions in this society women are more backwards, because of the fact that they have been forced to be more working women who are more exposed to what's happening in the world, are still relegated at home and stuff like that, they have a broader and more objective perspective in terms of the world is more limited. So it's very important that women who are more advanced, who already understand revolutionary principles, join them and explain it to them and struggle with them. Because it's going to require the efforts of both sexes, literally and we have to struggle with them. And that can be a special role that revolutionary women can play.

A LETTER FROM SISTER ERICKA HUGGINS

I will waste very few words of my own because Ericka said just about anything there is to say regarding the fascist treatment, political prisoners receive in the political prisoners. This was written in prison on July 8 of this year.

"Long live the United Front against fascism: Down with the reactionaries of all kinds!

It is impossible to say what I feel in my heart. I am in prison and the state doesn't offer enough paper. But because none of us can be free, I'll try to be brief.

I'm writing to the people that will hear this. I can see their faces. They're beautiful and strong. The warmth that surrounds them, how far each other, I can also see the face of those who always appear among the people—the warriors, the ones who fight in the spirit of freedom. Spirit because they know that people, when they are united, cannot be thwarted together for one reason. To analyze the conditions of the oppressions and wage it out, knowing because they have no feeling for the people. Only the feelings of revolutionaries we have lost for the starving babies of this country and the world. Only because they will fight to the last ditch to destroy the revolutionary spirit of the people. It is now time to run back, coming to the oppressors about the peoples' plans to rise up. They fail, however, to realize that the masses have been awakened and cannot be weaker how they have been, because, till we, or just us, the people, we will carry on. I see the love have changed. I hope that many minds are open to what is happening. I know that many ears have been listening to the foul lies about the political prisoners of the world. We have listened too long and the birth, her mouth has been filled with the filth of thoroughly oppressed our people at home. We are uncovering at keeping the people of Vietnam in a state of decay. We are thinking of the people in the Middle East, South America, making bigger and better alliances with Amerika. We are in the belly of the beast, and we will be the world power. And then we will place our feet on the throat of the enemy.

America is plotting universal imperialism. It will be the same everywhere. First Coca Cola then Oscar Mayer Weiner and then, Amerika will move in. Then we will cannot take this. We cannot allow fascist fanatics to continue to destroy the lives of the people. We must organize and form an everlasting United Front against exploitation, against imperialism, against class distinction, against racism, against fascism (applause).

We cannot allow reactionaries to use the democratic process, the continual harrassments and incarcerated brutality of the people. We cannot allow them to use the they, black, lesbian, indian, corporate, Chicano or white to be brainwashed and degraded. In Amerika a degenerate school system, a degenerate family structure, teaching and racial intolerance down South or up South. So we call on whites, and people, to drive the working class—the working class must drive the whole class. Our fight must be united to organize the workers of this country. We must be prepared for every necessity that is every factor. We cannot allow medical services to be withheld from us. We remain here, we serve as a catalytic agent to move the people forward. I'm trying to speak for all of us; for Lorelei Williams who is trying to turn a prison cell into a hole with no food, for Dhoruba bin Wahad who will bear a child in prison, for Ruchell Magee who has died prisoners and for the other prisoners in Connecticut, I cannot speak for them, but I know they want to be with the people. I know that their rights are circumscribed but some are because they want to take their places on the streets with the people. I know that they do not want to be with the fascists. I know that they, the Chicago 10 and all other political prisoners want to be free.

I know Papa Stinson Seberio's a congealed streets, but we are there to help him melt and move in the street. We who are that can realize who your real friends and your real enemies are. We must draw a clear line of demarcation between the people and fascism at present, between the imperialists and the internationalists, between the fascist and the people. Who sits next to you?

All Power to the People

Long live the Black Panther Party

Long live the Peoples' Revolutionary Struggle!

Long Live the Minister of Defense!

Free all Political Prisoners!

Ericka Huggins

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Panther Sisters on Women's Liberation, from The Black Panther, September 13, 1969. Courtesy Chicago History Museum.

Movement Women, *Goodbye to Shitwork*, 1967. Courtesy Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Barbara Jones-Hogu, *Black Men We Need You*, ca. 1970. Silkscreen print. Courtesy South Side Community Art Center.

wasn't watching the streets of the **Twin Cities** in 2008, as they were the streets of Chicago in 1968. (It was different in Chicago in November of 2008, as another **Mayor Daley** joined in a desire for symbolic redemption by welcoming throngs of **Obama** supporters to **Grant Park**.) In 1968, people thought they could change large-scale social and political institutions—and they did, to some degree, though the results were mixed. And we have a new set of circumstances: along with commitments to environmental and social responsibility, the pressures of energy costs are pushing us toward a more emphatic focus on the local. This is a good thing. But there's a risk of myopia. Looking at Chicago in 1968—and its legacies today—we should pay attention the successes and failures of coalition-building; the thoughtful coordination of large-scale analysis and small-scale, local gestures; and the aching need for both emancipatory pleasure and collective struggle.

Among other preoccupations, this issue of *AREA* emphasizes the arts. Major changes were occurring in the definition of art around 1968, and specifically in Chicago. Precepts of modernist art had previously held that art must be autonomous, distinct from all forms of literary or political content, narrative, or overt persuasion. A ferment of dissatisfaction with this view was brewing throughout the 60s, but the events around '68 dealt it a major blow. Mass-mediated and violent political events required new ways of thinking about art and community. In many cases, this meant a move away from abstraction. This might mean a return to representational art (depictions of the human body, often in struggle), or the incorporation of text into image; it might mean performance art and guerrilla theater.

Like the Parisian art students who set up the **Atelier Populaire** to print propaganda in their classrooms, many artists in the U.S. felt they could not sit idly by. Some stopped making art. Some participated in boycotts and protest exhibitions. Under the art world radar, not even aware of one another, groups like **AFRICOBRA** and the Chicago **Women's Graphics Collective** produced brightly colored, provocative posters. But they also produced new forms of collective consciousness, collaborative practice, and ways of imagining art as both popular and passionate.

Earlier in the decade, the **Port Huron Statement** written by **SDS** had emphasized moral and emotional emptiness in the midst of plenty: in a central passage it speaks of exhaustion, fear, chaos, apathy, weakening, numbness, anxieties, yearning. This is the voice of affluent youth seeking meaning; elsewhere the feeling was even more urgent. With the assassinations of '68, the riots that followed, **Jeff Donaldson**, a founding member of AFRICOBRA, wrote in the October 1970 issue of ***Black World***: "the atmosphere of America became more electrically charged, the balloons jarringly shaken, many destroyed by the thunder and by the lightning of the real Amerika...and COBRA coiled angrily. Our coats were pulled. And the anger is gone." Rejecting the artworld insistence on abstraction, AFRICOBRA and its allies created recognizable imagery, black faces and bodies, provocative slogans and poses, shattering their images and bringing them back together again with decorative patterns, superbright colors, lost and found line.

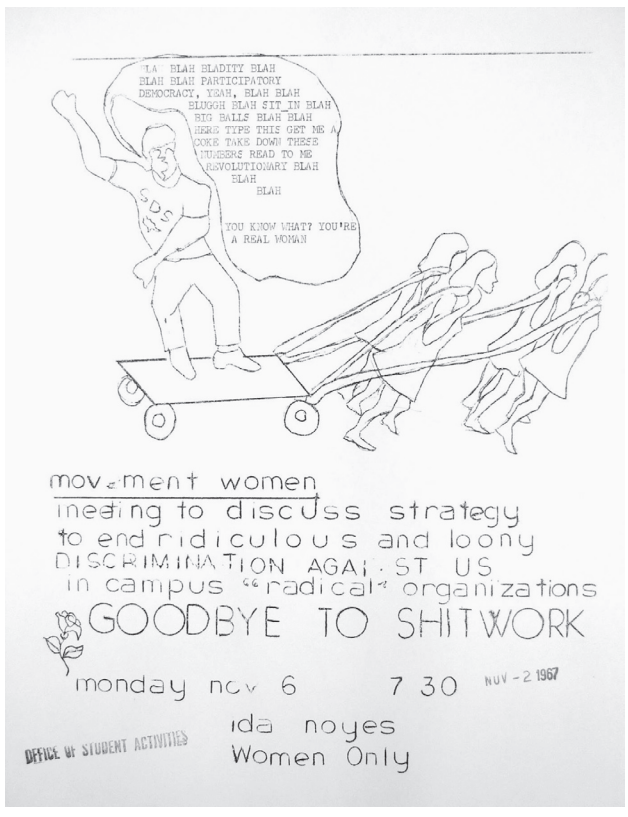
This type of art had, or at least seemed to have, a more immediate impact; at least for some segments of The Movement, culture was power. 1967's ***Wall of Respect***, a collaborative mural at **43rd and Langley** that spearheaded the community public art movement when it appeared two short weeks after the Chicago **Picasso** was unveiled, was one starting point. In a poem, **Haki Madhubuti** (don l. lee) called it "the wall, the weapon" and said that it made "white people run." Poetic bravado, but it points up parallels in the cultural work done by the image-conscious Black Panther Party. It wasn't just graphic artist **Emory Douglas** who did creative work within the Party. Like many others, the Panthers imagined a different society and tried to put it into practice. Much of the work they did involved caretaking in the community–breakfast for children, free health clinics. But they also worked creatively in a different way: projecting powerful (and scary to many whites) and at the same time stylish masculinity, they propagated an image of their own power far disproportionate to their actual use of guns.

It might be argued in this and other cases that activism was itself an art form. The **Hyde Park**-based feminist abortion collective **Jane** [see *AREA #5*] could be seen an instance of rebellious creativity—which is not to trivialize the bravery of the women involved. If it hadn't been so deadly serious, the group might be thought of, in today's terms, as a clandestine DIY performance collective. Addressing emotion and the subjective experience of the self was a key feature of the nascent feminist movement. Feminist women contributed a key insight to the movement in organizing "rap groups" whose function became known as "consciousness raising." By talking about personal feelings, connecting on that basis, and then analyzing the causes of shared experiences, participants arrived, over time, at a social analysis of their own oppression. The personal was political, in the strongest sense possible.

This was as true for the women of Jane as it was for the family politics of **Black Power** expressed in Barbara Jones-Hogu's print, *Black Men We Need You*. Like many of Jones-Hogu's works, it takes a few moments of looking at the vibrant image to understand all, or even part, of what's going on. A black woman stands with her children, taking up most of the space of this unusually narrow vertical format. "Black Men We Need You, Preserve Our Race"—only then do you notice the unobtrusive (white!) text at the bottom right: "Leave White Bitches Alone." This wasn't just an analysis suggesting that political forces structured personal experience; it was a demand for personal lives to be lived in accordance with political goals. Jones-Hogu and her collaborators viewed these messages as positive (though assertive), but it's no accident that this one wasn't on a wall, but in the more private medium of silkscreen.

As **Bob Crawford** notes in his intergenerational conversation in this issue, the art scene in Chicago was viewed as more political than the scene in **New York**. Still, the mainstream Chicago art world also had many individuals and groups, like the **Hairy Who**, that were not overtly political. But the Hairy Who's work expressed their own kind of rebellion, through overt and sometimes grotesque sexuality, pleasure, violence—a surreal anti-aesthetic. Art critic **Joanna Frueh** has referred to Chicago imagists (in which she included later '60s groups) as "Chicago's emotional realists." But what ties them to their more political contemporaries was more surrealism than emotion. The surreal in this period is most obviously associated with the **Chicago Surrealist Group**. But it's there in AFRICOBRA, it's Yippie mythmaking scaring delegates away from Chicago taxicabs, it's **WITCH** (**the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell**), it's newly imagined forms of affective solidarity, the pansexuality of early gay lib, the Black Panthers' imagemaking, the stubborn insistence that the way things were was not the only way they could be. **Cynthia Edelman** wrote hopefully in the Chicago Seed in 1969: "Ahead lie boycotts, demonstrations, speeches, WITCH guerrilla theater—out of it may come schools that do not shrivel the soul, nursery pools to aid ghetto mothers, free abortions, population control, doctors and other professionals so badly needed...a living wage at least for clerical slaves, and of course unforeseen developments." This surrealism of anticipation was not the unreal, not anti-realism, but a surplus added on top of the real, or what the AFRICOBRA manifesto describes as the super-real—what Donaldson also called "Art for people and not for critics whose peopleness is questionable."

We have divided this issue into three main themes: "Hidden Histories," "Then and Now: Legacy," and "Intergenerationality." In "Hidden Histories," our authors excavate less-known organizations and forgotten episodes from the late 1960s in Chicago. The section includes a subsection of shorter profiles written by students from DePaul University and the University of Chicago. In "Then and Now: Legacy," we look at the traces of 1968 in the present. How did that era shape our own? What remains relevant? In "Intergenerationality," we think about specific contacts between individuals of different generations, people who fall between generations, and the concept of the "generation" itself—often seen as an invention of the '60s. ◊



Glossary and Key Concepts

by Daniel Tucker

APRIL '68 – Following the assassination of CIVIL RIGHTS (see below) leader **Martin Luther King, Jr.** on April 4th 1968, urban areas throughout the U.S. erupted in revolt. This has popularly been described as a RIOT and is generally considered to have been spontaneous. The most notable precursors to this moment were a wave of urban riots in primarily African-American neighborhoods such as the August 1965 riots in **Los Angeles' Watts** area, then the 1967 riots in July in both **Detroit, Michigan** and **Newark, New Jersey**. Chicago had seen a number of smaller revolts before this, including the 1966 **Division Street Riots** took place in a mainly Puerto Rican neighborhood. The April '68 riots erupted primarily on the **West Side** along Madison Street, but the arson that accompanied them stretched south to **Roosevelt Road** and north to **Chicago Avenue**. In this event there were 125 fires, over 200 buildings were impacted and many were torn down, and 1,000 people were left homeless. **Mayor Daley** (our current Mayor's papa) ordered a curfew for anyone under 21 and famously told the police and **National Guard** to "shoot to kill" anyone who was perceived to be looting or rioting. There was only a small amount of protesting, rioting and looting on the south and north sides of the city. Similar revolts occurred in every major city in the country. As with any large-scale social and political event, the legacy lives on in many forms. The aftermath of the event spawned a number of community and social service organizations that live on to this day. The legacy is felt in the built environment as well—buildings that were burned in that area have left many vacant lots that leave the impacted area with a feeling of isolation and disorganization to this day. It is widely speculated that the post-riot economic development strategy for this area of the near west side has been one of speculative "warehousing" of poor people and vacancy, in order to drive prices and public perception lower so that large scale redevelopment at large profit margins could occur in the future.

BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT – Many people see this as the cultural wing of the BLACK POWER MOVEMENT (see below). While it is largely associated with literature and poetry including the writings of **Nikki Giovanni**, **Sonia Sanchez**, **Amiri Baraka**, **Maya Angelou**, and **Rosa Grey**, BAM was a broad movement that included a great deal of theater and visual arts. One strong pole was in **Harlem**, the other was on the south side of Chicago with groups like **AFRICOBRA**. Publishing was important to the movement; in Chicago, important institutions included ***Negro Digest/ Black World***, part of the **Johnson Publishing** empire, and **Third World Press**, founded by poet **Haki Madhubuti**.

BLACK POWER – While the CIVIL RIGHTS Movement (see below) against legal segregation laws was committed to desegregation and non-violence, some tendencies of the movement questioned the usefulness of that framework. These mostly African-American activists started to articulate more militant approaches in 1966 with the transition of the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee** (**SNCC**, a key early civil rights formation for young people) from a racially integrated group to one that made calls for "Black Power" and for white people to leave the organization and work within white communities to fight racism and for issues impacting those groups. Earlier versions of these concepts could be seen in the writings of **W.E.B. Dubois** and **C.L.R. James**, as well as the early '60s organizing of **Robert F. Williams' Black Armed Guard** in **North Carolina**. Williams' writings such as "Negroes with Guns" and **Malcolm X's** call to use "any means necessary" had a strong influence on groups ranging from SNCC, to the prisoner **George Jackson's Black Guerrilla Family**, and most famously on the 1966 formation of the **Black Panther Party** (**BPP**). The BPP would greatly elaborate on the written and embodied theories of Black Power as they expanded from one chapter in **Oakland, CA** to at least 30 chapters with 5,000 members at its height in 1969. Other groups such as the **Black Liberation Army** continued militant versions of this work into the early 1980s and the theories had influence on practices such as Black Anarchism, African Internationalism, pan-Africanism, Black nationalism, and Black supremacy. The work associated with Black Power also had huge influences on many segments of the NEW LEFT (see below), especially on Asian-American activists like **I Wor Kuen**, Latino activists such as the **Brown Berets** and **Young Lords**, as well as on many segments of the mostly-white groups which emerged out of the demise of the student movement such as the **Weather Underground** and many groups associated with the NEW COMMUNIST MOVEMENT (see below). The BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT (see above) was considered to be cultural wing of Black Power. Many active proponents of Black Power can now be found organizing in prison and political prisoner related efforts because of the significant number of individuals from various Black Power organizations who ended up incarcerated as a result of their work and actions.

CIVIL RIGHTS – This term is largely associated with the social movement for equal rights and end to legal racial segregation (known as **Jim Crow Laws**) for African Americans in the southern U.S.; it also applies to work that was done in the north. In addition, it has generally been used to describe any variety of civil rights work done by or on behalf of a politically and socially marginalized group of people, especially between the years 1960-1980. In this respect it relates to the concept of **Human Rights** as well as social movements which originate in the collective identification of a people group as requiring distinct political rights or forms of struggle (this has been called **Identity Politics**, but also see NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS definition below for more information). The Civil Rights Movement, as it is popularly understood in the U.S., lasted from around 1954 until 1968. As with any complex social movement, the origins and endings are not clear cut - but they are often associated with the 1954 **Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas** case which in 1955 led to the **U.S. Supreme Court** ruling to desegregate public schools which has previously been segregated by racial groups. Other significant events include the 1963 march on **Washington DC** planned by **Bayard Rustin** and **A. Phillip Randolph**; the Mississippi **Freedom Summer** of 1964; the **Montgomery Bus Boycott**; the campaign to desegregate a high school in **Little Rock Arkansas**; a number of sit-ins in public spaces and private spaces which were segregated; the **Freedom Rides** on southern bus lines which were effected by laws preventing racially integrated buses from crossing State lines; voter registration drives which resulted in the **Voting Rights Act** of 1965; Martin Luther King Jr.'s push to build on the successes of southern organizing by moving to northern cities to fight for equal housing and other economic justice issues (most significantly, there was the 1966 Freedom Summer campaign in Chicago). The movement is seen as "ending" following the end to Jim Crow segregation laws in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting rights act, and the 1968 Fair Housing Act—as well as in the aftermath of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968 (see APRIL '68 above). These later years also saw a shift of some activists into the official political and business class, while others became more militant in their struggles for economic justice and in some cases moving into the BLACK POWER work associated with the late 1960s (see above).

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING – Feminists associated with "second wave feminism" or "women's liberation" are credited with the invention of **consciousness raising** (or **C.R.**) as a process and practice. The practice typically involved a small group of people (usually women-only as a rule) openly discussing their opinions, experiences and feelings—though the methodology was not envisioned as a strict process. The approach could be more broadly thought of as the process through which anyone (typically with the help of others) arrives at a political consciousness, which allows them to understand how power is organized. The feminist version of this concept was widely circulated in 1968 **National Women's Liberation Conference**, which was held in Chicago. The concept has resonance with other calls for creating consciousness associated with the COUNTERCULTURE (see below) and other LEFTIST (see below) political thought organizing which political or class consciousness as a prerequisite to revolution (or even more simply, as a prerequisite to just getting started on getting organized towards whatever goals were set forth). C.R. has developed an association with group therapy that was not initially intended, and many radical and not radical organizations practice some method of discussion and deliberation in groups towards achieving greater clarity of purpose.

COUNTERCULTURE – Often associated with the 1950s beatnik culture, the Black musical and artistic subcultures and also the hippies, the counterculture should broadly be understood as the explosive cultural production which occurred simultaneous to the NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (see below) of the 1960s and '70s. More generally, we could see it as subculture because of its active seeking of minority style, fashion and aesthetics. What defined the late '60s period as unique is simply its scale of influence and popularity and its desire to be different from the social norms and culturally perceived "dominant" or "mainstream." Often, counterculture was and is understood as a dreamy, sex- and drug-fueled hippie drop-out lifestyle that was not politically active. But the "counter" of counterculture also had a complex relationship (involving both affinity and conflict) to a more aggressively oppositional political culture defined by "anti-": anti-fascist, anti-hegemonic, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-nuclear, anti-GMO, etc. In the re-telling of narratives of the 1960s, clashes between political activists and counterculture figures are downplayed, and the NEW LEFT and even NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (see below) become subsumed under a narrative of hippie lifestyle counterculture. This lighter narrative is particularly convenient for a capitalistic society which attempts to extract profit from all material, labor, culture and ideas. What would a popular narrative of the 1960s which combined the **R-n-B** and **Rock-N-Roll** of Detroit with the **League of Revolutionary Black Workers** from the same time period in Detroit look like? How would that narrative be more challenging to the status quo than merely sex, drugs and music?

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION (1968) – The **DNC** of this year is often referred to as the year in which a major political shift occurred where **Republicans** took control over U.S. politics and began the slow process of rolling back the gains of previous social-democratic reform. The event was marked by division inside the convention over the **Vietnam War**, and protests outside the convention and the **Delegate's** hotels, often called a "police riot" (see RIOT).

LEFT – This term is used interchangeably with "Left-wing" and "Leftist," and the context in which it is used generally clarifies what exactly it means. Historically, the term is associated with the groups and individuals who, during the **French Revolution** (1789-1799), were opposed to absolute monarchy. The term has since been closely aligned with the political and social thought of early socialism, utopianism, **Marxism**, anarchism and later with emancipation and liberation struggles throughout the world from the CIVIL RIGHTS Movements (see above) and NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (see below) in the U.S. to the anti-colonial and NATIONALIST (see below) struggles of the THIRD WORLD (see below). While this frustrates those on the extreme Left or Right, the definition of what is Left is generally determined relative to the

68/08 Bibliography on the legacy of 1968, the New Left, social movements, intergenerational dynamics and writing history

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Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement, by Barbara Ransby (Chapel Hill, 2003)

Eros and Civilization, by Herbert Marcuse (Vintage, 1955)

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In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s, by Clayborne Carson (Harvard, 1981)

It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: America in the 1970s, by Peter N. Carroll (Rutgers U Press, 1990)

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May '68 and its Afterlives, Kristin Ross (U of Chicago Press, 2002)

Mercy, Mercy Me: African-American Culture and the American Sixties, by James Hall (Oxford University Press, 2001)

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No More Lies: The Myth and the Reality of American History, by Dick Gregory (Harper and Row, 1971)

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dominant politics of the context in which it is used—meaning that in the U.S. we get a definition of Left which is closely linked to the socially liberal views of the **Democratic Party** (as opposed to the socially conservative views of the **Republican Party**). This relativist dynamic produces problems for most groups and individuals interested in articulating their visions and aspirations, especially those with goals that are radically different than that of the dominant ideology of their context.

LIBERATION – The distinction between the words "emancipation," "freedom," "autonomy," "sovereignty," and "liberation" are often difficult to decipher because of their misuse as interchangeable objectives. In brief, the term **Liberation** has its most significant origins in the French Revolution (see THE LEFT above) - which had as one of its slogans "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." In the ***Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*** (France, 1789), the definition of liberty was "Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law." The French Revolution has become a historical sign-post which is referenced consistently by Leftist movements from the nineteenth century forward—many of the concepts and terms from that period still inform the rhetoric of today's social and political movements. While its early usage clearly relates to the individual, as history has evolved the application has been broadened. Most of the anti-colonial struggles of the 1950s and 1960s were taking on **European** powers, and often they were taking on the French who had established strongholds in most corners of the earth from southeast **Asia**, to **North and West Africa** and the **Caribbean**. This means that many of the anti-colonial struggles were either French speaking colonies themselves, or were invested in using terms that translated well into French in order to produce international solidarity. This is one possible explanation for the adoption of the word "liberation" in so many of these struggles, as it is a French word. Given the historical significance of these struggles, and the wide circulation of revolutionary writings and thought and from **Algeria**, **Guinea** and **Vietnam** (all former French colonies)—it is not surprising that a French term became so widely used by the New Left of the 1960s. While the term was originally used by those who sought to free the French from the monarchy at the end of the eighteenth century, "liberation" was picked up as the word-of-choice to describe attempts at breaking chains of colonialism as well as sexual, gender and racial oppression in the 1960s.

NATIONALIST – While the term is historically linked to a self-identified "People" identifying as a nation and creating a nation-State, the term is also used more broadly to articulate calls for SELF-DETERMINATION (see below) and LIBERATION (see above) for people groups who have no intention to (or capacity for) creating a State. While nations, tribes and other collectives have existed throughout human life, the pursuit of the State form by nationalists is a modern invention which has changed the world's political map continuously and constantly since the late eighteenth century. In the 1960s "Nationalist" was a term that was closely associated with anti-colonial struggles in the THIRD WORLD (see below). Since most States include different nations, they are multinational—which leads to conflict over the priorities and definition of political power. In the U.S. this problem could not be more complex, with indigenous people being politically marginalized following their genocide during the formation of this State and then a continuous mixing of immigrant populations coming to this land, alongside those who were forced here due to legalized and illegal slavery. So when the anti-colonial struggles were occurring in other parts of the world, the oppressed people living on this land took notice and began to articulate their own version of nationalism and/or National Liberation for what was often called "internally colonized" people groups living within the U.S.. The critical debates over different approaches to and definitions of nationalism and "internationalism" were central to the fragmentation of Leftist political organizations in the U.S. in this period.

NEW COMMUNIST MOVEMENT – This term is associated with the **Marxist-Leninist**, **Cuban** and **Maoist** inspired socialist organizations and political parties which came about following the 1969 split of the **Students for a Democratic Society**. Like other efforts of the NEW LEFT (see below), these groups resisted association with the pre-60s groups like the **Communist Party** and other American and European **Leninists, Trotskyists and Stalinists**. Early groups included the **Revolutionary Union**, **League of Revolutionary Black Workers**, **October League**, and the ***Guardian*** magazine. Groups which still exist today and have their origins in this work include the **Revolutionary Communist Party USA**, **Freedom Road Socialist Organization**, and the **League of Revolutionaries for a New America**.

NEW LEFT – While the term is often associated with the Students for a Democratic Society (who often used the term in their writings), it has come to mean almost anything that happened or anyone working on the Left from the mid-1960s until the mid 1970s. This can be confusing because there is other work that later was termed the NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (see below) and the NEW COMMUNIST MOVEMENT (see above) which evolved soon after the development of the New Left. Sometimes it is used to understand the broad range of work spanning from BLACK POWER (see above) to Student Free Speech Activism to Women's and Gay LIBERATION (see above). It should be understood primarily as activism that was non labor union and as breaking from the monolithic Communist Party USA (which suffered declining membership in the 1950s due to government repression and its commitment to the Communist Party of the **Soviet Union** despite increasing criticism of the direction of the Soviet Union). The New Left is often credited with opening up more dialogue around the subjective and/or individualistic aspects of politics. It is also associated with a looser and less ideologically rigid form of politics than much of what preceded it, and is linked therefore to "social activism" over a particular political party or a method of organizing people or power. As time moved on, it mainly turned into some combination of political party formation, politics based on identity, or into a de-politicized counterculture associated with lifestyle choices.

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS – This term, most commonly used in sociological research on activism and social organization, refers to the broad range of social activism that has occurred since the late 1960s. As opposed to the NEW LEFT (see above), which is typically defined in opposition to the history and legacy of the "old Left," this categorization is mainly defined in response to work that happened after the beginning of de-industrialization of the economy. This brought about, according to the theorists, an increasing focus on immaterial issues like rights associated with minority people groups, cultures and lifestyles as opposed to focusing on "material" economic and labor concerns. This definition is messy and is subject to many critiques, but most thinkers who address activism today would agree that there is a difference in people's concerns and goals that gradually shifted over the course of the 20th century.

RIOT – Simply defined as public group violence, the term is often used casually to describe revolts of any kind—even those which produce damage (some might call it violence) to property but not to people, land or animals. In this sense, the term is used politically to describe what some perceive as violence but others perceive as symbolic protest. It was also used to describe the extreme police violence carried out against protesters at the DNC (see above).

SELF-DETERMINATION – This term has a long history of usage in association with a wide variety of politics. Generally it is associated with the right of a people, within a given territory, to define themselves as a people and to determine how the politics that affect their lives should be organized. This broad definition puts the term in close connection to NATIONALISM (see above). In the period associated with this issue of *AREA*, the term was used in the context of anti-colonial struggles in the THIRD WORLD (see below) and the LIBERATION and NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (see above) in the U.S. Self-determination always involves the definition of a group, and the argument for their status as requiring new or different politics. Sometimes these groups are popularly understood or determined groups and ethnicities, and sometimes they are identities that are either suppressed or not well-known in dominant society. The term can encompass a diverse range of goals: to build new Nations, new States, to create new micro-economies and self-help communities, to succeed into autonomous territories, and simply to gain new political rights.

THIRD WORLD – At the height of the **Cold War**, it was common to divide the world into three sections: the **First World** was the capitalist States of the "west", the **Second World** referred to the Communist States which were aligned with the Soviet Union and the Third World referred to the States which were aligned with neither First or Second Worlds and were commonly called "non-aligned" States. Because of their non-aligned status, many of the countries had underdeveloped economies either because of their isolation, or in some cases their status as colonies or former-colonies. This fact led to the eventual adoption of the term "developing countries" to be used in tandem with "developed countries" to characterize the post-communist world map. In the 1960s, as many of these so-called Third World countries were experiencing revolutions and NATIONALIST (see above) anti-colonial struggles for SELF-DETERMINATION (see above), the Third World began to take on a particular connotation and was inspiring for activists and LEFTISTS (see above) in the U.S. and the rest of the First World. For those Leftists who were critical of the Soviet Union and opposed the State-sponsored violence they saw in many wars, their critiques of the imperialism of both the First and Second worlds were channeled into hopefulness about a third option on the world stage. This led many members of the NEW LEFT (see above) to adopt politics of "**Third World Marxism**" (or sometimes **Third Worldism**) which was inspired by the likes of Cuba, Algeria, Vietnam and other countries which were overthrowing colonial powers and military dictatorships (many of these groups and individuals were also inspired by the **Cultural Revolution** in **China**). Some proponents of Third Worldism, such as the NEW COMMUNIST MOVEMENT (see above), saw the political struggles and leaders from these countries as the VANGUARD (see below) of international revolution. Today it is also common to refer to these countries as the **Global South**.

VANGUARD – Typically associated with a formal political party, the term is sometimes used to describe anyone or any group that is leading a revolution or a process towards revolution. The link to the formal political party as a vanguard has its roots in the text *what is to be done?* written by Vladimir Lenin in 1902. Leon Trotsky also worked on developing a theory of an international vanguard party around the same period. Confusion around the term is often arises between those who self-proclaim their vanguard role as central to the advancing revolution, and those who have the term applied to them by others. Often one of those instances merely precedes the other, and they are interrelated in the perpetuation of one group being identified as a vanguard. It is most often associated with these Lenin-inspired political parties, but it is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "avant-garde" in cultural work that is seen as pushing boundaries. Many leftists in the late 1960s and early '70s viewed the Black Panther Party as the vanguard of the Movement.

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SELECTED PUBLICATIONS ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1968

Artforum (May 2008) "May '68"

Prospect (May 2008 - Online) "1968: Liberty Or Its Illusion?" (A Symposium in 4 parts) *http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk*

Dissent (Spring 2008) "1968: Lessons Learned" (A Symposium)

L'Europeo (February 2008) "1968: A year of a thousand faces"

BBC radio 4 "1968: Myth or Reality?" *http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/1968/*

Charta (January 2008) *http://www.farefuturofondazione.it/edicola_charta.html*

SELECTED INTERNATIONAL ANNIVERSARY EVENTS:

Memories of 1968: International Perspectives (April 2008 - University of Leeds, UK) *http://www.german.leeds.ac.uk/gsm/Memories-of-1968.htm*

1968: A Global Perspective
(U of Texas-Austin - October 2008)
http://www.1968conf.org/cfp.html

Turning Point 1968, A Film Festival (Queens University Belfast UK - October 2008)

What's Left of the Latin American Left? (U of Texas-Austin - April 2008)

1968 In The Global South (St. John's University, New York City - November 2008)

1968 Documentary Series
(Indiana University - Fall 2008)
http://www.indiana.edu/~libsalc/1968/

68/89 – Theatre.Era.History (Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia - Ongoing)
http://www.68-89.net/

1968 Year Long Series (Brecht Forum, New York City) *http://brechtforum.org/*

After 1968: Contemporary Artists and the Civil Rights Legacy (High Museum, Atlanta - June-October 2008)

All Power To The Imagination: 1968 and its Legacies (London UK -2008)
http://www.1968.org.uk/

Left Forum featured track on 1968 (New York City - March 2008)

1968 and All That / Be Realistic! Demand the Impossible! (London UK - May 2008)
http://www.1968andallthat.net/

Signs of Change: Social Movement Cultures from 1960s to Now
(Exit Art, New York City - Fall 2008)
http://www.socialmovementcultures.org/

1968: Then and Now Exhibition (Nathan Cummings Foundation, New York City - Fall 2008)

See following page for Chicago 1968 Events in AREA's 68/08 Project Overview.

68/08 Project Overview

A Project In Residence at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum Organized by *AREA Chicago*

The 68/08 initiative consisted of multiple endeavors occurring on their own timelines in 2008, each investigating the legacy of 1968 in contemporary social movements, arts, and education. A release event for the magazine was held at the Hull House Museum on December 6, 2008. The Elements of the Project were:

COMMISSIONS/TRAVEL STIPENDS
Documentation, events or texts to be published in *AREA 68/08*—receiving $250 assistance grant from *AREA*:

Margo Crawford (Travel Stipend)
James Tracy & **Amy Sonnie** (Travel Stipend)
Eric Triantafillou (Production Stipend)
Nicole Garneau (Production Stipend)
Sam Barnett (Production Stipend)

Co-SPONSORSHIP
Events that *AREA* helped to publicize and co-organize:

Spook Who Sat By The Door (Screening and Discussion) at **Backstory Cafe.** Organized with the **Midwest Radical Cultural Corridor.**

Looks Like Freedom Exhibition and Event Series at **DOVA Temporary Gallery.** Organized with **Rebecca Zorach's University of Chicago** class on 1968 in Chicago.

Archiving '68 Panel Discussion at **DOVA Temporary Gallery.** Organized with ***Looks Like Freedom*** exhibition.

Backstory Cafe 1968 in Chicago Film Series at **Experimental Station.** Organized with Backstory Cafe and ***Looks Like Freedom*** exhibition.

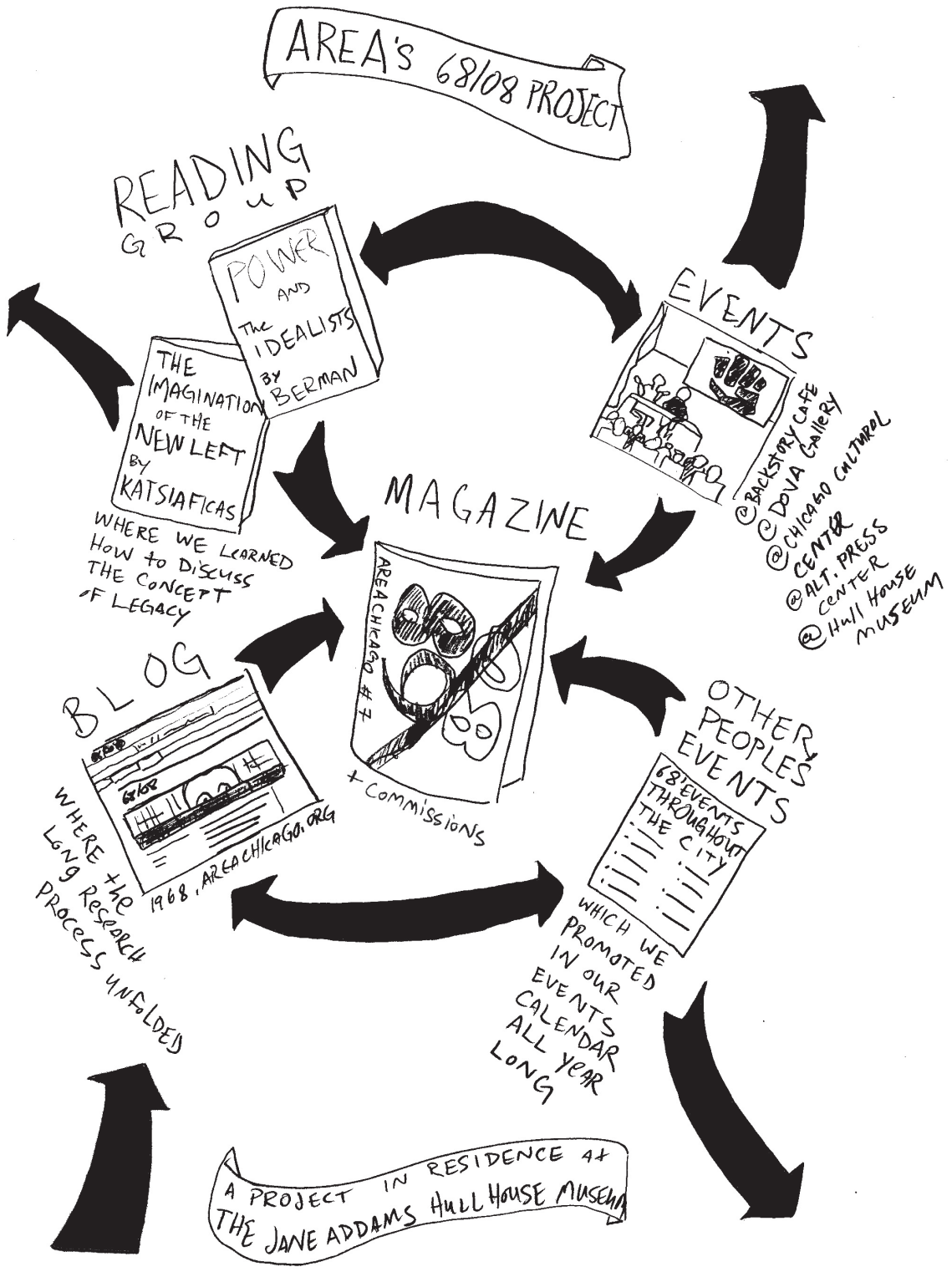
Chicago 10 Screening and Panel Discussion at **Chicago Cultural Center.** Organized with **ITVS, The Public Square**, and **WTTW.**

Intergenerational Dialogue on the **Black Arts Movement** with **Bob & Margo Crawford** at **Southside Community Arts Center.** Organized with ***Looks Like Freedom*** exhibition.

Open House for **Alternative Press Centre** at ***In These Times***. Organized with **Chicago Underground Library.**

***AREA #7: 68/08* Magazine Release Party.** Organized with the help of our advisory group and the **Jane Addams Hull House Museum.**

MAGAZINE
This issue of *AREA* on the theme of the legacy of 1968 in Chicago.



OTHER ORGANIZATIONS' EVENTS
remembering 1968 in Chicago in 2008: *AREA* helped to promote these events through our **Another Chicago** events newsletter

11/09/07 Movement for a Democractic Society events at **Loyola** with a '68 reflection

11/10/08 SNCC History Project presents ***Freedom Singers*** concert

2/08/08 Revisit 1968 at the **Chicago History Museum**

3/6/08 League of Revolutionary Black Workers sceening at **Mess Hall** with **49th St Underground**

3/13/08 Ultra Left: Workerists and Gauchistes around 1968 discussion at **Mess Hall**

4/5/08 France 1968 Panel at **New World Resource Center**

5/1/08 The Wobblies and 1968 on May Day at the **Newberry Library**

5/8/08 40 Years After 1968 Panel organized by **Platypus** (canceled)

5/15/08 ISO may '68 event at **Decima Musa**

6/6/08 Northwestern University Hosts ***1968/2008: The Aesthetics of Engagement*** conference

6/8/08 *Spook Who Sat by the Door* screening and discussion with **Sam Greenlee** at **Backstory Cafe**

7/3/08 SNCC and Freedom Schools Discussion at **Chicago Freedom School**

7/11/08 Youth Participation in Chicano Freedom Movement at **Chicago Freedom School**

7/11/08 Lumpen Releases 1968 Anniversary Issue of their Magazine

8/6/08 1968 Revisited with Marylyn Katz and Don Rose at **Yoshi's Café**

8/10/08 AREA BBQ and **Launch of 68/08 Project**

8/14/08 *I was There* Reflection on '68 DNC Protests at **Chicago History Museum**

8/15-17/08 *looks like freedom**: art, politics, and urban space / around 1968 / Chicago*** at **DOVA Temporary Gallery**

8/17/08 Backstory Cafe starts 2 month long **'68 Film Fest**

8/22-28/08 Filming the '68 Revolution Film Fest at **Facets Cinémathèque**

8/25/08 Sam Barnett Lecture on **the 1968 April Riot oral history project** at **Westwood College**

8/28/08 Re-enact 68 in **Grant Park**

9/19/08 *Radicals in Black and Brown* photo exhibit at **DePaul's John T. Richardson Library**

9/21/08 40 Year Struggle: Young Lords Celebration at the **San Lucas United Church of Christ**

9/26/27 David Dorfman Dance's Performance ***Underground***

9/27/08 Chicago 10 Screening at the **Chicago Cultural Center**

10/2/08 Anniversary of 1968 Tlatelolco massacre in Mexico at **Decima Musa**

10/3/08 1968 In Latin America Programs at the **University of Illinois, Chicago**

10/23/08 Intergenerational Dialogue with Bob and Margo Crawford at **Southside Community Arts Center**

10/24/08 AREA and CUL Welcomes Alternative Press Centre to Chicago

10/25/08 *After 1968: Art, Politics, History* at **DePaul University**

12/6/08 *AREA 68/08* Release Party at the **Jane Addams Hull-House Museum**

READING GROUP
This group met for 3 months in 2007 in order to conceptualize this project.

Participants included:
Eric Triantafillou, Toussaint Losier, Ryan Hollon, Adam Kader, Rebecca Zorach, Mairead Case, Aaron Sarver, Sam Barnett, Matt Malooley, Joseph Grim Feinberg, Alex Blanchette ,and Amanda Klonsky.

The readings were:
Power and the Idealists: Or, The Passion of Joschka Fischer, and its Aftermath. by Paul Berman (Softskull Press, 2005)

The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968. by George Katsiaficas (South End Press, 1999)

BLOG
http://1968.areachicago.org/
Featuring 10 guest correspondents from throughout the county posting 68/08 related articles and announcements.

Bloggers include: Malav Kanuga (NYC), Sam Gould (Portland), Rebecca Zorach, Daniel Tucker, Kelly Burdick (NYC), Kazembe Balagun (NYC), Robert Herbst (LA), and more.

For more information on the research that led to this issue, go to our blog: *1968.areachicago.org*

Lesser Known Events

in and around Chicago in and around 1968

[Notes and citations which are in parenthesis correspond to a bibliography available on the website from which this timeline content was taken. -ed]

1960

Malcolm X begins editing ***Mr. Muhammad Speaks*** for the ***Blackman*** newspaper in **Harlem**, which soon becomes simply *Muhammad Speaks* and its offices move to Chicago. By the late 1960s the paper has a 300,000-a-week circulation, and in the early 1970s 650,000-a-week, second largest of any weekly newspaper in the U.S., and covers many issues from an anti-imperialist perspective. *Muhammad Speaks* ceased publishing after the 1975 death of **Elijah Muhammad**, his son **Wallace** renamed the paper ***The Bilalian News*** and it folded 3-4 years later. (Woodford in *Underground*)

1965

AUGUST 11-16: Black uprising in **Watts**, lasting for six days, 34 killed, 1,000 injured and 4,000 arrested, fire damage estimated at $175 million. Two days of uprisings in Chicago. (*CrossRoads* No. 22; *Goines chron*; *Prize*; *Almanac*; Allen p126 says 9 total in 1965.)

1966

SUMMER: Black uprisings in Chicago, New York, Cleveland and a total of 38 cities (Haywood; Allen p126 also says total is 38.)

SUMMER: **Martin Luther King's Chicago Campaign** for open housing puts a spotlight on racism in the north. But the campaign fails to win its concrete goals and is essentially defeated by the **Daley** machine. (*Freedom*; *Marable*)

DECEMBER: The **Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam** (**SMC**) is formed at a conference at the **University of Chicago**. Initially a coalition effort that included **SWP**, **CP** and other folks, the SMC splintered in summer 1968 and by that fall was controlled by the SWP. (Spoke)

SCLC's Operation Breadbasket, headed by **Jesse Jackson**, wins its first significant victory, obtaining agreements from four large Chicago grocery corporations to carry products of Black corporations and deposit money in Black-owned banks. (Marable)

1967

SEPTEMBER: **National Conference for a New Politics** (**NCNP**), held over **Labor Day** Weekend in Chicago, and which at least some of the organizers hoped to see as the launching pad for a Martin Luther King/**Benjamin Spock** presidential ticket in 1968, is polarized especially around issues of race and racism and ends in failure (Carson; Spoke; Sale; Gitlin; Echols)

1968

MARCH 24-26: Formation of the **New University Conference** (**NUC**) at a conference attended by 350 radical academics in Chicago (*Sale*; *Guardian*, April 6, 1968)

JULY: **Afro-American Patrolmen's Association** formed in Chicago; similar groups are formed in many cities reflecting the "dual role" of Black police officers. (*Guardian*, October 5, 1968)

EARLY AUGUST: Conference in **Sandy Springs, Maryland** on the 120th anniversary of the **1848 Seneca Falls New York Women's Rights Convention**. With 20 participants this is the "first national conference of the fledgling women's movement," whose initial constituent local groups had begun to take shape in fall 1967. The **Westside Group** in Chicago started as the first-second wave women's liberation group in the U.S.. A much larger conference of 200 women (all white; an explicit decision had been made earlier not to invite Black women [Out of fears that a Black Power agenda would run counter to feminist politics -ED] takes place in **Lake Villa, Illinois**, outside Chicago, over **Thanksgiving**. Major figures in shaping the radical wing of the burgeoning women's movement attend one of both meetings: **Shulamith Firestone**, **Marilyn Webb**, **Judith Brown**, **Charlotte Bunch**, **Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz**, **Kathie Sarachild** (originator of the phrase "consciousness-raising") **Ti-Grace Atkinson**, **Kate Millet** and others. This is the period of the explosive growth in women's consciousness-raising groups across the country, with their framework that "the personal is political." There is tension in the movement and at these conferences between "politicos" and "feminists", that is, between the emerging radical feminist current and activists who see the women's liberation movement more closely linked to other forces on the Left. The pathbreaking. if short-lived, radical Feminist organizations were also formed during this year and 1969: **Redstockings** (initiated in February 1969 by **Ellen Willis** and Shulamith Firestone, lasting until fall 1970); **The Feminists** (formed officially in June 1969, with origins in Ti-Grace Atkinson's resignation from **NOW** in October 17, 1968, lasting until late 1973); **Cell 16** (formed in summer 1968 by Roxanne Dunbar, lasting until 1973); and **New York Radical Feminists** (launched in fall 1969 by Shulamith Firestone—who had left Redstockings—and **Anne Koedt**, lasted until 1972 with remnants sponsoring conferences until 1974). Many papers from this phase of the women's movement (for example, "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," by Anne Koedt or "The Politics of Housework," by Pat Mainardi) are circulated and gathered in the influential collections *Notes from the First Year*. (1968) and, later, *Notes from the Second Year* (1970) and *Notes from the Third Year* (1971); they are also and reprinted widely in anthologies and as pamphlets. (Webb in *Underground*; *Echols*; Durbin in *Sixties Papers; Line of March No. 17*; *Gitlin*)

AUGUST 25-30: **Democratic National Convention** in Chicago: "The Whole World Is Watching" as police riot and batter demonstrators, reporters and **McCarthy** delegates day after day. Protests by some McCarthy and other delegates reach inside the hall, as the convention majority nominates **Hubert Humphrey** and rejects a peace platform. The polarization and nationally televised repression is a watershed experience for the antiwar movement and the country. While polls show a majority backing the police, the confrontation (along with the other events of 1968 of course) spurs the growth of the **New Left**; that fall, 100 of 350-400 **SDS** chapters are new ones. (*Sale*; *Gitlin*)

1969

JANUARY 22: **Third World Liberation Front** begins student strike at **Berkeley** demanding an autonomous Third World college; eventually they win a compromise **Ethnic Studies Division** at **UC**, the strike ends March 14. On February 13 a Black Student Strike at **University of Wisconsin** brings out the **National Guard**; the Guard is also called out at **University of North Carolina**. Students occupy a building at the **University of Chicago** for 16 days beginning January 30 to protest denial of tenure to **Marlene Dixon**—they lose and many are expelled. There were major strikes and occupations in spring 1969 at **City College** and **Brooklyn College** in New York, led by Black and Puerto Rican students and especially important in the emergence of a large radical movement among Puerto Rican students. In March 1971 there was a three-day takeover of a building at City College led by Asian American students. Over the next 18 months confrontations and increasing violence grip the nation's campuses, as well as society in general. And the mass demonstrations and repression is accompanied by a rise in small-group actions: from January 1969 to April 1970 there are an estimated 5,000 bombings in the U.S., an unprecedented phenomenon. (*Goines chron*; Rorabaugh; *Reunion*; Louie; Torres; Wei; *Guardian*, February 8, 1969)

JUNE 18-22: SDS splits and explodes at Chicago Convention. The **Revolutionary Youth Movement** (**RYM**) faction, while probably not holding a majority of delegates, "expels" the PL-led faction. RYM itself is an alliance of the **Weatherman** (RYM I) and RYM II factions, which falls apart over the next several months. RYM II is the main seedbed for several of the early formations of the **New Communist Movement**. The polemics surrounding the SDS explosion - in particular the controversies over "You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows," published in *New Left Notes* June 18 issue - become a major pivot and reference point for left debate in 1969-70. The PL-SDS faction survives another year or so and then disintegrates. (Sale; self-published SDS & RYM material in BREV-3; Aronowitz; Weather; *Guardian*, June 28, 1969)

JUNE: Puerto Rican activists from New York visit the recently formed Chicago **Young Lords Organization** and gain authorization to organize a Lords group in New York City. Three New York groups come together —July 22 becomes the official Young Lords Party anniversary date—and begin organizing as Young Lords, largely modeled on the **Black Panthers**. Their first office is opened in September and in May 1970 they start publishing ***Palante*** as a full-sized tabloid newspaper. At the end of 1970 they have roughly 1,000 members, their height of influence and activity is 1970-1972. The New York-centered group expands, splits with the Chicago Lords in April-May 1970, and changes its name to the Young Lords Party in June 1970. (Guzman in *Underground*; Franklin; Torres)

SEPTEMBER 24: The "Conspiracy" trial opens in Chicago. On October 29 **Judge Julius Hoffman** orders **Bobby Seale** bound and gagged in his chair. His case is separated from that of the other 7 defendants on November 4. (Hayden; *Reunion*)

OCTOBER 8-11: Weatherman **Days of Rage** to "Bring the War Home" in Chicago. Criticized by **Fred Hampton**, leader of Chicago Panthers and the Chicago **Rainbow Coalition**—the first formation to use that term. The Rainbow included the Panthers, **Young Patriots** (who later split and produce an offshoot, the **Patriot Party**, which organizes nationwide), and the Young Lords Organization. The RYM II faction, which had split with Weatherman (RYM I) over the summer, holds a larger but peaceful action over the same four days in Chicago. (Sale; Guzman in *Underground*; self-published RYM material in *BREV-3*; *Guardian*, February 14, 1970)

DECEMBER 4: Fred Hampton and **Mark Clark** assassinated by police in Chicago. (*Sale*)

1970

Chicago Women's Liberation Union is founded, the first organization to call itself "socialist-feminist." The influential manifesto written by CWLU's **Hyde Park** chapter, *Socialist Feminism: A Strategy for the Women's Movement*, is published in 1972. **Bread and Roses**, a "socialist women's liberation organization" in **Boston**, is formed about the same time, in summer 1969. These groups are joined in the next few years by autonomous women's unions in Berkeley-Oakland, New York, Boston and many other cities within the radical wing of the women's movement, differences take clearer shape between the radical feminist and newly emerging socialist feminist tendencies. (*Echols*; Red Apple in *SR No. 38* - which says CWLU is formed in 1970; *Line of March No. 17*)

Rising Up Angry (**RUA**) group is started in Chicago to organize white working class youth. Begins publication of *Rising Up Angry* newspaper. Survives until about 1975. (*Rising Up Angry* Vol. 5, No. 7 in BREV-1; *Guardian*, November 13, 1974; Franklin)

Chicago-area **High School Independent Press formed**, publishes a widely distributed pamphlet *How to Start a High School Underground Newspaper*; the group soon drops "Chicago" from its name, moves its office to **Houston** in July 1970 and starts publishing ***FPS***, a young peoples news service. In 1971-72 it moves to **Ann Arbor**, merges with a project called **Youth Liberation**, and *FPS* soon becomes a "Magazine of Young People's Liberation" which includes reprints from the high school underground press. (Berlet in *Underground*)

JUNE 27-28: 850 union members and sympathizers form the **National Coordinating Committee for Trade Union Action and Democracy** at a Chicago "National Rank-and-File Action Conference" initiated by ***Labor Today***, a CP-linked publication. (*Guardian*, July 4, 1970)

1971

OCTOBER 9-11: First national meeting of the **New American Movement** held in Chicago, after a more than a year period of organizing by a national interim committee. A national conference on program is held in November, and the formal Founding Convention in June 1972 (SR No. 8; SDHx)

MARCH 10-12: **National Black Political Convention** in **Gary** draws 8,000, forms **National Black Assembly** (or **National Black Political Assembly/NBPA**) whose first "seating" is October 21/22 in Chicago. **Amiri Baraka** is Secretary General of NBPA until 1975. Gary convention approves a **National Black Political Agenda**, among other things to be taken to the Democratic and Republican conventions to obtain as much commitment to its principles as possible. One week after the Agenda is released, in May, the **Congressional Black Caucus**, dissatisfied with its anti-busing and anti-Israel provisions, issues its own document, the ***Black Declaration*** and the ***Black Bill of Rights*** which **Ron Walters** called "a watered down version of the Agenda." Marable terms the Gary Convention "the high point of Black nationalist agitation in the **post-World War II** period." The second convention, much smaller with 1,700 present, is held March 14-17, 1974 in **Little Rock**. (*Freedom*; Forward No. 3; Walters in *Black Scholar* October 1975; *Marable*; *Guardian*, June 21, 1972 & April 3, 1974)

SEPTEMBER: Founding national meeting of **Black Workers Congress** (**BWC**) in Gary, in preparation since late 1970, 400 delegates attend, with the concept of Black including all peoples of color within the U.S. **The League of Revalutionary Black Workers** (**LRBW**) and **United Black Workers** from **Mahwah, New Jersey**, expected at one time to be the pillars of the group, do not affiliate; **Ken Cockrell, Mike Hamlin and John Watson** had resigned from **LRBW** earlier, as of June 12, 1971. By the end of this year many of the members who were left in **LRBW**, including key leader **General Baker**, had joined the **Communist League** (Georgakas; self-published material in BNCM-1).

1972

OCTOBER: **Grailville** (**Cincinnati**) **Ohio** conference of 200-300 "independent" **Marxist-Leninist** activists and collectives—**Sojourner Truth Organization** (**S TO**) in Chicago played a leading role—that is unsuccessful at forming a national organization; some remnants from this conference form the short-lived "Federation" or "Midwest Federation" later, about 1974. (Dowling in CW#3; O'Brien)

NOVEMBER 21: **Seventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals** overturns the **Chicago 7 Conspiracy** convictions and the government announces it will not retry the case. After several years of political trials on conspiracy charges the government fails to win a single case, being defeated each time by a jury or on appeal. (Reunion)

Taken from **Max Elbaum's** website *http://www.revolutionintheair.com/chron/chron1.html*

Image: Barnett Newman, *Lace Curtain for Mayor Daley*, 1968. Cor-ten steel, galvanized barbed wire, and enamel paint, 70 x 48 x 10 inches, Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Annalee Newman, Photo courtesy of The Art Institute of Chicago.

Read more in article *1968: Art and Politics in Chicago* on page 59.

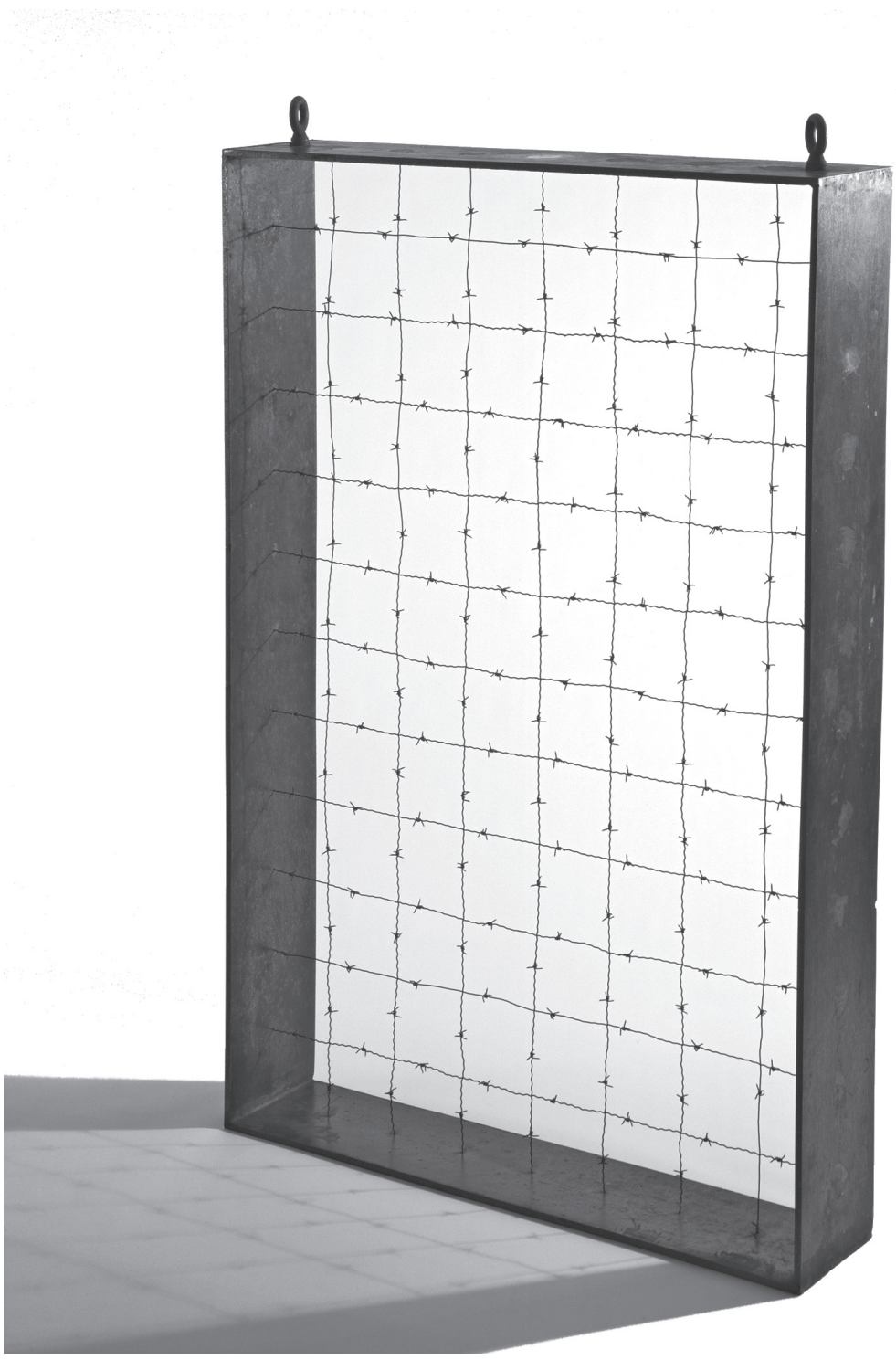


Image by Katie Joy Sojourner. Taken from *Reproduce & Revolt* (edited by Josh MacPhee & Favianna Rodriguez; Softskull Press, 2008), a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics for activist use. If you would like to get a copy of this book, check out *Justseeds.org*

Hidden History

SOME HISTORIES REMAIN HIDDEN FROM US, WHILE WE CAN'T ESCAPE OTHERS.

In this section of '68/'08 we attempt to uncover neglected histories and untold stories of Chicago from 1968. Some events such as the **Democratic National Convention** and accompanying police riots in **Grant Park** have been told and retold, so we see no need to include them here. Instead we investigate lesser known events and organizations like the **Conservative Vice Lords** from the **West side**, and **JOIN Community Union** in the **Uptown** neighborhood; both groups have escaped the resurgence of interest that the **Weather Underground** has garnered. We also aren't interested in rehashing sectarian battles that some still beg to fight 40 years later. These arguments often monopolize discourse about 1968, and obscure important lessons of history.

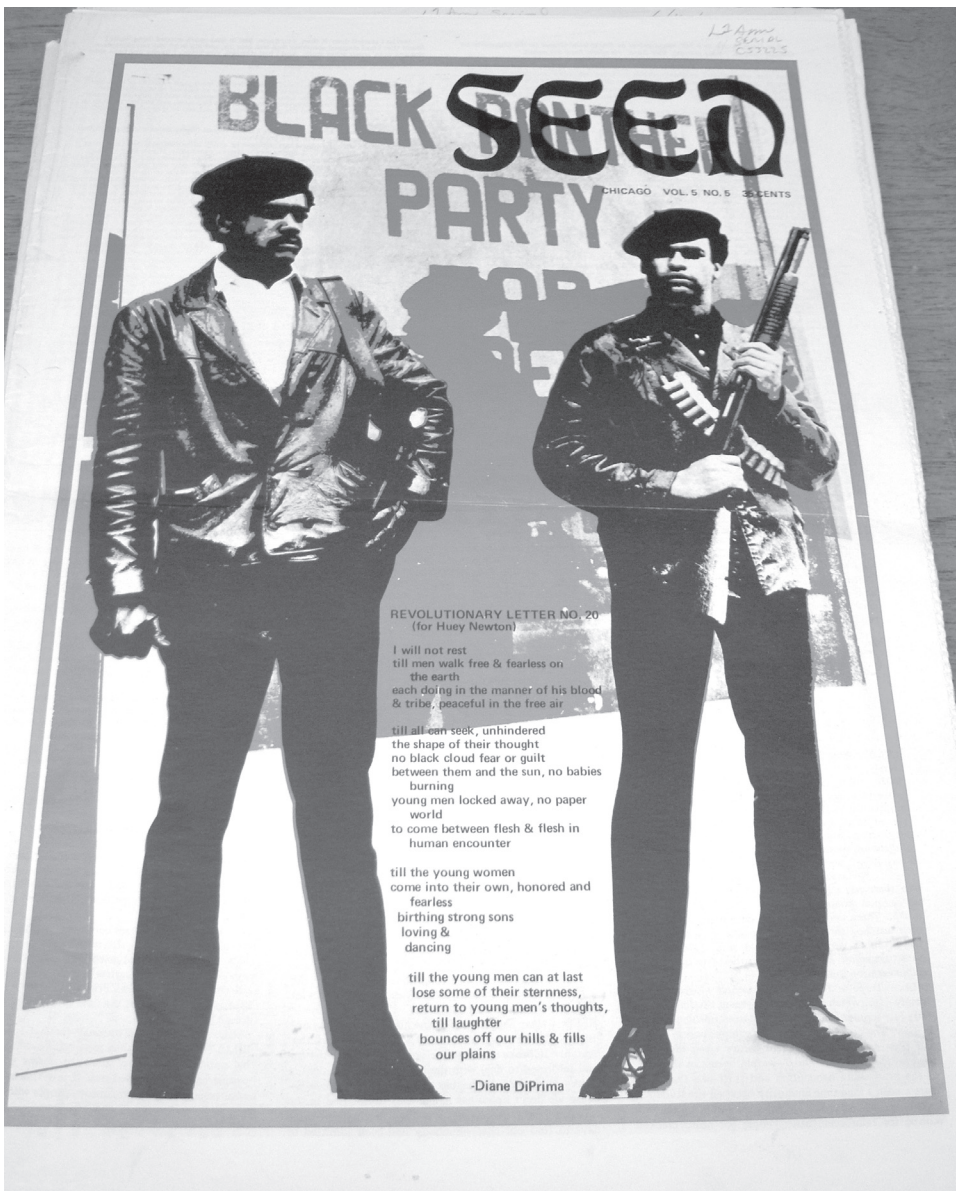
Like any telling of history, the stories told here are imperfect; recollections of events are often altered by the teller—by time or by intention. In my experience, what is said "off the record" is often more revealing than what is said during an interview. Also many people, for different reasons, are unwilling to tell some stories. Therefore, this is by no means an all-inclusive history of neglected **New Left** groups and lesser-known events of 1968 Chicago.

For example, we had hoped to include an article on the **Movimento de Liberación Nacional** (**MLN**) and the incredibly active Filipino activists wokring in the '70s in **Albany Park**, but were unable, due to a variety of reasons. But histories about the these and other groups continue to be written and unearthed by dedicated historians, writers, and independent journalists. As has been said, history doesn't exist only in the past. Stories of those who came before us are inescapably necessary to the present, not just so we can avoid repeating mistakes, but so we can collectively move forward towards creating a better, more just world.

—Aaron Sarver

Keywords to consider

NOSTALGIA, RECOLLECTION, MEMOIR



Unlike the rest of the Chicago press, *The Seed* provided regular, informed and sympathetic coverage of the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords Organization.

The Seed staff was radicalized by the police violence at the DNC and its contents became increasingly focused on politics in the convention's wake.

The Chicago Seed

Voice of a Community, Center of a Movement

An article and two interviews with key contributors to this important local culture and politics zine from the 1960s

BY STEVE MACEK AND ALYSSA VINCENT

By the mid-1960s, the area around **Wells Street** in what is now **Old Town** formed the heart of Chicago's small but thriving hippie scene. The neighborhood housed headshops, record stores, music clubs, coffee shops and a burgeoning population of bohemian young people. **Students for a Democratic Society** had its headquarters in the city as well and thanks to their tireless organizing, after 1965 the draft resistance and anti-Vietnam War movements had begun to gather steam. Predictably, local news coverage of both the flower children and the **New Left** was often antagonistic, factually inaccurate or openly dismissive. As a consequence, the city in the late 1960s saw the founding of several underground and alternative newspapers that sought to speak for the different currents of political and cultural dissent that the mainstream press misreported. The most important of these was ***The Seed***.

COMMUNICATING PEACE AND LOVE

Launched in 1967 by artist **Don Lewis** and **Earl Segal**, owner of a poster and button shop called **The Mole Hole**, *The Seed* was initially conceived as a community paper for the Wells Street hippie enclave. The paper's main sources of revenue were ads taken out by Old Town merchants (especially headshops and hip clothiers) and big record companies like **Columbia**. It featured freeform poetry, music and movie reviews, reports on area rock concerts, and a fairly detailed *Dope on Dope* listing of the current street prices of drugs like LSD, marijuana and hashish. It regularly covered demonstrations, festivals and community happenings that the ***Tribune***, ***Daily News*** and ***Sun-Times*** typically ignored. Occasionally it also published long, rambling personal essays on such subjects as ecology, Zen Buddhism and masturbation. It set aside a significant amount of space for letters-to-the-editor, announcements from community and activist groups, and an assortment of personal ads.

"We reflected, we energized, we communicated [our] community," recalls **Marshall Rosenthal**, who began writing for *The Seed* in 1968, "Anti-war, counterculture, pro-love—it was all there."

A typical early issue (Vol. 1, number 6) carried a statement on draft resistance by one of the founders of the **Chicago Area Draft Resisters**, a report on the city's censorship of the **Andy Warhol** film *Chelsea Girls*, an obituary for **John Coltrane** and an article extolling "wild and undisciplined" long hair as both inherently erotic and anti-macho.

An early member of the alternative news exchange **The Underground Press Syndicate** (UPS), the paper frequently reprinted material from larger, better known underground rags like New York's ***East Village Other*** and ***The Los Angeles Free Press***. Among other things, *The Seed* ran a UPS-syndicated medical advice column by **Dr. Hip-O-Crates** that dispensed information on the health effects of recreational drug use and gave frank answers to questions about sex.

The form of the paper matched its nonconformist contents. Stylistically, the prose in *The Seed* was brash, unpolished, laced with profanity and slang, often tongue-in-cheek and sometimes incoherent. Visually, the paper exploited the full expressive potential of recently introduced offset printing technology, quickly becoming famous for its multi-color psychedelic graphics, chaotic layouts, unusual font choices, occasional pictures of nude women and transgressive comics by artists like **R. Crumb** and **Skip Williamson**.

In the lead-up to the **Democratic National Convention**, writers and editors for *The Seed* not only publicized but helped to organize the counter-convention activities **Abbie Hoffman** and others were planning, including signing onto the first official permit request for the **Yippies'** proposed **Festival of Life**. As the convention grew near, the paper aired the growing debate within the anti-war movement over the Yippies' tactics and the sort of reception protestors could expect from **Daley's** police. In an article titled *1984*, it also covered the passage of an ominous anti-riot bill making it a crime to cross state lines with the intent to incite or promote a riot, the very law later used to prosecute Hoffman and other anti-war movement leaders for their role in the convention protests.

Shortly before the convention, the paper put out a special issue with a schedule of events issued by the Yippies, a city guide for out-of-town protestors and tips on *What to do in Case of Arrest*. It included an editorial by *The Seed* editor **Abe Peck** warning that "the Man is into confrontation" and telling would-be demonstrators "[d]on't come to Chicago if you expect a five-day Festival of Life, music and love." Alongside Peck's piece was printed Abbie Hoffman's testy rebuttal essentially dismissing *The Seed*'s peace and love ethos as politically inadequate and out of date.

"The whole Yippie thing was kind of an exercise in media jiu-jitsu, of using the media through a series of greater and greater claims. The problem was that you only made news by making a bigger claim each time you did it," Peck remembers. "My ethical position was that if you're telling your brothers and sisters to come, you ought to have full disclosure. This was going to be a tough scene. We were getting arrested left and right."

MAKING A FIST

Of course, the police violence during the convention proved to be just as horrific as Peck had expected. In its aftermath, *The Seed*—like the New Left and the counterculture more generally—became more militant and confrontational in its politics.

"The cover of the issue after the convention was a picture of a pig dressed in a Chicago police uniform with Daley's face on it. I think that was our change. We had been radicalized by the convention," said Peck.

The police murder of charismatic **Illinois Black Panther Party** leader **Fred Hampton** in December 1969 and the notorious **Chicago 8** trial hastened the process of radicalization.

"The murder of Fred Hampton was a very dramatic event that had a lot of influence. The Black Panther Party was very well thought of in Chicago and Fred Hampton, in particular, a lot of us knew," explained former Seed writer **Bernie Farber**. "The Chicago police were becoming... vicious."

The Seed itself was a frequent target of official harassment and politically motivated violence. The **Chicago Police Department's** notorious **Red Squad** followed and photographed staffers. Editor Abe Peck was slapped with obscenity charges for a surreal sexual illustration in one issue (although, as often happened, the charges were ultimately dropped). Street vendors hawking the paper were hassled and sometimes arrested. Cops pressured drug store and newsstand

"*The Seed*" continues on p. 15

A Very Volatile Time

Interview with Bernie Farber, Seed contributor

BY STEVE MACEK AND ALYSSA VINCENT

Bernie Farber joined ***Students for a Democratic Society*** *in the mid-1960s while a student at* ***Niles East High School****. He attended* ***Roosevelt University*** *and was editor of the student newspaper,* **The Torch**. *He was on the staff of* **The Seed** *from 1970 to 1973. He currently teaches part time at* ***IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law*** *and works as an attorney. The excerpts printed below are taken from the transcript of a much longer interview.*

SM/AV How did you end up writing for The Seed? What attracted you to the paper?

BERNIE FARBER In May of 1970, there were the killings at **Kent State**, the invasion of **Cambodia**, the killings at **Jackson State** and a nationwide student strike. I chaired the meeting at Roosevelt that called the student strike there. And we carried on a variety of activities during that week. There was in fact a referendum as to whether or not Roosevelt U. should shut down until the war ends, and we got 1/3 of the student votes in favor of shutting down—over 970 people in fact. It was a very volatile time.

I knew the people at *The Seed*. I lived in the neighborhood. I had spent time at their offices and written articles for them before about what was happening in SDS and at Roosevelt. I also did an article about the **Chicago Transit Authority**. When I left Roosevelt after May or June 1970-- after Cambodia and Kent State, the student strike and everything like that-- I went over to *The Seed* and started working full time there.

SM/AV What sorts of stories did *The Seed* focus on during your tenure there?

BF Well, the anti-war movement in general was a continuing theme. We not only covered protests and events, but we covered what was going on with the war. You know, the **Pentagon Papers**. We also—*The Seed* collective—were very much directly involved in anti-war activities. We did stuff like drive down **Lake Shore Drive** holding anti-war banners out the windows between two cars. During large anti-war marches downtown, *The Seed* collective would do demonstrations inside these **State Street** stores; while the big demonstration was going on on State Street, we would gather in the center of the aisle at **Marshall Fields** and start yelling anti-war chants and march down the middle of the aisle, and then out the other door. We did that a number of times without getting caught. One woman was busted by store security at **Sears** once, but that was it. It was a real dramatic thing, because it was part of this no business as usual mentality, we're going to disrupt business and not allow people to just go about their shopping while people are getting killed in **Southeast Asia**.

SM/AV Could you say a little more about your piece on the CTA? Judging from the reporting in the mainstream dailies at the time, the outcry over CTA fare hikes back then was enormous and ultimately caused CTA to back away from their proposed fare increase.

BF A little bit, not much. The major thing, based on the research I did, was that the CTA used to be all these private transit companies. They ran the system into the ground. They hauled all the profit that they could out of it, didn't maintain it at all, and then when they were bankrupt and falling apart, they pulled it over to this Chicago Transit Authority, where the city government bailed them out. The money [for the bailout] was in a variety of mechanisms [and] was lent to them by some of the same banks that controlled the private transit companies. There were these revenue bonds where a lot of the money that people were paying in fares was just going to pay off the interest on the revenue bonds and not be invested in the system. So tax money was then used to do maintenance and upkeep on the CTA. And the same people who used to own the transit companies, and who had destroyed it, were continually being funneled more money in order to pay them off for the purchase of this by the city. They've done this several times over. When they formed the **Regional Transportation Authority**, the **RTA**, they pulled a different version.

SM/AV Your article in *The Seed* exposed all of this. And yet the mainstream news media were not at all interested in digging into the details of the story.

BF Of course not, and the thing is that this was all public record kind of stuff. But you won't see that in the records of the ***Sun-Times*** or ***Tribune*** because, of course, these are some of the same people who are their advertisers or own the banks that loaned them money.

SM/AV What was it like working at *The Seed* in the early 1970s?

BF The editorial process was very haphazard. When it was time to put out an issue, we would have a meeting. Everyone who was on the staff or hanging around would come to the meeting, and we would make up a list of things that people wanted to write, and we would hang up the list, and people would proceed to write the stuff, or in some instances, people would come up with an idea and never write the thing, and when you got your article written, you typed it up, and it got pasted up and laid out, and when there were enough pages you were done. [...] One continuing controversy was the artwork, especially when the paper became more political, but there were still people who were more into the artistic end of it. For example, I wrote a long article about the Pentagon Papers, and it went on for a couple pages of dense type. And then somebody put this three color screen graphic behind it, and there were parts of it you couldn't read. And it was an article I had spent like dozens and dozens of hours getting just right factually.

SM/AV How did the staff support themselves? People got paid, right?

BF Once in awhile people would get paid a check of either $50 or if we had the money $100, but you would go months in between that sometimes. People were allowed to take a bundle of papers and the deal usually was that you sold papers for 35 cents. Other people who were street sellers would buy a bundle of 100 for $20, and would sell them for 35 cents. They'd make $15 per hundred. If you were on the staff, you could take a bundle without turning in anything. You just kept the whole $35 bucks. But you know, it would take you the whole day and you had be in a good location. If you were at

"Bernie Farber" continues on p. 14

Messages in a Lovely Psychedelic Bottle

Interview with Abe Peck, *Seed* Contributor

BY STEVE MACEK AND ALYSSA VINCENT

Abe Peck is professor emeritus at the ***Medill School of Journalism*** *at* ***Northwestern University*** *and author of the book* Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press, *the definitive survey of the underground press movement of the late 1960s and early 70s. He was an early editor and writer for* **The Chicago Seed** *and a member of the coordinating committee of the* **Underground Press Syndicate**. *After leaving* The Seed, *he worked as an editor for* ***Rolling Stone*** *and as a reporter and weekly columnist for* **The Chicago Daily News** *and* **Sun-Times**. *The excerpts below are taken from the transcript of a much longer interview.*

SM/AV You settled in Chicago in fall of 1967 (on your way back from the **Summer of Love** in San Francisco) and became immersed in the hippie scene around **Wells St.** How did you first get involved with *The Seed*?

ABE PECK I was an avid reader of ***The Realist*** and **Paul Krassner**. I used to live in the **East Village** in **New York** but never met Paul. He had gotten mugged, and he wrote a piece in *The Realist* saying, "Hey, I'm looking to get out of the city. It's too tough for me here. I'd like to live on a farm." I knew a guy who was a gentlemen farmer who came from a fair amount of money, and who had a place in **Northern Illinois**, so in the spirit of the times, I volunteered his farm. I wrote to Paul with an invitation. In response, I got **Jerry Rubin** in my apartment - my black-lit apartment with posters and soap flakes all over the floor. And Jerry is telling me about this groovy festival that's going to happen at the counter-convention in August of '68. I wrote a piece about that for *The Seed*, and that was my first contribution. I believe it was signed **Abraham Yippie**. I was the first Yippie in Chicago, I think.

SM/AV Speaking of which, *The Seed* famously became the headquarters of local organizing for the Yippie **Festival of Life** held in **Lincoln Park** during the **'68 Democratic National Convention**. What was that like?

AP Jerry and **Abbie [Hoffman]** were flying in a lot and there were a lot of us from Chicago organizing...We had planning meetings that were raided. We had a benefit for those arrested in the raid that was held at the **Electric Theater**. And the benefit was raided on a curfew violation... We met with the Chicago police about permits. The city had the man from central casting, the perfectly named **David Stahl**, who was the Deputy Mayor negotiating with us, and another guy named **Al Barger**. And they were just stalling us at every turn. The thing that kind of freaked me out was that we had a meeting with one of the top cops who said, "even if there's 100,000 people, I will clear **Lincoln Park** if I see one marijuana cigarette."... We were scared from having our meetings busted and being followed. I think we saw that it was going to be tough times and I think we were a little bit afraid, at least I was. And some of us were also concerned that our "brothers and sisters" were not being told how heavy things could get in Chicago... All those things kind of boiled over. I wrote a piece for *The Seed* approximately a month before the convention saying "if you're coming to Chicago, make sure to wear armor in your hair."...Our permit was pulled [by the city] and then resubmitted. I did not sign the new permit but stayed very involved with things and was of course totally swept up in the events once they happened.

SM/AV What were you and the rest of *The Seed* staff doing during convention week?

AP I was in Lincoln Park a lot. I was there both nights when people were pushed out. I was a reporter in a way. I went to **Henrotin Hospital** and watched the people who had been smashed come in... I saw a guy from a gas station come running out and break the arm of the first demonstrator he could hit. Whether it was political or he just wanted to protect his gas station, I'm not sure.

Later on I was at *The Seed* office. We were putting our heads down, trying to get the paper out. I was in there with a couple of other guys and the windows got shot out. All of a sudden, these bullets whizzed into the front window. It was one of those surreal things where we ran out into the street, which of course was not the wisest thing to do. The only car on the street, cruising slowly north, was a blue and white cop car. We liked our landlord, so we had to call the police to file a damage claim for the insurance. So the police came down and said "Who do you think did this?" And we said, "Well, you guys." It was a bizarre dialogue.

SM/AV How did *The Seed* respond to the police brutality at the convention and to its aftermath, to the **Conspiracy trail**, the increasing repression of the left, and so on?

AP The cover of the issue after the convention was a picture of a pig dressed in a Chicago police uniform with **Daley's** face on it. I think that was our change. We had been radicalized by the convention... **Mike James** [a founder of **Rising Up Angry**] came into *The Seed* office and took my hand and made a V, and he said, "That's what we used to be." And then he made a fist—my first fist—and said "That's how we are now." I've known him 40 years, and we still tease each other about that moment. So we were getting increasingly into that kind of militant politics and we started doing, in our own way, more investigative reporting.

SM/AV What about the **Black Panthers** and other revolutionary New Communist groups who increasingly opted for armed struggle after 1968? How did you relate to them?

AP Well, I think in a couple of ways. We certainly didn't see ourselves as communist. If anything, we called ourselves communalists. We let the Panthers use our facilities. We sympathized with them. I think that people were very uncritical about the Panthers but there's no denying that we were captivated by them and saw them as a group that was trying to carve out a space in a country that we were increasingly at odds with... As we got more international in our politics, some of us, including myself, came to see that the country was imperialist. That wasn't a word I used but I certainly felt that way. I think we tended to identify more with a world revolution in the late 60s and early 70s than we had before even though some of us thought we were still hippies.

"Abe Peck" continues on p. 14

Bernie Farber continued from p. 13

State and Madison, you did ok, sometimes late at night you could do the **Rush St.** area and do well, and **Wells St.**, but you know, if you were at other corners, sometimes it wouldn't be worth doing if you were really trying to make a living. [...] I literally did make a good amount of my money other than those occasional checks selling the paper on the street. And I used to view that as a good part of working on the paper too, because you get a lot of conversations, feedback, and even leads for stories sometimes. I didn't want to be just sitting in the office, I wanted to be out in the community anyway. I'd go to a lot of events also, demonstrations or rallies, things like that. You could sometimes sell a lot of papers that way, and also be there to cover the event. Write up whatever it was.

SM/AV One issue that *The Seed* covered in much greater detail than any of the other papers in town was the ongoing police and government harassment of the student left, the **Black Panthers**, the Young Lords and the underground press. Especially after 1968, it seemed like every issue carried accounts of arrests or raids or police infiltration of movement groups. *The Seed* was certainly targeted. Can you talk about the various types of harassment people encountered from the police and from the **Red Squad** because of your involvement with the paper?

BF If you look through the back issues of the paper, there's this two page spread I wrote called *They Mean to Kill Us All* about police shootings. And in there I relate an incident where, during some kind of parade downtown, I'm standing at **State and Randolph** and I'm selling the paper, and these cops come over to me. Their sergeant points to me and says "When the parade starts, this guy goes down in the **Walgreen's** washroom and we beat him up." I left. I'm a brave person, generally, and I've been in situations where I've gotten my fair share of abuse, as the **Rolling Stones** said, but I wasn't about to hang around for that one.

There was also an organization called the **Legion of Justice**, and they would do things like break into people's apartments, beat people up...I had a party at my apartment on **Halsted**, and a car got firebombed right in front of the place, the next night I heard voices on our back porch, and I found two cans of gasoline there. At one point at *The Seed* office, some people drove by and shot through the windows.

[The Red Squad] were always coming by and photographing us coming in and out of the building. There were stores that were threatened for just carrying the paper. A cop would come in and say that they shouldn't be carrying that. Especially more mainstream businesses. Because here's the thing, it's one thing for a place like a head shop or a radical bookstore to carry it, but there were mainstream bookstores that carried it too. That was back in the era when there were little neighborhood bookstores in a lot of places - stores that economically don't exist at this point in time - who were told not to carry it.

There was also one main distribution company in Chicago, **Chas A. Levy**. Levy was the company that delivered newspaper and magazines to Walgreen's, supermarkets and similar locations. We could never get them to carry *The Seed*. They would sign up places to these exclusive contracts. We knew we weren't going to get into Walgreens, but they would start to sign up these little neighborhood drugstores that had their own magazine rack. It purportedly got to the point where if you owned a drug store and wanted to carry ***Time***, ***Newsweek***, ***Look***, or ***Sports Illustrated***, and they saw that over in the corner there was a stack of *The Seed*, some store owners claimed that they were told that they might be in violation of the exclusive distribution contract.

SM/AV Police were also cracking down heavily on *The Seed* street sellers in the early 70s. How often did people get arrested for selling the paper?

BF We had tons of instances where we'd have to collect bail money for someone.

SM/AV What would they be charged with?

BF Loitering, disorderly conduct and so on. At one point, the **ACLU** sued the city on behalf of some of the sellers. In fact, they won the case. To a certain extent, after that, some cops backed off. But the individual cops would sometimes just ignore that. It's like everything else. You have to have money to hire lawyers every time. You couldn't in that era always call up the ACLU and bother them about this because they were doing a lot of different stuff. They were involved in that big battle over the police spying and stuff. And that was an era where people were getting shot and killed.

[As a result of the ACLU case] it's still a principal that you can sell a newspaper on the streets of Chicago. In fact, ***Streetwise***, the homeless newspaper still relies on precedent that goes all the way back to that. You don't have to be the *Trib* or the *Sun-Times* to sell a paper on the street. That's why all these other free papers can stick a box on the streets.

SM/AV What do you think led to the demise of *The Seed* and the underground press more generally?

BF One thing was economics, plainly. Printing got more expensive. Circulation of the paper got more difficult. It got more expensive to live. You no longer could find a house for 10 people to rent for $400 dollars a month. People needed more substantial jobs to survive after the mid-70s. There was also a good deal of co-optation by the mainstream media. The mainstream media would hire veterans of the underground press to write hipper rock criticism to try to appeal to a younger audience.

SM/AV What do you think the current crop of student activists and members of the left can learn from the experience of *The Seed*?

BF Audacity. The ability to try and do things yourself. To not always seek established channels for what you're doing. The truth of the matter is that we need this kind of media. Now, a lot of what can be done with media today can be done on the Web, not in print. And that's an advantage that people have today—we used to actually have to try and gather some money somehow to physically put the thing out. Now, the reality is that it by comparison costs almost nothing, but you still need people dedicated to investigating the same kind of things, and to writing articles, and to go talk to people. I think that there's not enough of that. One of the interesting experiences with that is the **Indymedia** movement. There are some very positive things about it, along with some aspects that show a need for improvement in exercising a bit more directly an editorial process. A somewhat unedited discussion forum can be good, as is the ability to get news posted quickly. But there's also a role for people who are going to act like professional journalists and attempt to direct the focus of a forum to important issues through the exercise of judgment. ◊

Abe Peck continued from p. 13

SM/AV Around 1969 or so, *The Seed* began printing more and more articles about the women's movement and gay and lesbian issues. Your girlfriend at the time was a member of the **Chicago Women's Liberation Union**. Can you say something about how women's liberation affected the paper?

AP Several things happened. Traditional hierarchy went away...because there was a "revolution within the revolution" of women and if we weren't going to do that, who was? ...The infusion of women into the paper became very real and we became more of a collective. And at one point, we had a rotating editorship. It was good in that it certainly created an increase in perspective, and it opened us up to one of the most important revolutions that went on during the 60s, the gender revolution. At the same time, it was a problem in that the women who came in were new and had varying degrees of talent. It wasn't that **Gloria Steinem** came in and was the editor that week. It would be someone who might not have even a modicum of talent that the guys had. ...There were a lot of women who were quite talented and they certainly espoused views that would not have gotten into the paper, and were important for men to know, if only for the evolution of our own politics. But there were times when people who didn't know how to put out a paper were in charge of the paper that issue. When you have a truly radical organization, one of the things you have to figure out is how to embrace your political evolution while still getting the job done...

SM/AV Can you talk a bit about the notorious incident in which obscenity charges were brought against you and bookstore owner **Barbara Kahn** for an illustration by artist **Karl-Heinz Meschbach** that appeared in *The Seed*?

AP It's actually ironic, because I used to have very bad asthma, and I missed the insertion of that graphic into the paper. It was a surreal graphic about [Karl's] life in **East Germany**, and there are lots of images in it, but there was one small image of someone performing oral sex on an erect penis very close to the figure of **Mayor Daley**. I was sick and my then-girlfriend brought the paper home. I was looking at it, and I said "Oh great, a graphic by Karl," and I looked at it some more and thought "Uh-oh, this could be trouble." Now, had I been healthy, would I have run it? The answer is very likely. Because the two things we were against were censorship and property...So two guys come in wearing suits—they're pretty obviously cops—and buy the paper. Then they come back and flash badges and arrest us. They arrested the guy who sold them the paper and they arrest me...Barbara had been arrested simultaneously because she was an outlet for the underground press. She was the alternate bookseller in town. And remember, this was way before underground comics or anything. So I'm arrested for this graphic that I didn't see, which was the irony, and it turned into a real circus down there, which of course, we fanned the flames of. Our bank dropped us as a result, so we picketed them.

SM/AV Weren't the charges ultimately dismissed?

AP The judge ruled that *The Seed*—while trashy—was not obscene, which of course we ran on the masthead for awhile.

SM/AV Overall, what role would you say *The Seed* played in the counterculture and Movement over the course of its 7-year existence?

AP *The Seed* really tried to express—we weren't **Buddhist**, but we tried in an almost Buddhist "right action" kind of way—to express our counterculture. With all those colorful pages, we tried to embody a way of life. It's a word that's widely abused, but I think it is appropriate...I've been reading the inevitable '68 pieces now, and the thought that I'm most sympathetic with is the French stuff in May. ...There was a saying in France—"Beneath the cobblestones, the beach." And I think that was kind of our politics. At least at *The Seed*, and a fair chunk of Yippie politics. The idea that was there was something deeper than the **Democratic Party**, and even something deeper than ordinary reality. There was living a different way, opening the doors of perception. ...I think that *The Seed*, by using this offset press and by using those split-fountain colors, was trying to get at that physically. It was the only place in Chicago where you were going to find that. The other papers had different emphases. ***Second City*** was much more a kind of descendent of left politics and very straight. Later on ***Rising Up Angry*** was sympathetic to the counter culture, but were trying to build something tougher...

[*The Seed*] was just a window into an alternate worldview, and in some ways, an alternate reality. When people say that it wasn't professional, I usually say—well, where were the professionals? They weren't trying to explain this culture. Not just on it's own terms, but in a thoughtful way. I think it gave people a window into considering some of the basic tenets of society. ... It was the right place to be. If I had to pick at where to be—*The Seed* or *The Tribune*, I would go for *The Seed*, at that time, in a heartbeat. Because I thought it was doing the right thing—not that *The Tribune* was coming my way. It was just the right place to be in terms of where the world was going.

SM/AV In your book you talk about the various factors that led to the collapse of the underground press by the mid-70s, but could you say a little more about why the tide receded and how that affected *The Seed*?

AP I think a lot of younger people who had given—no, that sounds like a charity—who had been in the crucible for 4 or 5 years of their lives were either burned out, or wanted to move on, or there were other alternatives, things that were more palatable, whether it was ***Rolling Stone*** or **FM Radio**, or ***New Times*** in **Phoenix**. I think that some people wanted careers; some people wanted more than one pair of jeans. The politics became so intense that it was hard for everyone to hang in. The level of commitment and purity that was attached to being in the movement by 1972 was difficult. It called for a level of sacrifice as opposed to a level of fun... Some people went back to the land, some people took too much acid, some people completed their experience of it. And then there was the government, the trials, the repression...I don't blame the whole thing on the government. I think that's too simplistic. So I think [the demise of the underground press] was a combination of things. Also, the papers were never born to be institutions. Maybe with one or two exceptions. They were messages in a lovely, psychedelic bottle. But they were of their time, and I think in some ways it was "mission accomplished." They reflected and nurtured and critiqued their movements, however imperfectly, and then those movements either crested or proved unviable or wrong, and people kind of drifted away. ◊

The Seed continued from p. 12

owners to stop selling the publication. Right wing vigilantes shot out the windows of *The Seed*'s offices (with the alleged collusion of the police). The **FBI** monitored and assembled lengthy files on several people involved with the paper to disrupt the New Left as part of its **COINTELPRO** program. As Abe Peck notes in his book, *Uncovering the Sixties*, there is even scattered evidence that the FBI encouraged record companies to withdraw their advertising from underground papers like *The Seed*.

To make matters worse, *The Chicago Tribune* in 1968 purchased *The Seed*'s printer, **Merrill Printing Company**, who then promptly announced that they no longer wanted *The Seed*'s business. For a time, the paper was forced to rely on a lone independent publisher and printer in **Port Washington, WI**, **Bill Schanen**, who courageously continued to print underground newspapers from around the region despite vocal opposition from conservative leaders in his community.

In response to the escalating repression at home and rising body count in **Southeast Asia**, *The Seed*'s editorial content shifted dramatically, focusing increasingly on hard political news about war, oppression and their causes. Quotes from **Mao** and **Ho Chi Minh**, along with fact-filled critiques of U.S. imperialism, replaced the Beat-inspired poetry and music reviews of earlier issues. Stories about police persecution of revolutionary youth organizations like the Black Panther Party and the **Young Lords**, profiles of political prisoners being held in American jails, and reports on trials involving anti-war and draft resistance activists took up more and more space. The paper ran investigative pieces on U.S. foreign policy in **Latin America**, the carpet bombing of **Laos** and the appalling conditions in **Cook County Hospital**. A recurring section dealt with student activism at Chicago high schools and reported on the proliferation of underground high school papers. *The Seed* even became an established outlet for communiqués from armed left-wing groups like **The Weather Underground** and **The New Year's Eve Gang** who engaged in bombing of military and government targets.

The paper also underwent significant changes in content and organization as **New Social Movements** quickly gained momentum in the post-'68 period. Informed by the gender "revolution within the revolution," *The Seed* in the early 70s incorporated more women into its writers' collective, put out special issues or supplements on the women's movement and gay liberation, and made the economically difficult decision to stop carrying ads for the **Playboy Theater**. The nascent Native American rights movement—and, in particular, protests against the **Bureau of Indian Affairs** staged by the Chicago group **Indian Village**—frequently made it into the paper. So, too, did radical groups like **Rising Up Angry** who were attempting to organize Chicago's poor whites.

The Seed not only reported on the women's, black power and allied progressive social movements, it shared its resources with them. People from groups such as the Black Panthers, the **Chicago Women's Liberation Union** and Rising Up Angry would often make use of *The Seed*'s light table to lay out their own papers or use its darkroom to develop their photos.

"[The paper] functioned as a kind of organizing center," says Farber, "and I think that's the role a newspaper historically and traditionally has played in a lot of eras."

Unlike some underground publications of its era, *The Seed* avoided taking sides in many of the divisive ideological conflicts tearing apart the New Left. Thus, though the paper carefully chronicled the bitter struggle between rival groups of **Marxist-Leninists** that eventually broke apart **Students for a Democratic Society** [for more information on SDS see articles by Earl Silbar and Michael Staudenmaier in this issue of AREA -ed], it never allied itself with any one position, faction or organization. Indeed, even as it became more self-consciously revolutionary in its rhetoric and positions, the paper remained a relatively nonsectarian, open forum for debate and discussion within the Chicago left and **The Movement** as a whole. If anything, its politics were staunchly anti-authoritarian. A 1969 piece by **Bernard Marshall** entitled *Eh...What's Up Lenin?* articulated what appears to have been a dominant political sentiment among the staff: "This is what our revolution must be about. Smashing all hierarchies and bureaucracies, all bourgeois hangovers, whenever they appear and for whatever reason."

THE DEMISE AND LEGACY OF THE SEED

By 1973 or so, only a few years after reaching a circulation of 30- 40,000, *The Seed* was on its last legs. The advertising that had supported the paper dried up as headshops were shut down and major record labels found other, more politically palatable outlets for their ads. The government campaign against the New Left and the underground press took its toll. Editors and writers quit because of the relentless official harassment, to pursue other careers or over frustration with the paper's sometimes acrimonious internal politics. Many of the movements that *The Seed* sought to serve either accomplished or outlived their goals (like ending the war in Vietnam) or faded for lack of support.

"The papers were never born to be institutions," observes Abe Peck. "They reflected and nurtured and critiqued their movements, however imperfectly, and then those movements either crested or proved unviable or wrong, and people kind of drifted away."

In 1974, *The Seed* was relaunched as ***The Free Seed***, a free, ad-sponsored publication along the lines of the increasingly popular ***Chicago Reader***. That experiment lasted only a few issues before the paper shut down for good.

In retrospect, it is easy enough to trace left media production and activism in Chicago today back to precedents like *The Seed*. Its do-it-yourself spirit, anti-authoritarian politics and irreverence characterize the best of the city's current crop of alternative media, be they print magazines like ***Lumpen***, radio shows like ***This is Hell***, or websites like ***Chicago Indymedia***. And at least a few of *The Seed*'s former contributors – such as David Moberg of ***In These Times***—continue to produce muckraking advocacy journalism.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be gleaned from the experience of *The Seed* is one that was summed up by Bernie Farber in a single word: "Audacity." *The Seed* collective and the community it served attempted to overthrow a sclerotic political and cultural establishment steeped in blood and filthy lucre. Though they failed to attain their ultimate (revolutionary) goal, they managed to stop a destructive imperialist war and transform American attitudes about race, gender relations and sexuality for the better in the process. That legacy of audacity is something the left, and the left press in particular, would do well to remember. The old **Situationist** slogan, spray-painted on many a wall in **Paris** during the May '68 insurgency, is as valid as ever: "Be realistic. Demand the impossible". ◊

The Reporters' Rebellion

The Chicago Journalism Review 1968-1975

BY STEVE MACEK

The staff of *The Seed* weren't the only journalists radicalized by the events of 1968. In the course of the police riot that greeted demonstrators during the **Democratic National Convention**, cops beat or arrested some 75 reporters working for the city's mainstream newspapers and broadcast news organizations. Nor was this a case of unfortunate individuals accidentally getting swept up in the general melee. The evidence reviewed by the official inquiry into the violence showed that members of the press had been "singled out for assault and their equipment deliberately damaged."

During the convention, most of the city's news outlets—with the notable exception of the staunchly right-wing ***Chicago Tribune***—dutifully chronicled the atrocities being perpetrated by Daley's police. But shortly after the convention was over, they changed their tune. As soon as the delegates and the national TV networks left town, the local news media began selectively rewriting the history of what had happened and retrospectively blamed the protestors for the bloodshed. ***The Daily News***, for instance, gave prominent coverage to **Mayor Daley's** side of the story in the days following the convention, including publishing the city's self-serving 8-page **white paper** on the convention violence in full and without comment. ***The Chicago Sun-Times*** ran an editorial that condemned police brutality against reporters while implying that the brutality directed against demonstrators was perfectly justified. **WGN TV** even aired a 60-minute propaganda film produced by the mayor's office, entitled *What Trees Do They Plant?*, that indicted the protestors as lawless communists while eliciting sympathy for the beleaguered cops.

Rank and file reporters reacted to this backtracking with indignation. Within a week of the convention, nearly a hundred newspeople from every major paper in the city gathered in a room above **Riccardo's** bar on **Rush Street** to discuss how best to respond. After two additional meetings, they settled on the idea of putting out a monthly magazine called ***The Chicago Journalism Review*** (***CJR***). In many ways, it was an entirely unprecedented publication: a journalism review with a local focus, published not by academics but by members of the working press, and devoted to candidly examining the constraints imposed on journalists by the corporate structure of the media. As its founders explained in the first issue, the magazine aimed to carry out a "continuing critique of media coverage in the city" and "to provide pressure from below for change." They intended the magazine to be a forum where, as longtime editor **Ron Dorfman** put it, "we could tell stories that couldn't be told in the establishment press and where we could tell non-journalists something about how media institutions operate."

Though most of the reporters who became the staffers and writers of the *CJR* were young and relatively unknown, older established figures like **Studs Terkel**, columnist **Mike Royko** and editorial cartoonist **Bill Mauldin** also lent their support to the project. The group behind the review decided early on against carrying advertising. As Dorfman explained in an interview, the staff felt the compromises that came with advertising were "the shit we put up with every day" and wanted the magazine to be uninhibited in its criticism. A wealthy patron put up the money to print the debut issue and a collection was taken up among friends to cover other expenses.

Understandably, *CJR*'s first issues focused on press coverage of the convention mayhem and its aftermath.

The first issue (Oct. 1968) skewered the anti-demonstrator bias of much of the convention coverage in the city's four main dailies, ***Chicago's American***, the *Chicago Tribune*, *The Daily News* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*. It noted, for instance, that the *Sun-Times* buried an account of the repeated police use of tear gas and truncheons against demonstrators camped out in **Lincoln Park** on the inside pages of the paper. It attacked the *Tribune* for labeling all the protestors "hippies" and for reporting that the people protesting in front of the **Conrad Hilton** on **Michigan Avenue** had intentionally broken the window of the hotel bar when in fact they'd been shoved through the window by rampaging police. The liberal *Daily News* was criticized for playing up the demonstrator's "provocation" of the cops without ever mentioning "the steady stream of obscenities from the police."

The mere fact of *CJR*'s existence—the fact that a collection of junior reporters had dared to speak out publicly about the editorial policies and internal politics of their papers—sent ripples through the American media establishment. ***The New York Times*** and ***Newsweek*** both ran stories about its release; a little later, the review was covered in ***Time***, ***The Columbia Journalism Review*** and ***The Nation***; it even made the national evening news on **CBS**. Thanks to all the free publicity, subscription requests and inquiries from bookstores and newsstands poured in. And money from sales, subscriptions and a few grants from foundations allowed the magazine to grow. In short order, circulation had reached almost 10,000 and in 1970 *CJR* was able to open its own office (on **N. Clark Street**) with Dorfman as editor and two other paid staff. Even more impressive, by 1972, the review had inspired some 18 imitators around the country, from the high profile ***MORE*** out of **New York** to less well known publications like ***The Hawaii Journalism Review*** and the Denver-based ***The Unsatisfied Man***.

While the first few issues of *CJR* concentrated on exposing (and debunking) the Chicago media's knee-jerk support of Daley's actions during the '68 convention, the magazine's contents quickly became more varied, featuring critiques of the major news media's biased representations of the **New Social Movements** of the 60s, investigative stories killed by nervous editors, accounts of journalists fired for being too independent and polemics arguing for radical media reform.

CJR played an especially crucial role in documenting the factual omissions and errors that marred the mainstream media's coverage of the notorious police murder of charismatic **Illinois Black Panther** chairman **Fred Hampton**.

"*CJR*" continues on p. 16

SELECTED CHICAGO-AREA UNDERGROUND/ALTERNATIVE PUBLICATIONS (ROUGHLY MID-1960S TO EARLY 1970S)

Black Truth
Blazing Star
Camp News
Chicago Express
Chicago Free Press
Chicago Gay Crusader
Chicago Journalism Review
Chicago Kaleidoscope (later merged with The Seed)
Chicago Reader
Daily Planet
Dull Brass
Fire!
Free Chicago Graphic
Hyde Park Voices
Killer Dyke
Labor Voice for Peace
Lincoln Avenue Ambush
Mattachine Midwest Newsletter
New Left Notes
Pax
Prensa Libre de Chicago
Rising Up Angry
RU Revolting
Second City
Secret Storm
The Black Liberator
The Bridge
The Firing Line
The Lincoln Park Press
The Seed
Veteran Stars and Stripes for Peace
Vietnam GI
West Side Story
Womankind
YLO (Newspaper of the Young Lords Organization)

SELECTED UNDERGROUND PAPERS AT LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS, LATE 1960S-EARLY 70S

Above a Whisper (Sullivan)
Affluent Drool (Latin)
Brother (Lions)
Cosmic Frog (Lane Tech)
Fifth Estate (New Trier West)
Grab Hold (Kennedy)
Intercourse (Lane Tech)
New Free Press (Niles East)
Parallax (Libertyville)
Shove It (De La Salle)
Solidarity (Admundsen)
The Alternative (Central)
The Daily Dove (Oak Lawn)
The Living Supplementary (Lions)
The Oppressed (Lane Tech)
The Shape of Things to Come (Quigley South)
The Sum-Times (Homewood-Floosmore)
The Truth (Hubbard)
Thyng (Mather)
We The People (a number of south side schools)
Word (Aurora East)

Compiled by Steve Macek

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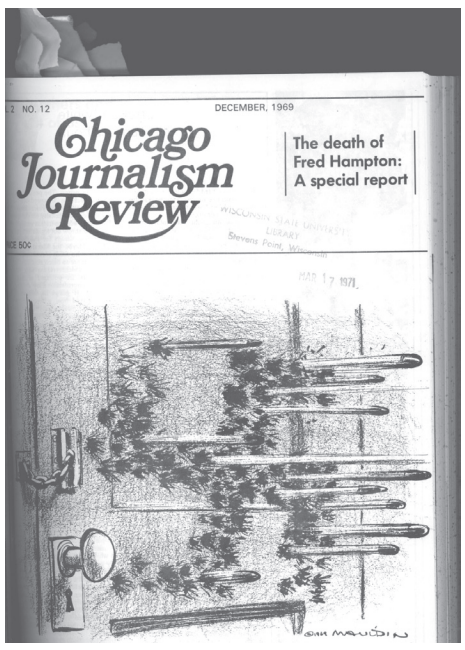
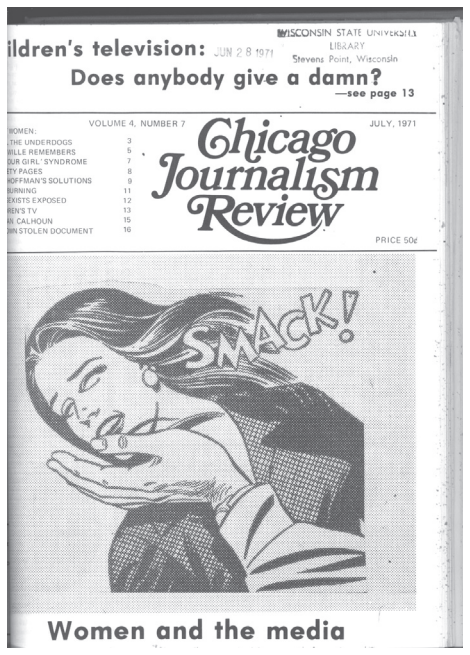
Early on the morning of December 4th 1969, 14 police officers descended on a **West Monroe St** apartment inhabited by several Panthers. Gunfire ensued. When the shooting was over, Hampton and another occupant of the apartment were dead. The cops claimed they were attempting to serve a warrant so they could search for illegal weapons when the Panthers fired on them and their story was backed by **Cook Country State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan**. Initially, all of the city's newspapers accepted without question Hanrahan's account of what had happened. Yet, as the Panthers and reporters associated with *CJR* probed the official story about the raid, it began to unravel: eyewitnesses said police fired on the Panthers first, the bullet holes in the walls indicated that virtually all of the shots fired had come from outside the apartment, and an independent autopsy showed Hampton had been shot from above, in his bed, while lying down—consistent with the theory that he was still asleep when he was killed.

Within days of the shooting, core members of *CJR* set to work on a special report about the incident and about the major media's role in the cover up. **Chris Chandler** wrote a story summing up all the evidence contradicting the Hanrahan version of events. **Dan Rottenberg** did a piece on the misleadingly captioned photographs from the Black Panther apartment run by the *Chicago Tribune*. Another article disclosed that a *Sun-Times* reporter quit the paper "when editors buried his story—the first report that the location of the bullet holes did not square with the police version of the raid." The special issue included a profile of Hampton, a historical sketch of Hanrahan's efforts to target the Panthers over the years and a table showing the conflicting claims made by the various officers and witnesses present at the raid. Rounding out the issue was **Bill Maudlin's** powerful cover illustration of bullets carving a swastika through an apartment door.

The special issue on the Fred Hampton murder was typical of *CJR*'s incisive criticism of the Chicago media's hostility toward radical activist groups and social movements. The magazine regularly dissected local news coverage of the anti-war movement and the student left. It responded to the growth of the women's liberation movement by printing a special issue on sexism in the Chicago dailies' contents and hiring practices. It also analyzed their skewed reporting on the **Attica** prison uprising and exposed their casual indifference to government censorship of the underground press.



Bill Mauldin's famous cover illustration for *CJR*'s special issue on the murder of Fred Hampton.



CJR regularly critiqued the Chicago papers' reporting on the women's movement & attacked sexism in newsroom hiring practices.

Just as important as *CJR*'s ongoing critique of the media's anti-Movement bias was its printing of politically explosive stories that the mainstream news outlets simply wouldn't touch. For example, the magazine routinely subjected the activities of the Chicago police department's "anti-subversive" unit, the so-called **Red Squad**, to detailed scrutiny at a time when most major media outlets in town either ignored the unit's existence or actively colluded with them.

The February 1969 issue of the magazine was devoted almost entirely to a lengthy exposé on the Red Squad co-authored by **Lois Wille**, the Pulitzer-prize winning urban affairs reporter for the *Daily News*, and the review editors. Among other things, the story revealed that the police were covertly spying on black alderman **Sammy Rayner** and other black politicians critical of the Daley regime. It also documented that **Students for a Democratic Society**, **Citizens for a Democratic Society**, and the **Medical Committee on Human Rights** (an organization of health professionals headed up by **Dr. Quentin Young** [*also featured in Eric Triantafillou's* Between Lefts *interview in this issue of AREA Chicago - ed.*] had been infiltrated by police spies and agent provocateurs. The article went on to detail a long string of police-sponsored break-ins at the offices of Chicago area peace and New Left groups. Follow up stories in subsequent issues exposed the fact that Red Squad agents frequently monitored anti-war demonstrations while posing as journalists and that *Tribune* writer **Ron Koziol** routinely supplied information to Army intelligence officers spying on local activist groups.

CJR published its last issue in 1975. By then, most of the original staff had moved on to other ventures. The **Vietnam War** had ended; many of the radical movements born in the late 60s were winding down. As a consequence, some of the issues which the magazine had championed –like the need for balanced reporting on the student left and the Panthers—no longer seemed as urgent. Moreover, as former managing editor **Dan Rottenberg** points out, the new crop of young journalists coming on the scene at the time were more career-oriented and less idealistic than the "**Kennedy Generation**" reporters who started CJR.

Over the course of its seven-year run, *The Chicago Journalism Review* exercised an influence far beyond that indicated by its modest peak circulation. Media critic and onetime *CJR* editor, **Micheal Miner**, now of ***The Chicago Reader***, credits the review with nudging the once reactionary *Chicago Tribune* in the direction of more honest, factual, ideologically balanced reporting. Rottenberg argues that pressure from *CJR* encouraged the Chicago dailies to hire more women and people of color (and to abandon sex-segregated want ads). And at least one of the local journalism reviews inspired by the magazine's example—the ***St. Louis Journalism Review***—is still publishing today.

But beyond these specific concrete accomplishments, by making it possible for reporters to talk openly about the foibles, blindspots and ideological agendas of the institutions that employed them, *CJR* helped to explode the then-popularly-accepted myth of journalistic objectivity. And this, in turn, paved the way for the sort of progressive press criticism currently practiced by organizations like **Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting**, **Media Matters for America**, and **Project Censored**. ◊

The Cosmic Frog and The Free Speech Rights of High School Students

BY STEVE MACEK AND ALYSSA VINCENT

In the wake of 1968, an increasing number of Chicago-area high school students began to identify with the anti-war movement and the counterculture. At one high school after another, activists organized sit-ins, pickets and class boycotts protesting the war, supporting racial justice or expressing solidarity with students who'd been had suspended for previous political activities. Almost overnight, dozens of student-produced underground papers sprang up to give voice to the rising tide of dissent. One of these papers became the subject of a legal case that was instrumental in securing the first amendment rights of "unofficial" student publications and has been a vital precedent protecting free expression for students ever since.

In the spring of 1970, two **Lane Tech High School** seniors—**Burt Fujishima** and **Richard Peluso**—were suspended for distributing 350 copies of their underground paper, ***The Cosmic Frog***, on school grounds. According to the **Chicago Board of Education**, they had violated a rule that required students to get advance permission from the Superintendent of Schools before distributing any printed material on school property. Together with another student who had been suspended for circulating an anti-war petition at his school, Fujishima and Peluso challenged the **Board of Education** rule in court. In 1972, the **7th Circuit Court of Appeals** ruled in *The Cosmic Frog*'s favor, striking down the Board of Education policy as an unconstitutional restriction on student speech.

Despite the 7th Circuit Court ruling, two more students at Lane Tech were threatened with suspension in 1973 for printing and distributing an underground paper called ***The Oppressed***. Citing the *The Cosmic Frog* case, the students brought a suit against the school administration and, in response, a **U.S. District Court** issued a restraining order preventing their suspension. Ultimately, Lane Tech officials arrived at an out of court settlement with the students allowing them to pass out *The Oppressed* on campus and protecting them against any further repercussions for their work on the paper.

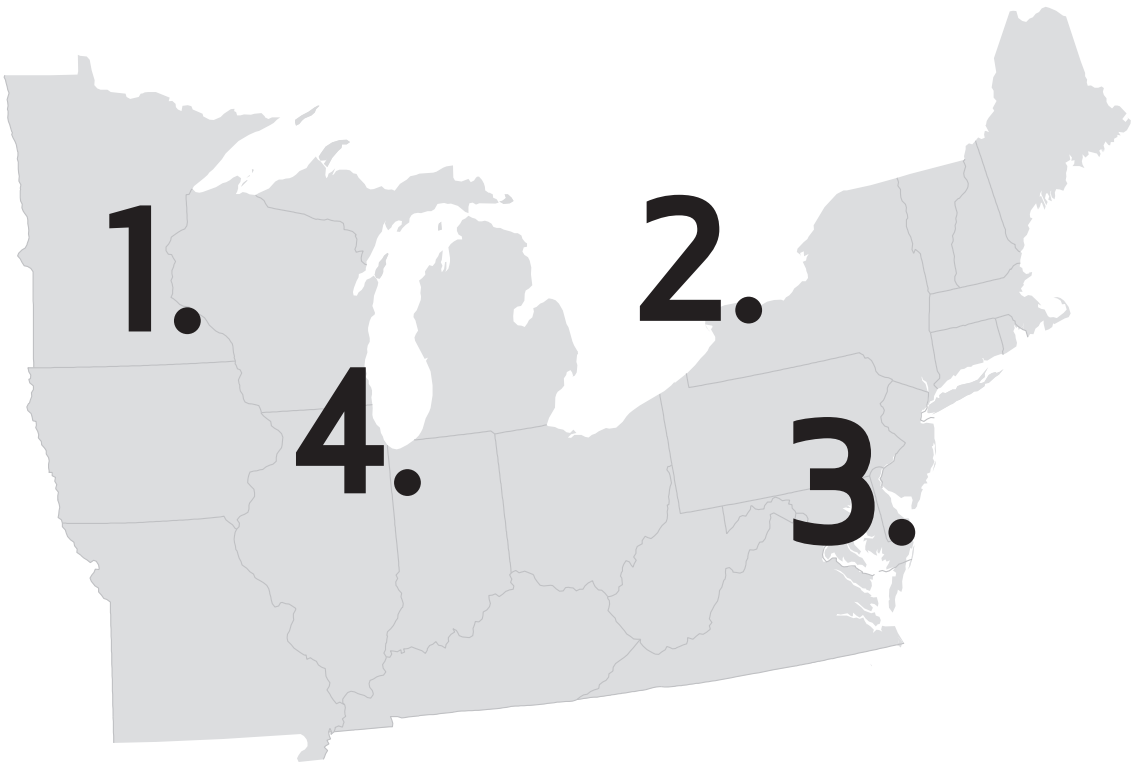
In 1987, Lane Tech's then-principal, **Maude Carson**, attempted to ban the free, city-wide, alternative youth newspaper *New Expressions* from the school on the grounds that it was creating a litter problem. Attorneys for the Board of Education advised her that because of the first amendment protections enjoyed by underground student publications, she would have to allow the paper back on campus.

The Cosmic Frog was a small ad hoc publication that did not survive long enough to have any direct impact on the experiments in underground and alternative youth media being currently conducted in the Chicago-area. Yet the free speech fight that developed around the paper laid the legal groundwork for the freedoms enjoyed by today's high school media activists. And for that reason, its worth remembering. ◊

Introducing

The Alternative Press Centre

There is a new archive of Leftist and progressive journals and magazines in Chicago, learn all about them here.



The **Alternative Press Centre** (**APC**) publishes the **Alternative Press Index** (**API**), a unique and comprehensive guide to the alternative press in English, French and Spanish. The API provides access to articles from 300 magazines, newspapers and academic journals. The API has indexed 948 periodical titles since 1969, the year that:

*The **Students for a Democratic Society** disintegrated into the **Progressive Labor Party** and the **Weather Underground** factions

*The **League of Revolutionary Black Workers** was founded in **Detroit**

*The **Trial of the Chicago Eight** took place

*The **Days of Rage** occurred in Chicago

***Black Panther** leader **Fred Hampton** was murdered by government agents in his Chicago apartment

*The radical feminist group **RedStockings** was founded in **New York City**

*German student leader **Rudi Dutschke** was shot in Berlin

*The civil rights movement in **Northern Ireland** began

*Huge demonstrations against the U.S. war on **Vietnam's National Liberation Front** took place in Washington DC

*The **Radical Research Center** was founded at **Carleton College** in **Northfield, Minnesota**

1. NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

Student activists **Robert Stigler**, **Sealy Anne Hicks** and **Bill King launched** the **Radical Research Center** (**RRC**) at **Carleton College** with no formal support from the institution, though **Dean Bardwell Smith** gave the students office space.

Librarians were not involved in the founding. However, **Sandy Berman** and **Jackie Eubanks** were actively supportive after the first issues of the Alternative Press Index were published. Berman and Eubanks later became well known leaders in the **American Library Association's Social Responsibility Task Force**.

The Alternative Press Index was a project of **New Left** activists. Its first issue included 72 titles - more than half of which were "underground press" publications such as ***The Berkeley Tribe***, ***The Fifth Estate*** (**Detroit**), ***The Seed*** (**Chicago**). These newspapers grew remarkably during the late 1960s /early 1970s. Older left publications like ***The Guardian***, ***IF Stone's Weekly***, ***Monthly Review***, and ***The Progressive*** were also included. The RRC office served as organizing center for participation of Carleton College activists in the 1970 student general strike in response to the U.S. bombing of **Cambodia**.

2. TORONTO, ONTARIO

Lack of institutional support forced RRC activists **Kathy Martin** and **Art Jacobs** to search for new space. In 1972, they managed to find a new home at **Rochdale College** in **Toronto**. However, before reaching Toronto the RRC was stalled in Detroit. Kathy Martin reported that **Canadian immigration officials** were concerned they may be connected to the Weather Underground.

The RRC was renamed the Alternative Press Centre. At Rochdale the collective found inexpensive office space on the 6th floor and living space on the 13th floor. Rochdale College was an attempt to develop a "free university" space and a collective living experiment. The Canadian government funded the construction of this eighteen story building at 341 **Bloor Street**. Rochdale's founders were New Left activists and included **Dennis Lee**, to-be poet laureate of **Ontario**.

At Rochdale, not much publishing was accomplished, yet a wide network of volunteer indexers was developed. The number of titles covered reached 130. By the summer of 1974, a new collective, **Peggy Asendorf**, **Michael Burns**, and **Chuck D'Adamo**, moved from **Baltimore** to Toronto to join Martin, Jacobs, and **Marti Scheel** who were on their way out (some to a farm in north Ontario). Soon the new collective encountered a serious problem. Rochdale's residents were now involved in a struggle with Toronto's "city fathers" over the space. Rochdale College was losing ground and eviction was likely the next year. The new collective decided to move to the APC to Baltimore.

3. BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

The move to Baltimore had its obstacles. U.S. immigration officials in **Buffalo** impounded the entire truckload of precious periodicals. The APC's collection was finally released through Customs in Baltimore after it was transported commercially. By 1975, the year the **Vietnam War** ended and **Angola** and **Mozambique** gained independence from **Portugal**, the APC was operating in Baltimore with computer support from the **University of Maryland** established through connections at its library science school.

In 1976-77, the APC opened its first independent library spaces and was situated in a neighborhood home to various New Left and feminist projects such as a coffeehouse, a feminist bookstore, a food cooperative, and the **People's Free Medical Clinic** founded by the Black Panther Party. The 1970s retained revolutionary spirit and hopes and the APC was an employer of activists from the **New American Movement** (**Gramscian Marxist**), the **Baltimore Women's Union** (socialist feminist), and the **Great Atlantic Radio Conspiracy** (social anarchist). The API was now indexing 153 periodicals including ***Socialist Revolution***, founded in 1970 by **James Weinstein** and others in **San Francisco**. In 1976, Weinstein, dissatisfied with both NAM and SR, founded ***In These Times*** in Chicago, another API title.

In 1982, the APC (Peggy D'Adamo, Elizabeth O'Lexa et al) became an anchor in establishing the **Progressive Action Center**. This was the time after **President Reagan** busted the **Air Traffic Controllers Union**, giving a green light to U.S. corporate attack on labor, and martial law was implemented in **Poland** to constrain the independent labor union **Solidarity**. Despite these difficult times, a group of activists with roots in the movements of the 1960s and 1970s bought a former **Enoch Pratt Library** building and renovated it with much volunteer labor, creating a home for six activist projects.

Then the API was indexing 182 periodicals. The years at the Progressive Action Center were stable (modest rent) and productive. In 1994, **A.O. Kuhn Library** of the University of Maryland agreed to archive the APC's expanding periodical collection. In 1995, APC began annual participation at the **American Library Association's** national conference, developing links with the **Progressive Librarians Guild** and the **Social Responsibilities Round Table**. In 1999, APC co-published with the **Independent Press Association** the second edition of its directory on the independent, critical press which sold about 500 copies. In 2001, the **Online Computer Library Center** (**OCLC**) agreed to publish the Alternative Press Index electronically with their **FirstSearch** databases. The API was then covering 285 titles and began offering interlibrary loan service through the OCLC system.

4. CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

In 2007, there was a decision to sell the Progressive Action Center. Today, the APC is pleased to be in Chicago with our old friends at *In These Times* and our new friends *AREA Chicago* and the **Chicago Underground Library**. You can visit APC's offices at 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave. on Wednesdays from 10 am to 6 pm or by appointment. The Alternative Press Index has indexed 948 periodical titles since 1969 and looks forward to linking with Chicago's grassroots communities.

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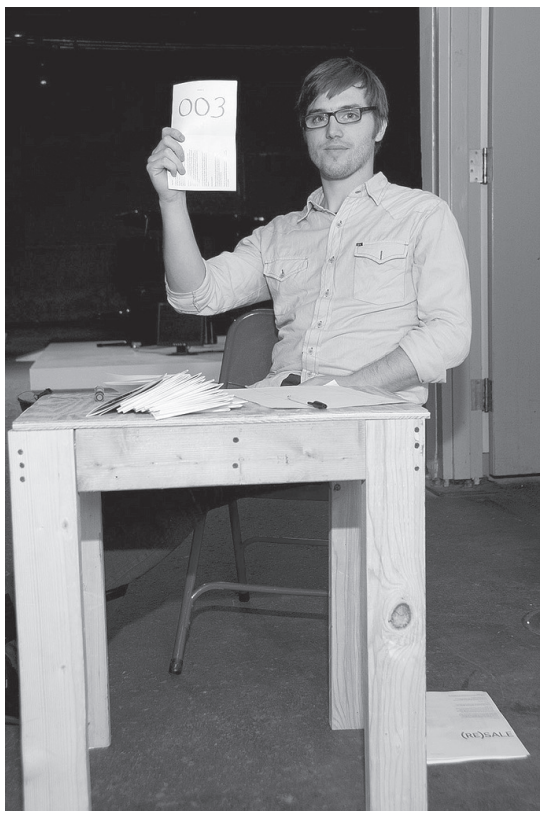
In Memoriam

Benjamin J. Schaafsma

1982-2008



I am a member of the Institute for Community Understanding Between Art and The Everyday (InCUBATE) in Chicago. It is our primary focus to find new possibilities for funding and supporting cultural production that exists outside the heavily binary system of "public" support and private sponsorship. By researching ways that artists have incorporated models of resource allocation, community building, funding structures and forms of exchange as part of their artistic practice, both historically and contemporaneously, we hope to build a vocabulary of approaches for supporting artists' practices directly.

The impetus for the formation of InCUBATE came out of a direct captivation with methods being developed by cultural policy makers, artists and business people in countries such as Latvia and Hungary after a trip to Eastern Europe in the winter of 2007. Countries that once relied on the state to fund cultural production are now developing new ways of funding culture and in particular private-public partnerships since joining the European Union. We began to imagine what it would look like to transpose these approaches on our own situation in the U.S.. As young arts administrators interested in supporting critical art practices, affecting official cultural policy in the United States via traditional channels seemed a bit lofty and, with a growing understanding of the state and direction of public and private funding, completely uninteresting. Is it possible to create new contexts for public support by looking towards the periphery of neoliberal economics, by operating in the folds of established institutions?

Our interest in the possibility of alternative funding models and support structures, and the urge to share and formalize what we learned during this process, culminated in an exhibition and research project, called OTHER OPTIONS.

OTHER OPTIONS is a traveling and evolving exhibition, which features artists' projects concerned with the re-interpretation, alteration and creation of infrastructures that affect their everyday lives, and their artistic production. The motivation for this project began after our assessment of the current conditions of formalized support for cultural production in the United States. The research revealed a heavily binary system of public versus private support. Although the model of a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation has traditionally been considered an appropriate mode of support, a number of flaws and contradictions are becoming apparent in the way that these organizations are made to function within society, both individually and as a collective "Nonprofit Industrial Complex." In an attempt to explore the nature of such flaws and contradictions in the nonprofit system, OTHER OPTIONS asks the question: How does the current matrix of specific regulations and compliances to which nonprofit organizations are forced to adhere, affect the creative output, imagination, and flexibility of such organizations?

Excerpted from:
OTHER OPTIONS: A closer Look at FOOD By **Ben Schaafsma**
Journal of Aesthetics and Protest #6
http://joaap.org/

Image of Ben by Christine Butler
Courtesy of Eyebeam

Ben Schaafsma, 26, was an ambitious and admirable man. A man with a plan! He worked hard to build community and to understand the history of like-minded people who came before him. Growing up in Grand Rapids (Michigan), Ben got his start at organizing culture and community through booking concerts, often at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art. While studying urban planning and art history at Calvin College, he became involved with the Civic Studio program which introduced him to a tradition of the visual arts engaging in community building that resonated with the work he had already begun. Ben was a key figure in initiating a number of projects such as the Division Avenue Arts Cooperative and *http://g-rad.org* which helped to make the nascent cultural practices occurring in Grand Rapids more visible to one another as well as to outsiders.

Ben understood through lived experiences that people needed spaces and occasions to come together to learn, meet and grow - and the more interesting the context of those encounters then the more likely they would be changed and affected as people. On a message board someone recently said "Ben was constantly preoccupied by the usefulness of art in our lives."

Following years of this committed work in Michigan, Ben did what many young and ambitious people do these days - he went to graduate school. This transition took him to study Arts Administration at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Ben did his research and knew what he was looking for and how to make the most of that time in school - he was highly motivated. As his turf shifted his desires and goals were re-articulated in his new home - he started new endeavors and relationships building on his own history.

Within six months of moving Ben had pushed out of his school environs and staked a claim in community building and cultural experimentation in Chicago. Along with his fellow Arts Admin graduate students Roman Petruniak and Abby Satinsky (and later Bryce Dwyer), he co-founded InCUBATE (*http://www.incubate-chicago.org*). In just two years they have established an artist residency program bringing international artists to Chicago every month. They have established their own granting program, hosted numerous lectures and workshops and created a touring exhibition which has traveled to five cities throughout the country.

Just months before his passing, Ben took a job with the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts in New York City, where he was brought on to overhaul and expand their studio program.

He will be greatly missed.

Daniel Tucker

Ben believed that if a desirable resource didn't exist, there was no reason to wait for someone else to wait for someone else to put it in place. Leading by example, he taught us that a good idea need not remain only an idea. He believed that people could produce meaningful and lasting change with little more than their own goodwill and enthusiasm. His deep emotional commitment to challenging the role of arts organizations in our society has inspired the realization of many 'other options'. With Ben, we at InCUBATE learned how to approach the relationship between art and everyday life in an entirely new way.

The week after Ben's death, we held an open house at our space in order for those people who knew him to come together and reflect. Our space was packed, the event was standing room only, people spilled out of the door and onto the sidewalk. Knowing Ben, he would have eventually found away for all those present to rub shoulders with one another. His unique personality had touched everyone, but instrumentalization was never the goal. He was a relentless networker with an uncanny type of rolodex in his head; one which could only have been generated by taking a genuine interest in people. If Ben put you into conversation with someone, it was because he recognized something special about both of you – something that could only be produced through mutual collaboration.

At InCUBATE, our collaborations with Ben began spontaneously, but before we knew it, the four of us were soon spending nearly all of our time together. Be it in class, on the train, at a party, or even over gmail chat, we were soon experts at the art of rapid fire brainstorming sessions. As InCUBATE began to expand we became insanely excited and insanely busy, yet somehow along the way we also learned to think as a team and trust one another's judgments. Ben was constantly working things out, always questioning, always critical, and always dedicated to helping InCUBATE grow. In turn, he expected nothing less from each of us. His vision kept us on track and his generosity kept us humble. We are all better off for having known him. He will be sorely missed, but never forgotten.

We will fondly remember how Ben was constantly introducing us to his home town of Grand Rapids, MI. It was there that he helped found the innovative community blogging platform *www.g-rad.org*. Yet despite his great enthusiasm for blogging and for the internet, we will remember how Ben always stressed that fact that these things could only serve as annotations of everyday life. With Ben, we learned that forging real connections and developing flexible infrastructure would require something more.

We will remember our adventures in Eastern Europe, how Ben led the way in seeking out radical art collectives on the fringes of Budapest and Riga. We will remember negotiating cheap rent for the storefront at 2129 N. Rockwell. How we made plans and blueprints for the space. How we would meet after class to go build furniture and paint the walls. How nasty the place was in March, but how awesome it was by May. We will remember how Ben curated and initiated various public programs, lectures and symposia both from within and without the support of larger cultural institutions. We will remember working with so many different people, spaces, groups, residents, chefs, artists, institutions, collectives, etc. With Ben in mind, we will remember what we demand of our future.

For two years now, we at InCUBATE have undertaken a number of projects, including the operation of our storefront space and residency program, organizing traveling exhibitions, selling homebrewed beer and kombucha, facilitating the exchange of mail art, and administering the Sunday Soup Granting Program. Our projects have been exhibited at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, Netherlands and at Creative Time's Democracy in America exhibition at the Park Avenue Armory. To date, our Sunday Soup granting program has managed to raise and re-distribute over $3000. Our self-organized exhibition entitled Other Options has involved over a dozen different projects, and has traveled from Chicago to Grand Rapids, MI; Pittsburgh, PA; Syracuse, NY; and New York City.

Over the course of the past year Ben had begun to publish extensively, writing on the history of artist-initiated programs to self fund culture and to create their own economic and organizational sustainability outside of traditional means. His writings have appeared in *Phonebook*, *AREA Chicago*, *Proximity* Magazine and the *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest*. Ben's singular vision, intelligence and emotional dedication will continue to drive us forward everyday.

Obviously our practice will never be the same without Ben Schaafsma, yet nevertheless InCUBATE will keep going. We have touched upon something much bigger than ourselves. Ben's concept of OTHER OPTIONS stretches far beyond the specific context and implications of InCUBATE as a storefront space, as a series of traveling exhibitions, as a revolving door of residents, as a bowl of soup or bottle of homebrewed kombucha; OTHER OPTIONS is a way of seeing, a unique approach to art & life, the challenge to do-it-yourself, to make something from nothing, and the knowledge that we can do it together.

Abby Satinsky, Bryce Dwyer and Roman Petruniak (InCUBATE)

Local University Students Write Local Histories

For this issue, AREA has solicited the contributions of eleven students from DePaul University and University of Chicago. Two of our Advisory Group members, Rebecca Zorach and Euan Hague, taught courses that related to the history of 1968 in Chicago. Several of their students wrote short profiles of Chicago organizations and movements for this section on Hidden History. This is not the first time AREA has actively connected with the pedagogical process—in late 2006, Ryan Hollon (guest editor of Issue #4) collaborated with Young Chicago Authors to produce several pieces of poetry related to that issue's theme. AREA also had a regular presence at the Teachers for Social Justice Curriculum Fair and this year presented a number of free lesson plans (in collaboration with CPS teacher and AREA contributor Bert Stabler) for Chicago Public Schools teachers to use in teaching past articles from the pages of AREA in the classroom. Please enjoy this collection of articles, which exemplify one of the goals of this issue—for young people to critically engage with the history which they have inherited.

DePaul and University of Chicago Student Contributions:
Free Schools by **Ashley Weger**, *Blackstone Rangers* by **Julie Glasier**, *Chicago Surrealist Group* by **Joey Pizzolato**, *Kartemquin Films* by **Darcy Lydum**, *Chicago Area Draft Resisters* by **A.L. Gray**, *The Seed* by **Amy Martin**, *Negro Digest/Black World* by **Chris Brancaccio**, *Harper Court* by **Andrea Baer**, *Chicago Artist Boycott* by **Maggie Taft**, *Conservative Vice Lords* by **Laura Gluckman**, *AACM* by **Chloe Ottenhoff**.

The fortieth anniversary of the events of 1968 remind us that it is important to ensure that the stuggles that were fought, the people who believed in them, and the issues that were contested are not forgotten. Indeed, many are still relevant today. From protests against unpopular wars, to efforts to by-pass mainstream media outlets by self-producing film and art, I asked DePaul students to examine the past and make connections to the present. This would enable them to assess how the legacies of 1968 impact on their lives. Gray, Darcy, Joey, Julie and Ashley each researched an organization that was active in the countercultural struggles of 1968. Each noted how the groups they reviewed still resonated, from Gallery Bugs Bunny's surrealist art to the community organizing efforts of the Blackstone Rangers. Each learned that the contests of 1968 continue to echo throughout Chicago.
—Euan Hague

I taught a course on Chicago in 1968 to introduce students to the city's recent history and to ask them to reflect on the relationship between that history and contemporary issues in art and politics. I also had the ulterior motive of pushing them to investigate the wealth of archival materials available in Chicago collections, as a way of encouraging them to get a sense of what it means to do research with unique archival sources. In one assignment, students produced "catalogue essays" on significant organizations, events, and historical developments in the city in and around 1968. Several of these essays were also presented in edited form on the website of the exhibition Looks Like Freedom, and incorporated into exhibition text.
—Rebecca Zorach

The AACM

CHLOE OTTENHOFF

The Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (**AACM**) was organized in May 1965 by pianists **Muhal Richard Abrams** and **Jodie Christian**, drummer **Steve McCall**, and trumpeter **Kelan Phil Cohran**. Having spread to **New York City**, the **West Coast**, and **Paris** since then, the AACM continues to do what it set out to do almost 43 years ago. The AACM is seriously original and formed as, and remains, an avant-garde, radical, and revolutionary musical collective. Their avant-garde sound was difficult to sell at first—the kind of jazz that was supported in the '60s was cool and smooth—and the collective had to carve out a space for itself, often playing small shows with only other AACM musicians in the audience. Their revolution was therefore one of the less known of the 1960s, but it was also one of the more successful. Great Black Music, from "the ancient musics of Africa to the music of the future"[1] is more than free jazz, more than black musicians playing for black audiences; AACM music is the creation of a new language uttered in the most amazing way, that encourages listeners and musicians alike to expand their horizons and challenge themselves.

Mwata Bowden, current conductor of the AACM **Great Black Music Ensemble** and former chairman, witnessed this himself as a young musician in Chicago in the late '60s, and it changed his life. Like so many southern black families, Mwata's relocated from **Memphis** to Chicago's **South Side** where his father could find work. Mwata recalls the scene: "Along **47th Street**, you had the **Regal Theater**, the **Metropolitan Theater**, clubs, bars, cabarets, everything. It was a thriving area, and we lived a block away... Musicians were visible all over the neighborhood. I would see these guys walking around with their beautiful instrument cases in their hands, I would walk by **Gerri's Palm Tavern** and hear the music pouring out onto the street from inside. And when I heard that, I thought, 'Man, I want to play that music.'"[2]

Exposed at an early age to the jazz of Chicago's South Side along with a classical music education, Mwata expanded his sound when he joined the AACM in the mid-'70s. "In improvised music we do everything that you do in organized music. I mean, there are layers, there's interplay... there's call and response, there's an accepted tonality that's agreed upon collectively, all of those types of things... We're taking those extended compositional things that come out of classical music and incorporating it into improvised music, like 12-tone techniques, like graphic structure stuff, like polytonality... So we take your compositional devices and expand those techniques."[3]

The AACM has only gotten stronger since its first days in 1965. **Anthony Braxton** and **George Lewis** have both received **MacArthur Genius Fellowship**s, **Dee Alexander** was recently named "Chicagoan of the Year," and in 1990, AACM co-founder **Muhal Richard Abrams** was the recipient of the prestigious Jazzpar prize. The AACM has also been working for nearly forty-three years with inner-city youth, creating music programs for children who would not otherwise have access. Training the next generation, the longevity of the AACM has enabled its most senior members to see their influence come back around, with younger members who grew up with the AACM now joining. Flutist **Nicole Mitchell** is only one such example.

The past and the future make up the present, and this idea embodies the radical way the AACM has taken from past traditions and created a new idea of music. Like other grassroots revolutions, the AACM made everything themselves, never buckling under normalizing pressures and staying true to their original mission of advancing creative musicians, creating original music, and playing great black music, ancient to the future. ◊

1. *http://www.aacm.org/aboutus.com*, accessed February 2008.

2. *http://www.aacm.org/Mwata.com*, accessed February 2008.

3. All quoted material, except where noted otherwise, is from an interview with Mwata Bowden, February 13, 2008.

Conservative Vice Lords

BY LAURA GLUCKMAN

> *"Brothers, this is where you live. There's no place else to go that is not the same. So make what you already have a beautiful thing. If you succeed, then the system can't deny blacks nothing because what he calls the worst of humans proved him wrong. Never forget, WE ARE SOMEBODY!"* – **Bobby Gore**, leader of **Conservative Vice Lords**

As we remember Chicago in 1968, we don't always think about youth movements outside the context of the **Democratic National Convention**. We tend to forget those who fought for local change in other ways that were just as revolutionary. In the late 1960's, one of the largest gangs in Chicago, the **Vice Lords**, became the **Conservative Vice Lords** (**CVL**), pledging to change their neighborhood through an ethos of self-determination. People tend to think of gangs as catalysts only for social mayhem, full of youths that have too much time on their hands. Yet the CVL tried to change socially rebellious energy into good work for the **Lawndale** community, and their activity became an organized form of rebellion against the urban system.

Between 1967 and 1969, the former gang opened businesses and community programs in Lawndale, contradicting notions held by politicians and government officials that a neighborhood club, a gang, in the ghetto could not change without outside intervention. How could the government know exactly what was needed in the neighborhood if they were not citizens of that neighborhood? According to CVL leader **Bobby Gore**, "They [CVL] wanted to change the conditions that caused a man to get a gun and hold up a store... to make him drink cheap whiskey... to make him forget about the conditions in which he lives."

All CVL programs had interlocking goals pertaining to the betterment of youth life, education, and social awareness, as well as community empowerment.

Many of the programs were created for the purpose of educating and economically empowering the youth and families of Lawndale. **The Street Academy** was a GED program for high school dropouts. **The Management Training Institute** was a 20-week program that taught black history, self-awareness, reading, and business skills. CVL was involved in **Y.O.U.** (**Youth Organizations United**), a **Washington**-based, national office of some 350 former gang members working within the system to improve living conditions in their communities, and to provide education and job opportunities so their little brothers and sisters. CVL also had a tenants' rights group, and **The House of Lords**, designed to stop the police from arresting youths who might have been standing on the street corner instead.

Programs were not only geared toward getting youths active and occupied, but also promoted an Afro-American identity for black residents of the **Westside.** CVL opened the **African Lion**, a soul shop that sold clothing and accessories in line with an African aesthetic. **Art & Soul**, a gallery project designed to educate both youth and adults, and provide a path for expression, with art that reflected political and social issues. The building housed art happenings related to the **Black Arts Movement.** There was free instruction and it was an open space for art creation.

The programs of the CVL tried to create networks of information, so that future generations could grow up with a sense of empowerment and self-worth. The Conservative Vice Lords, Inc. served as an example of a movement to bring sustainable power to the people. They were very much a part of the 1960s movements for change, another bit of the continuous constellation of community change that comprises the struggle against injustice. ◊

Free School Movement

ASHLEY WEGER

Over the course of the 1960s, inspired by the **Civil Rights** Movement, students began seeking and creating educational alternatives, new ways of being in and engaging with the world. Coming to critical awareness of social and political inequity, they sought to radicalize education, establishing hundreds of independent "**free schools**" across the **United States**.

The **free school movement** cannot be attributed to a single form, source, ideology or effort. Some sought to restructure the pre-existing educational system, while others chose to situate themselves outside of institutionalized education altogether, forming instead community learning initiatives, as **Ron Miller** put it in his 2002 *Free Schools, Free People*, "free from state control and the values of corporate capitalism."[1] The soul of the free school movement, in 1968 and in 2008, is in the passion of each individual engaged in revolutionary education to live, learn and love in hopes that a more just, equal and free world is possible.

From the **University of Chicago** to **Northwestern University** and nearly every other college campus in Chicago, students responded to the conventional school model and reinvented education as a vehicle for social change. University of Chicago professor **Marlene Dixon's** 1967 free summer school sessions titled *The Local Capitalistic Power Structure and How to Beat It* and *Radical Changes Needed in the World*, make clear that the curriculum of the free school could pose a threat to the dominant ideology's very core. [2] When University of Chicago students banded together for the **New University** conference, proposing the formation of "an organization of radical scholars, students, and intellectuals, working to transform the universities and to use them in the movement for social change," the intellectual and social elites' place was threatened.[3] As students occupied buildings, organized teach-ins, protests and boycotts, education became more than just information gained in the classroom; it became the path by which the world was to be changed.

When discussing student participation in social movements of the 1960s, it is all too easy to lose oneself in a state of nostalgia for an era in which young people were highly politicized, all too tempting to fetishize dissent and civil disobedience as the apex of participatory democracy. As a student activist in the 21st century, the relationship I share with my comrades of the 1960s is a complicated one, while I continuously attempt to balance my admiration for their organizational efforts and actions without resorting to mere impersonation. What can I learn from the radical community's past, while still taking into consideration the metamorphosis of American culture through the age of globalization?

What is shared between students of 1968 and today? The social conditions propelling calls for revolution are remarkably similar: a highly unpopular and politically motivated war, repression of civil liberties, excessive materialism, a neglect of human rights. As in the 1960s, some radical students today are beginning to band together to provide opportunities once again for free and democratic education.[4] When speaking to free school organizers of Chicago, I heard familiar themes re-emerging. Some attempt to make their own universities more democratic; others oppose conventional schooling altogether because of its connections to perpetuating social harm. Most free school classes, workshops and dialogues aim to be anti-capitalist, anti-hierarchical, anti-specialized and anti-competitive. Instead, free schools reclaim the ideals of education by embracing cooperation, community, mutual aid, responsibility, accountability, autonomy and liberation.

On a hot Chicago summer night, over a shared meal at the **Weiser House**, a house guest suggests that "if there is going to be any real change in society, it starts with education. The sort of education needed, however, is not the highly esoteric and impersonal information being taught in schools not detached from one's own existence." For the Weiser House organizers, for the recently relaunched **SDS**, for radically oriented students across the city, nation and world, the power structure must always be horizontal, with the acknowledgment that "no one person is an infinite repository of knowledge or blank canvas," that knowledge is something to be shared and created by an actively participating, consensual and intentional community. This includes learning new languages, arts, cultures. It means removing the disciplinarian figure and allowing learning to be an organic occurrence. It means removing education from a closed room and engaging it within the context of a larger community. **Fancy**, a former Weiser House resident and free school and infoshop organizer, discussed her involvement with a class on war profiteers, which included a biking field-trip/protest to several corporations, such as **Boeing**, with financial gains from war-oriented business. For her, this is the free school in its essence: less a movement of words than a movement of action, a movement of solidarity with the oppressed. The free school exists to offer "another way to live outside of the industrial modern capitalistic man eat man" world of today. Free schools, then, are about "reclaiming lost power, lost cultural knowledge" that has been buried underneath a disabling consumer culture where agency has been deactivated for the majority of the American public. Those who come together continue the struggle between the institutionalized and the marginalized, between the complacent and the critical. They embraces the direct action and participation endorsed by radicals of the sixties. They too propose that education can be an intellectual and ethical space of infinite, world-changing possibilities. ◊

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1. Miller, 3.

2. Koziol, Ronald. "Controversial Prof Taught Revolution, Policeman Recalls," *Chicago Tribune* (1/31/1969), 1.

3. Manly, Chesly. "'New Left' Forms Group to Encourage Student Rebellions," *Chicago Tribune* (7/14/1968), A8.

4. Free schools and infoshops have blossomed in recent years, but they never entirely disappeared: to take one example, the **Autonomous Zone Free Skool** was very active in the 1990s and into the new millennium.

CONTEMPORARY FREE SCHOOL PROJECTS IN CHICAGO

Backstory Cafe Lecture Series
http://www.backstorycafe.com

Chicago Free School
http://groups.google.com/group/chicagofreeschool?hl=en

Chicago Freedom School
http://www.chicagofreedomschool.org

Chicago Political Workshop
chicago.political.workshop@gmail.com

Jane Addams Hull House Museum Tuesday Soups at Noon
http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/Events/kitchen/

Mess Hall
http://www.messhall.org

Platypus Marxist Reading Group
http://platypus1917.org/

Salon at Saunatech
http://saunatech.tumblr.com

Sunday Soup and Brunch at Incubate
http://www.incubate-chicago.org/sundaysoup

Super Sessions
http://groups.google.com/group/supper-sessions/

Harper Court

BY ANDREA BAER

Just off of **Harper Avenue**, half a block from the neighborhood's major thoroughfare, on the eastern edge of the center of **Hyde Park**, lounges **Harper Court**. An ordinary enough triad of buildings shading a sunken courtyard, this unassuming complex reveals the legacy of urban renewal just over 40 years old.

The **1954** Federal Housing Act amended the **1949 Housing Act** and provided funding to cities that were attempting to prevent urban blight by initiating proactive "renewal" projects, demolishing slums and turning over land to private developers. During the project's 10-year span, more than 850 buildings in Hyde Park-**Kenwood** alone were demolished, and many residents and businesses were displaced. While some buildings were replaced, many were not; part of the project's purpose was to thin out concentrated and perceivably over-congested areas. By 1962 so many buildings had been taken down or were slated for demolition that **Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference**, the neighborhood's community action group, became concerned about the fate of many of Hyde Park's favorite small businesses. Arts-oriented independent merchandisers had been extracted from their stores, which were very often located in older low-rent buildings. This included the first art colony in Hyde Park, which had been housed in buildings originally constructed for the **1893 World's Columbian Exposition**. The new shopping centers, erected in an effort to separate businesses and residences, promised upscale settings, parking and new buildings at prohibitively high rent.

Harper Court was intended to present an alternative that would preserve the unique character of the neighborhood. The process of fundraising for Harper Court took most of a year and construction of the buildings began in December of 1964. Tenants moved into the new buildings between September of 1965 and March of 1966 and it was then that Harper Court, dubbed "a new center for the useful arts," was established. In 1968, once Harper Court was stabilized and productive, management was turned over to two "Hyde Park housewives"—as **Muriel Beadle** writes in her *Where Has All The Ivy Gone?*—who could devote all their time to the tenants and customers of Harper Court.

In the years following its opening, Harper Court and the Foundation succeeded to varying degree. Many of the stores in Harper Court were rented before the launch party, indicating that there were indeed useful arts anxious to participate in this kind of project. The 28 businesses that moved into Harper Court in the late 60s represented a wide sampling of practical arts including pottery, instrument repair, and lamp making. In the late '60s and early '70s Harper Court served as home to several Hyde Park arts and culture institutions, including the beloved **Hyde Park Art Center** and the nationally renowned **AFRICOBRA**.

You are invited Harper Court's Light-Up and Launching, 1965. Courtesy Special Collections Research Center, U of Chicago Library.

Harper Court had its share of misses, as well. Only three of the business owners who had been displaced by urban renewal could hold out long enough to take advantage of the low rent in Harper Court. The others had left the immediate neighborhood or gone out of business all together. And then, shortly thereafter, due to the success of the shopping center, some independent craftsmen were evicted due to increasingly expensive rent. One tailor was forced out in favor of a more lucrative ice cream parlor.

These successes and failures, and the uniqueness of the endeavor, drew the attention of major local and national reports including *The Chicago Tribune*, *Business Week* and even the *Wall Street Journal*. These sources point to the originality of the plan and the pluck of the band of citizens invested in maintaining the integrity of their own neighborhood. ◊

Chicago Area Draft Resisters

BY A.L. GRAY

During the **Vietnam War**, in the **United States**, "open resistance to the draft [was] greater than at any time since the **Civil War**." Chicago's urban population allowed many anti-draft groups to prosper during the Vietnam War draft period. The **Chicago Area Draft Resisters** (**CADRE**) quickly became a major player in draft resistance in the city.

CADRE chose a specific approach from among the options for draft resistance available to Americans at the time. Bill Davidson's article *Hell, no, we won't go!* published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1968 describes six categories of draft resisters. Two include people with a government-approved conscientious objector (C.O.) status, which was the only legal option available. C.O.'s were split into 1-A-O's (military service without weapon use) and 1-O's (substitute service). Another group of draft-evaders went "underground," hiding in locations across America. Most Americans are still familiar with the "fleeing to Canada" concept popularized during the period by those who left the United States. The last two categories had the most people involved in the open resistance movement within America. Organizations such as CADRE were formed by people actively willing to go to jail rather than submit to draft regulations and those "who [had] already entered the armed forces and then decided they couldn't fight in Vietnam."

In 1967, twenty-three year old **Green Beret Gary Rader** burned his draft card, left the **CIA**, and helped form CADRE in order to actively resist America's military involvement in Vietnam. Rader and the treasurer, **David F. Greenburg**, helped establish the nationally linked organization in 1967 that "grew out of the struggle for civil rights and protests against the Vietnam war."

A big part of CADRE's campaign against the draft involved making literature available around Chicago. The group printed original material, and re-printed articles from other organizations and underground newspapers. Young adults were a key ingredient in draft resistance (after all, they were facing or about to face the draft board), and their support soon became essential to literature and actions. CADRE aided in the printing and/or reprinting of many underground high school newspapers that spoke out against the draft and other corrupt institutions. Such papers included ***The Affluent Drool*** out of the **Latin School of Chicago**, ***Alternative*** from **Naperville Central High**, and the ***New York High School Free Press***. They also sponsored speech-ins at various colleges and high schools.

Efforts to increase support led CADRE to aid in the coordination of other draft-resistance leagues around the Chicago area such as the **Hyde Park Anti-Draft Union** and **South East Draft Action**. CADRE also set up counseling for individuals facing the draft. Organizing "a panel of lawyers willing to defend draft resisters," it raised funds for bail, legal defense, and families with imprisoned resisters. The group organized draft-related events such as draft-card burnings and turn-ins, as well as cooperating in events such as **Anti-Draft Week** (set for March 16-22) and **Day of Civil Disobedience** on March 19. In August of 1968, members of CADRE joined protests during the **Democratic National Convention**, as they had following **Martin Luther King**'s assassination in April. It also supported activities such as the burning of I-A files from the downtown federal building in Chicago by a group later dubbed the **Chicago 15** on May 25, 1969.

CADRE not only worked against the draft, but also against injustices in economic, civil, and educational institutions. The group soon expanded to support gay rights, the feminist movement, and the **American Indian Movement**. It also published pamphlets asking Americans to boycott the **Dow Chemical Company**, which produced nerve gas and napalm for the military. In 1973, it helped organize the **New Orleans Fire Benefit Dance**.

As the United States government gradually evacuated troops from Vietnam and finally ended the draft, financial support for the various anti-draft leagues across the nation dwindled. With only the major peace organizations remaining, CADRE ceased operations around 1974 or 1975. Widespread dissent against the draft by Americans during the Vietnam War still holds relevance today, for it has certainly played a part in any government considerations for the reinstatement of the draft for the current war in Iraq. ◊

The Chicago Seed

BY AMY MARTIN

> *"Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one."*—A. J. Liebling

The Chicago Seed was an underground, biweekly newspaper published in Chicago from 1967-1971. It, like many other independent publications of the era, was organized in response to the mainstream media's disregard for opinions valued by the countercultural movement. Cultural and political activists sought an alternative media through which to promote their views and found resources through membership with both **LNS** (**Liberation News Service**), and **UPS** (**Underground Press Syndicate**). Both organizations were affiliated with *The Seed*, supporting the paper that, begun as a celebration of peace, love and drugs, had, at the end of its four year run, become a politically engaged compilation of social commentary and appeals for revolutionary involvement, easily accessible at bookstores across the city.

The Seed's design mirrored its politics. In contrast to the strict black and white columned format of typical newsprint, *The Seed* favored a more expressive aesthetic, reflecting the sense of upheaval spreading throughout the city. Article text does not adhere to justified margins, but instead flows around and across the colorful graphics and illustrations accompanying most articles. Shading effects blur and confuse the distinction between feature articles and the paper's advertisements, as *The Seed* creates a maze of text, with articles jumping from page to page without warning. This chaotic design reflected the sense of revolution and cultural and political turbulence of the time, but such creativity came at a price, as articulated by one reader in a *Letter to the Editor*—the Seed is the most imaginative paper ever printed, but its content is often nil" (Volume 3, No. 5).

The paper also included a *Movement Scoreboard*, dedicated to reporting updates on the actions and developments of revolutionary groups. The style was as straightforward as the box scores in your typical Sports section (Volume 3, No. 13). Including briefs on the **Black Panthers**, **Young Lords**, **Young Patriots**, **SDS**, **White Panthers**, and **Dopers**, the *Movement Scoreboard* informally detailed sentencing information, arrests, and trial announcements. One week the paper reported that nine *Seed* staff and contributing members were arrested for conducting a "small recreation of the convention." The accompanying article cited the injustice of the arrest but focused more on rallying readers in support of their *Seed* editors, pleading "We go to trial October 20 at 321 **North LaSalle**, come and see us there [...] We need money [...] If you can help with the money or were a witness to any of the arrest, call or write us at *the Seed*."

Incorporating the revolutionary spirit and energy of the movements of the sixties and seventies into both the presentation and content of the popular underground newspaper, *The Chicago Seed* took the issues and struggles of value to the countercultural movement, and brought them to light and to the people. With design straying as far as possible from the rigid, monochromatic columns of mainstream papers, *The Chicago Seed*'s spreads reflect the spirit of insurgency ripe in Chicago. Engaging readers on a personal level and adopting a tone of familiarity, at times even crudeness, writers and editors of *The Chicago Seed* made the radically political content of every issue accessible from a streetwise perspective, further echoing a move towards collective revolution. With this approach, *The Chicago Seed* became an essential resource pointing the community towards action and providing the community with activists. ◊

Kartemquin Films

BY DARCY LYDUM

For 42 years, **Kartemquin Films** has been expressing the need for social change through documentary films. The journey began first in Chicago but now reaches a global audience. Founding members **Gordon Quinn** and **Jerry Blumenthal** envisioned the film company as a way to bring the need for social change to the public through cinéma vérité. Kartemquin Films began in 1966 as a local film company hoping to provide insight and spark change in the community. In 1968, a year that rocked the world, Kartemquin Films released three documentaries that showed a changing face of youth and the emergence of the New Left.

The 22 minute film *Parents* documents a parish youth group discussion about the relationships teens have with their parents by posing questions about what these relationships mean and how they evolve, and how they are difficult yet important. This film, made at a time when youth were fighting to be heard, showed real challenges that particular young people were facing in regard to authority, parents and the community.

Thumbs Down offers a perspective on **anti-Vietnam** participation among a different church group. This film focuses on anti-war efforts among a group of young Christians who oppose the war because they believe their faith means taking social and moral responsibility in current issues. This film examines the old church and the new, showing the rocky transition from deep-rooted beliefs to new awareness. This film sheds a new light on the people that opposed the Vietnam war. Many different groups helped transform social and political thought in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The public image of antiwar protest is associated with radicals and militants, with little mention of portions of the movement that flew under the radar, gaining strength in local communities rather than large-scale demonstrations that rocked the country.

Kartemquin Films also made *Inquiring Nuns* in 1968. This documentary has an interview format: the film crew follows two nuns around Chicago, and they ask various people one question: "Are you happy?" In fact, all three of the 1968 Kartemquin Films focused on religious groups or people—two church groups, and the interviewing nuns. Contrary to a view of religion as conservative and stuffy, these films allow us to see both a diversity of political views among religious people, and the religious elements of activist movements in the 1960s.

Today's problems differ from those in 1968. *In the Family*, a 2008 Kartemquin film, focuses on **Joanna Rudnick's** struggle with the knowledge of her medical fate. New genetic testing allows women the ability to detect the likelihood of developing certain kinds of breast and ovarian cancers. This film shows what power medical progress gives to various women that Rudnick encounters – these women have the power to save their own life, to predict their fate, but what obligations come with this power? Rudnick, the director and producer for this documentary, follows the tradition of other Kartemquin productions—she localizes a problem, in this case she personalizes it, and makes one case an example for many while simultaneously creating an awareness of social progress.

Kartemquin Films continues to provide insightful views on social change. Although the motives behind each film have changed over the years, the company still pursues its original goals of bringing to light the necessity of social transformation. Kartemquin Films looks through a lens into the lives of individuals to show how social change affects human beings on a personal, local, national and global level. ◊

Chicago Artist Boycott

BY MAGGIE TAFT

In August of 1968, after seeing the brutal images and televised footage of the aggression perpetrated by the city's government forces at and around the **Democratic National Convention**, two artists, **Hedda Sterne** and **Jesse Reichek**, organized a protest. The plan was to boycott Chicago's art museums and galleries for two years, until 1970, when **Richard J. Daley's** term as mayor ended. In a telegram to Daley, the artists explained their disgust and revulsion, and asserted the impossibility of art in an environment where brutality was not only tolerated but also enacted. The statement was signed by some 50 artists including **Roy Lichtenstein**, **Barnett Newman**, **Robert Motherwell**, and, Chicago-raised artist **Claes Oldenburg**.

Many of the artists took action immediately. Among these was Oldenburg, who promptly pulled his show, *Proposals for Monuments*, slated to open at the **Richard Feigen Gallery** in autumn of that year. Oldenburg told *Time* magazine that "a gentle one-man show about pleasure" seemed to him "a bit obscene" for the time.

But **Richard Feigen** had another idea. He persuaded Oldenburg to reconsider and others to join in, and on October 23, less than two months after the artists had sent the telegram to Mayor Daley, an exhibition featuring work by many of boycotters opened at the **Feigen Gallery**. The show was titled *The Richard J. Daley Exhibition* and the art was intended as a direct response to the August events. The *New York Times* called it a more activist approach than silence.

A total of 47 artists engaged in this artistic activism and 21 of them created new work specifically for the show. Among these were **James Rosenquist's** *Tattered Image*, Barnett Newman's symbolic sculpture, *Lace Curtain for Mayor Daley* (a distinct formal departure from his oeuvre of abstracted zips and broken obelisks), and Oldenburg's 48 piece series of sculpted plaster fireplugs, the symbolic form of the city according to the artist. Along with these Oldenburg submitted two drawings showing Mayor Daley's head on a platter. *Time Magazine* named them *Daley on a platter* and the artist adopted the title.

Both Oldenburg and Feigen had themselves been targets of brutality during the infamous police riots of the previous summer. In his letter requesting that the *Proposals* show be postponed, a letter that also served as the advertisement for the *Daley* exhibition, Oldenburg explained that he had been "tossed to the ground by six swearing troopers who kicked and clubbed [him] and called [him] a Communist." In addition to their (and the other artists') anger at Daley, the protest show revealed Oldenburg and Feigen's ambivalence to the city they had previously so celebrated.

After closing in Chicago, the show traveled to the **Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati** and then Feigen's NYC gallery, where it was later reprised in 1988. But, despite the canonical artists involved, the *Daley Exhibition* was regarded more as a display of activism than of works of art. It was primarily as such that newspapers nationwide reported on the show. And that's also how Daley received it. According to Feigen, some of the Mayor's "goons" trashed the exhibition.

Nevertheless, it has proven but a blip in Chicago's political history. Straddling the formulated line between art exhibition and political protest, the show fits neatly into neither category and so has been largely excluded from both. The Special Collections archivist at the **Harold Washington Library** well articulated this divide. "We don't have anything about that," she told me when I asked for materials on the Chicago Artist Boycott. "We're primarily a history collection. We don't have those sorts of arts related things." ◊

Negro Digest/Black World

BY CHRIS BRANCACCIO

Negro Digest/Black World is a fascinating artifact because the content of each issue seems to evade rigid binaries like integrationist or nationalist, and therefore became a very real space for public debate. For instance, the November 1966 issue contains an article entitled *Black Power Symposium* features 12 different opinions on Black Power, offered by a diverse group of black individuals ranging from **Conrad Kent Rivers**, founder of **Organization of Black American Culture** (**OBAC**), to **Anita Cornwell**, a writer and former state employee, to **Dudley Randall**, founder of **Broadside Press** but also a librarian and poet. The sheer range of voices about this particular concept indicates how useful this resource is for constructing a historiography of the time from an African American perspective. A fascinating example is **June Jordan**'s *White English: The Politics of Language*, part of the August 1973 issue's *Focus on Language* feature. In this essay Jordan makes an extremely cogent appeal to readers about the importance of "black" English. At the end of the article, the political implications are amplified by the postscript that reads "Both her [June Jordan] award-winning teen novel *His Own Where* and *Dry Victories*, a history book, were written entirely in "Black Language." "One consequence," she writes, "is that the novel has been banned from the public schools of **Baltimore Md.**" As this example illustrates, the magazine both hosted literal debates and articulated more conceptual and long running problems such as the one addressed by Jordan.

Negro Digest/Black World also showcased original aesthetic theory and reproductions of rare artworks. For example, the October 1971 issue features the article, *AFRICOBRA (African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists): 10 in Search of a Nation*, by **AFRICOBRA** artist **Jeff Donaldson**. Not only does this article contain the group's credo in the words of one of its most prominent member, but also features a variety of rare images, such as Africobra member **Jae Jarrell** modeling her "revolutionary suit." This fascinating image has fallen almost completely into obscurity, only existing in this periodical's yellowing pages.

Negro Digest/Black World constitutes a massive archive. A renewed scholarly interest in these periodicals offers new perspectives and could profoundly change the way we consider the **Black Arts Movement** and Black activism during this period. ◊

The Blackstone Rangers

BY JULIE GLASIER

In the late 1960s, day after day, ***Chicago Tribune*** articles reporting robberies, knifings, and homicide on the **South Side** blamed the **Blackstone Rangers** as the source of all delinquency. In an 1969 interview with *Atlantic Monthly*, **Woodlawn's Congressman Abner Mikva** remarked, "If someone commits a crime in the area and if he is a kid, the victim will assume that he's a Ranger, but if the Rangers had committed all the crimes they have been charged with, there would probably have to be at least 100,000 of them, or they would have to be some of the most energetic criminals who ever lived."[1] Though firmly rejecting the term "gang," the Rangers reached national renown under this label by the mid-1960s, as the group branched out into cities beyond Chicago such as **Cleveland**, **Gary** and **Milwaukee**.

But as historian **Timuel Black** has pointed out, the Blackstone Rangers also participated in campaigns for economic justice and human rights.[2] As 2008 comes to a close and research continues to make sense of the history of groups such as the Blackstone Rangers, it is appropriate to re-evaluate the truth behind the myths. In living through difficult times, their actions were truly cries from Chicagoans, passionately seeking a way to live meaningfully within their community—a passion certainly needed forty years later, as too many in this nation continue to demonstrate apathy alongside systems of injustice.

Recounting the beginnings of the Blackstone Rangers during an talk at the **University of Illinois at Chicago** in November of 2000, Black argued that a great migration of immigrants into the city was a major catalyst for gang formation. After World War II, he remarks, people from **Mexico** and **Puerto Rico** flooded into northern urban centers, at the time largely populated by African Americans. Competition for jobs was intense and youth became as polarized as their elders. At **Hyde Park High School** during the early 1960s, within this atmosphere, a student named **Jeff Fort** led a small group of other boys into becoming the established Blackstone Rangers of **Woodlawn**. By 1969, the group called itself a "Nation," with as many as 8000 people claiming affiliation to the Rangers, including members of formerly autonomous, smaller South Side groups.

Though apolitical at the outset, by the mid-1960s, the **Blackstone Nation** found itself at the forefront of the fight for equal housing, education, and work within the city of Chicago in addition to joining the national African American **Civil Rights** struggle.[3] In 1967 in collaboration with the Rangers, the grassroots enterprise **The Woodlawn Organization** opened two career training centers in their neighborhood to create a work placement network and job training. Federally funded through the **Office of Economic Opportunity**, the establishment came under federal scrutiny as both centers were staffed by leaders of the Blackstone Rangers who were accused of taking money from trainees.[4] Tagged as a "gang," the Blackstone Nation was viewed with great suspicion by the public.

In 1966, the Rangers provided security as **Martin Luther King** and the **Congress On Racial Equality** marched through hostile white neighborhoods like **Cicero** and **Marquette Park** (famously documented in the film *Eyes on the Prize*). As the Rangers were becoming more activist in orientation, the **Chicago Police Department**, in 1967, initiated the **Gang Intelligence Unit**, a specialized police division.[5] Arrests soared and the Rangers reported countless police abuses. Though in no way were the Blackstone Rangers innocent of every crime pinned upon them since their establishment, the perspective of today paints a clearer picture of the group's actions and desperate situation. Victims of hatred by newcomers pouring into the South Side in search of work, they spoke for an end to discrimination. Targets of an obsessive media and police with questionable control, they demanded justice for their neighbors and spoke for an end to abuses of power. While the news continually overlooked the Rangers' dedication to establishing peace treaties with rival groups in the area (including briefly the **Illinois Black Panther Party**), its efforts to keep prostitutes and drugs off the streets, and its pivotal role in calming the South Side in the Spring of 1968 after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., today's perspective allows us to see the Blackstone Rangers' genuine efforts at community leadership and citizenship.[6] ◊

First Presbyterian Church in 2008. In the 1960s Rev. John Fry gave the Blackstone Rangers meeting space in the church through a program run by The Woodlawn Organization.

*In 1986, Ranger leader Jeff Fort heard that **Louis Farrakhan** of the **Nation of Islam** had received $5 million to support his work from the state of **Libya**. Fort then decided to pursue getting money from Libya as well—he took this request straight to **Colonel Moammar Khadafy**. Over the course of that year, the Rangers made several trips to Libya as well as **Panama** for meetings with Khadafy and other Libyan leaders. Throughout most of that time the **FBI** was following or wiretapping the Rangers, and eventually set them up by going undercover and selling the Rangers a U.S. military rocket. Eventually the Rangers were busted for having the rocket and for attempting to wage a terrorist campaign against the U.S. in exchange for the $2.5 million they were given by Colonel Moammar Khadafy. For more information see **Ron Chepesiuk**,* "America's Home Grown Terrorists: The Strange Case of Libya, Khadafy and a Chicago Street Gang" http://www.newcriminologist.com/article.asp?nid=2099, *accessed 10/16/08* —Ed.

1. James Alan McPherson. "The Blackstone Rangers (II)."

2. This information and material in the following paragraph are drawn from Timuel Black, "The History of African American Gangs in Chicago."

3. James F. Short Jr., "Youth, Gangs and Society," 5.

4. McPherson, "The Blackstone Rangers (I)."

5. Short, 12.

6. McPherson, "The Blackstone Rangers (I)."

Chicago Surrealist Group

BY JOEY PIZZOLATO

Amidst the turmoil of 1968 in Chicago, a group of six young surrealist artists established their own revolution on the corner of **Mohawk** and **Eugenie**.

The **Chicago Surrealist Group** was formed two years prior in 1966 after **Franklin and Penelope Rosemont** were inducted into the **Paris Surrealist Group**. When they returned stateside, they set an artistic movement in motion that would grow exponentially in the following years.

The French surrealist **André Breton** defined surrealism as "Pure psychic automatism, by which one proposes to express, either verbally, in writing, or by any other manner, the real functioning of thought. Dictation of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason, outside of all aesthetic and moral preoccupation." Strongly influenced by psychoanalysis, the surrealists viewed thought as a collection of strange, dreamlike associations. Back in Chicago, Penelope Rosemont described surrealism more simply as "liberation of the mind." However, surrealism is a difficult term to define because it upholds individual freedom so rigorously. In most cases, if one considers oneself to be a surrealist—or practicing surrealism—one probably is.

Set within the confines of three small rooms and a hallway at 524 Eugenie, in the present-day neighborhood of **Old Town**, the Rosemonts' revolution had no name. Its only marking was a large mural painted on a solid black door depicting the **Warner Bros.** character, **Bugs Bunny**, standing with his leg crossed, chomping on his trademark carrot, as if leaning against the door frame.

As such, the art exhibit came to be known as **Gallery Bugs Bunny**. It featured over a hundred works by Penelope and Franklin Rosemont, along with fellow surrealist artists **Robert Greene**, **Eric Matheson**, **Schlecter Duvall**, and **Lester Dore**. For fifty cents, anyone could mingle amongst works displayed as a protest against the *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage* show at the **Art Institute of Chicago** in the fall of 1968.

But Gallery Bugs Bunny served as more than just a protest to the "reprehensible fraud" of the Art Institute's exhibit. It became a meeting place for other radicals including: diggers, anarchists, **Black Panthers**, and **Wobblies**—all of whom were fighting their own struggles.

The show received unexpected success from the public and critics and extended its closing date for an extra month—from December 8, 1968 to January 8, 1969, when it picked up and moved to **Madison, Wisconsin**.

The Chicago Surrealist Group formed by Franklin and Penelope Rosemont and their colleagues remains the center of the surrealist movement of the United States. Chicago still boasts one of the highest numbers of surrealist painters and poets within the United States. The Rosemonts have remained active in politics as well as the arts. Their **Black Swan Press**, an imprint of the **Charles H Kerr Company**, continues to publish revolutionary movement texts and surrealist artwork and literature to this day.

2008 marks the 40th anniversary of Gallery Bugs Bunny. In celebration, the Chicago surrealist group put up a small show at the famous **Heartland Café** in the neighborhood of **Rogers Park** which ran through the end of September. They have plans to continue organizing exhibits around the city. ◊

Surrealist Insurrection, 1970. Court. Chicago History Museum.

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The Woodlawn Organization

BY CARRIE BREITBACH

The Woodlawn Organization (**TWO**) was officially formed in Chicago in January of 1961, but its origins date to the late 1950s when residents of the **Woodlawn neighborhood**, just south and west of **Hyde Park**, felt under threat from an expansion plan by the **University of Chicago** called the **South Campus Plan**. This expansion proposal came on the heels of the **Hyde Park-Kenwood urban renewal plan**, which involved the demolition of 20% of Hyde Park's buildings and the forced relocation of 20,000 residents, mostly low-income blacks and whites. The urban renewal project, although it included both federal and local government as well as private funds, was an effort to response to fears that the University of Chicago would relocate due to an increase in crime, deterioration in housing quality and higher population density that had beset the Hyde Park neighborhood since a post **World War II** population boom. Woodlawn had seen a similar population boom, mostly a result of African Americans moving to the city in search of employment. The neighborhood had gone from 60% white to 95% black between the early 1950s and the early 1960s, a shift that was accompanied by a sharp upturn in illegal conversions and steep rents despite the deteriorating conditions. Now, facing the University's expansion plan, Woodlawn residents feared that the same displacement of low-income and black residents and small businesses that went along with the urban renewal of Hyde Park would also occur in Woodlawn.

To fight the power of the University of Chicago, a group of **Woodlawn clergy**, including three **Protestant ministers** and a **Catholic priest**, knew that they would need to organize their community. They looked for help to **Saul Alinsky**, the community organizer who had organized the **Back of the Yards** neighborhood. Eventually, Alinsky and other **Industrial Areas Foundation** (**IAF**) organizers succeeded in procuring funding from the **Catholic church**, a **Presbyterian church**, and the **Schwarzhaupt Foundation** to begin an organizing campaign in Woodlawn. TWO's founding president was the **Reverend Arthur Brazier** of the **Pentecostal Apostolic Church of God**, an advocate of black self-determination whom Alinsky helped to train to head the organization after seeing Brazier's leadership abilities.

Throughout the early 1960s, TWO was involved in mobilizing Woodlawn residents against the injustices they faced daily, including dishonest local store owners, slumlords, and an overcrowded and segregated public school system. Brazier and other TWO leaders, at first in conjunction with the IAF, organized rent strikes, led a public campaign against short-weighing and overcharging at grocery stores, and demonstrated against the inequities Woodlawn's black children faced in their public schools. TWO's tactics, drawing on Alinsky's model, involved mobilizing residents to hold absentee landlords, shop owners, and school officials publicly accountable for their actions.

In 1967, TWO secured a grant from the **Office of Economic Opportunity** to begin a controversial program training unemployed youth in job skills. The program was controversial because it drew on the existing organizational structures of some of the city's most notorious gangs, the **Blackstone Rangers** and the **Devil's Disciples**. TWO also insisted that the job training facilities be located in Woodlawn itself and that gang members be involved as staff, including in instructional positions. The training program eventually collapsed after it came under investigation by the federal **Gang Intelligence Unit** and **Senator John McClellan**'s **Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations.**

Despite this setback, TWO secured a strong reputation in Woodlawn and in greater Chicago. The organization was fundamental in ensuring that rioting did not break out in Woodlawn during the summer of 1967 (though there was looting in the neighborhood following King's assassination the next year), and became known as a powerful voice in Chicago's south side. Throughout the 1970s, TWO became involved in development work, rehabilitating and constructing low and middle income housing in the Woodlawn area, as well as supporting small businesses. TWO became a very successful procurer of foundation and federal grant money and has used these funds to offer social services such as prenatal and mental health care in the community. Throughout this time, TWO continued to advocate for equity in public school conditions. Though the focus of efforts has changed, The Woodlawn Organization continues to be involved in a range of programs including social services, economic development and political work. In recent years TWO has been criticized for its close collaboration with the University and for its real estate development activities, seen as promoting middle-class homeownership over tenants' rights. ◊

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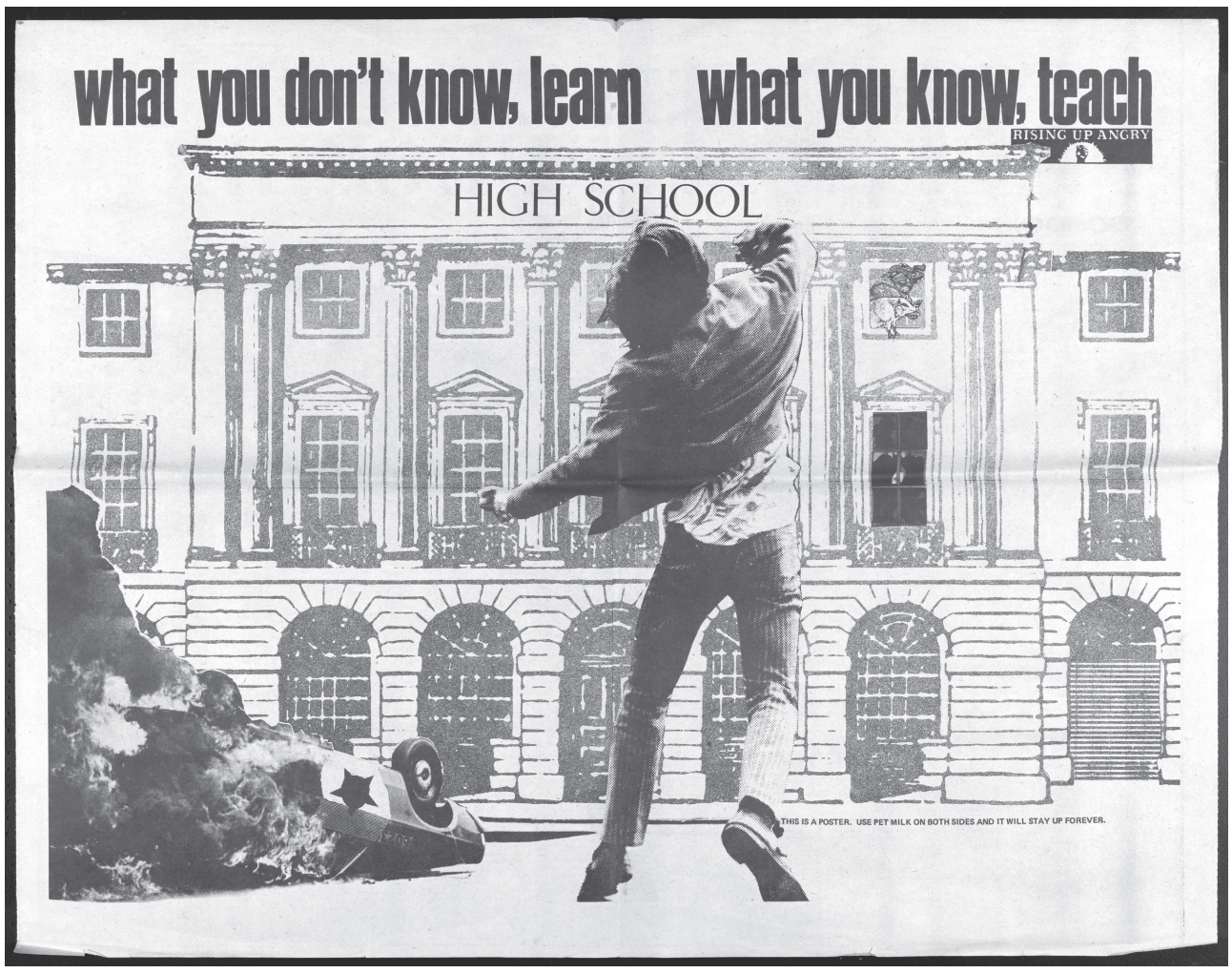

What You Don't Know, Learn. Rising Up Angry broadside. Courtesy Chicago History Museum.

Rising Up Angry

EUAN HAGUE

"We're outlaws. Dig it. Right on, brothers and sisters," was how the Chicago area activist newspaper ***Rising Up Angry*** described itself, "a group of people who work together to back each other up. We do a lot of things together, building for the revolution." Published between 1969 and 1975 with the slogan "To Live We Must Fight" emblazoned on the cover beneath a clenched fist, which on some issues was raising a rifle, Rising Up Angry surveyed local topics and national politics in this turbulent era. One of its founders **Michael James**, now proprietor of the **Heartland Café** in **Rogers Park**, explains,

> *"The idea was pretty much to educate to liberate, that we had to popularize revolution, promote it, fan the flames, and so we started a paper that we took all over Chicago and then beyond to **Minnesota**, **Wisconsin**, **Waukegan**, **Philadelphia**, **New York**, and **St. Louis**. It was happening, and the paper was an entry into various communities: 'Hey brother have you seen this paper? Check it out.' 'All power to the people!' 'The pigs been harassing you guys, what's going on in your neighborhood?' 'You're back from 'Nam? What do you think about that?' 'You've got to treat the sisters with respect' 'Hey, black people are alright, you know, you're wearing the same clothes as they do, you're listening to the same god damn music, what's the deal?'"*

More than just a newspaper, *Rising Up Angry* was a coalition of activists. Many of those who founded *Rising Up Angry*, such as James, had worked with community organizations in Chicago such as **Jobs Or Income Now** (**JOIN**) in **Uptown** in the 1960s [*see James Tracy and Amy Sonnie's contribution to this issue of* AREA *for more information on this history -ed*]. "We'd found success in working with poor white southern women, and poor, mostly southern, white young people… [and] wanted to take that experience that we had in Uptown …more city-wide. We went around and started just meeting people…We were always looking to build an organization, a network of people, and looked to the **American labor movement**, **guerilla movements in China**, **Vietnam**, **Cuba**, and **pan-African ideas**." With a cover price of 25 cents (free to GIs) and a new edition arriving each month, *Rising Up Angry* contained advice about what to do when encountering "pig patrols," condemned "fat businessmen," and criticized public figures such as **Illinois State's Attorney General Edward Hanrahan**.

"The initial target audience was 'greasers,' white working class youth with their **Ban-lon** shirts or **A-1 Stay-Pressed pants**," says James, and "the key was a thing called **Stone Grease Grapevine**, vignettes on what was happening in individual parks, schools, clubs, gangs or neighborhoods. In the early issues there was also a lot of stuff about cars, a movie review of ***Bullitt***, talk about the GI rebellions. People liked the content. They liked the music, the culture, it was happening. The police were definitely hard on kids in the neighborhood, but the key I think was the photographs. We'd go around and get photos of everyone throwing their fist up in the air. We started with a group of little kids hanging out at **Clark and Devon** in Rogers Park."

Issues of *Rising Up Angry* bristled with anger and frustration at the state of the United States and soon reached beyond the audience of "greasers." Columns gave the latest news about activities throughout Chicago of the **Young Lords**, **Students for a Democratic Society**, the **American Indian Movement** (**AIM**), the **Black Panthers**, the **Young Comancheros Organization** and a whites' group, the **Young Patriots**, amongst others. With profiles of figures such as **Malcolm X** and **Fred Hampton**, **John Dillinger**, **Bonnie and Clyde**, reviews of the **Rolling Stones**, **Stevie Wonder** and **The Wild Bunch**, *Rising Up Angry* mixed political and cultural commentary with cartoons, montages, discussions of motorcycles and custom cars, with histories of labor activism and guerrilla warfare. One issue featured an image of **Mayor Richard J. Daley**'s face as the bull's-eye on a dartboard; another gave advice on the practical use of handguns versus rifles and shotguns. The subject of women's rights was central and the newspaper reported regularly on events like **International Women's Day** and the successful lawsuit at **Curie High School** which gained female students equal gym access and sports facilities.

At times, today's news echoes that presented in *Rising Up Angry*. In a 1969 issue, for example, an anonymous contribution asks: "So, what's this crazy **Asian war** about? It's about people. It's about space. It's about people living their lives in that space. It's a war we shouldn't be fighting," and then demands, "The **Viet Cong** should win. Not by killing more American soldiers—but by American soldiers leaving Vietnam for the Vietnamese and bringing their guns back home." Other issues described where to find contraception and abortion services in Chicago, challenged the displacement of low income communities by luxury development, recounted efforts to stop student activism at **Senn High School**, criticized public school reforms that worsened conditions for low income children, and discussed high food and fuel prices, U.S. policies towards **Iran** and **Latin America**, police racism and prisoner abuse allegations. "It's like nothing's changed really," comments *Rising Up Angry*'s Michael James. "We've made some steps forward. We don't have the war in Vietnam, but then we went on to the **Iraqi wars** and now we have this volunteer military, with better pay, that trick you into getting signed up. We're in worse shape in a lot of ways than we were."

Closely connected with **Right On Books** and, by the mid-1970s, office space at **1215 W. Belmont**, *Rising Up Angry* was more than just a newspaper. The group's "**Serve the People** programs," comments James, saw *Rising Up Angry* follow the **Black Panthers** in providing breakfasts to children. "We also had a legal program, buses taking visitors to prisons, even free rabies shots for dogs and cats… the **Fritzi Englestein Free People Health Center** at the **Church of the Holy Covenant** at **Diversy and Wilton** became pretty much a *Rising Up Angry* program, and there was Friends of *Angry* which was the outreach to younger people, pulling them together for meetings, movies and dances." Promising at these centers and clinics that "no one is turned away for lack of money," by the mid-1970s *Rising Up Angry* was endorsing **Young Lords** founder **Jose "Cha Cha" Jimenez** for alderman in **46th Ward**, an area that covered what are now the considerably less mean streets of **Lakeview** and **Wrigleyville**.

Rising Up Angry was current, urgent and radical. Today it is still worth reading. Indeed, it is perhaps ironic that forty years later, copies of *Rising Up Angry* can be found in the Special Collection of the **University of Illinois at Chicago** (**UIC**) **Library**, which is named after one of the newspaper's favorite targets: Richard J. Daley.

Trick Bag (1975) a 21 minute documentary that interviews Chicago residents discussing race relations in the city, produced by **Kartemquin Films**, *Rising Up Angry* and **Columbia College**, can be seen on-line at: *http://www.heartlandcafe.com/media/* ◊

Actor Harry Belafonte visited JOIN in 1965, from left to right: Ralph Thurman, Evelyn Arnold, unknown, Virginia Bowers, Dominga Alcantar, and Peggy Terry. (Photo by Nancy Hollander).

Uptown's JOIN Community Union 1964–1966

BY AMY SONNIE AND JAMES TRACY

***James Tracy** and **Amy Sonnie** have been researching the history of white working class groups of the **New Left** for many years. This selection is drawn from their forthcoming book from **Melville House** on this history. Look for it in winter 2010.*

*The portion printed here is excerpted from the first of two chapters on **JOIN** (Jobs Or Income Now), a group that organized poor whites in Chicago's **Uptown** neighborhood in the mid-1960s. It traces a part of JOIN's history through the eyes of one organizer, **Peggy Terry**, who migrated to the **Midwest** from the **South** in 1956. Another Chicago chapter in the book chronicles the first **Rainbow Coalition** that brought together **Black Panthers**, **Young Lords**, and Uptown's **Young Patriots**.*

*JOIN's parent organization, **SDS's ERAP**, officially dissolved in 1965, and like many left organizations of the late 1960s, JOIN was targeted for police reprisals and infiltrated by **FBI** informants. In 1968, as the authors write in chapter two of the book, "JOIN frayed at the edges under the friction, chaos, and force that had come to define the Sixties." In the excerpt below, the authors give us the story of JOIN before that moment, with insights into the personal histories, struggles, and optimism of JOIN's organizers.*

EARLY YEARS

In 1965, Peggy Terry and **Dovie Thurman** met for the first time in a storefront office in the Uptown neighborhood of Chicago. The two women, one white and one Black, would not have been natural friends a decade before. But, hundreds of miles away in the American South political and economic events had been unfolding for years that would have a profound effect on these soon-to-be radical organizers, on Uptown and on Chicago.

In July of 1955, seamstress **Rosa Parks** attended a training and strategy session on desegregation at the **Highlander Institute** in **Monteagle, Tennessee**. Six months later, while working as secretary of the **Montgomery NAACP**, Parks took a historic stand by refusing to move to the back of a Montgomery bus. With the support of the Women's Political Council and NAACP, Parks' activism sparked a 381-day boycott of segregated public transportation that catalyzed the U.S. **Civil Rights** Movement.[1]

The boycott was not only an assault on **Jim Crow** laws but also a push to finally stare down the specter of white supremacy in the United States. Park's action was not the first refusal by a Black person to relinquish a seat at the driver's request. In fact, **Irene Morgan's** lesser-known refusal in 1944 allowed the NAACP to take the issue of transport segregation to the **Supreme Court** (Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia).[2] A decade later, however, Parks' planned civil disobedience was the first time a city's Black community was fully prepared to shut down the transportation system in protest. Between December 1955 and January 1956, 17,000 Black Montgomery residents walked to work; and later, devised an alternative, autonomous transportation system based in mutual aid. For one white southerner, whose family was steeped in southern racism, the movement in Montgomery catalyzed a change that turned her into one of the Black Freedom Movement's staunchest allies. Just over a decade later, she would run as the **Peace and Freedom Party's** Vice Presidential candidate alongside **Black Panther Eldridge Cleaver**.

Peggy Terry was born October 28, 1921 and raised in poverty in **Oklahoma** and **Kentucky**. Like many white southerners, she very rarely came into contact with Blacks growing up, but remembers being taken to a **Ku Klux Klan** meeting at age three. Terry's grandfather had been a member of the Klan; her father was a sympathizer. Peggy's mother, **Mary Bethel Ousley**, did not share her father's attitudes, and like Peggy later joined the Civil Rights Movement. Her mother's benevolence primed Peggy to confront her own prejudices later in life. Still, among the many racist messages Terry received as a child, she recalls that her father once refused roadside assistance from a Black man, preferring to remain stranded in a ditch in the middle of winter; four children huddled in the car. Her father's position was common among white southerners; he was a coalminer in Kentucky and an oilman in Oklahoma who always "spoke out and stuck up for the workingman,"[3] yet he clung to the meager warranty of white supremacy. "When I was a little girl we used to ride through the 'niggertown' and shoot off people's chimneys. I didn't have enough sense to know kicking black people didn't pay the rent."[4]

During the **Great Depression**, when she was fifteen, Terry married her first husband. They hitchhiked from town to town looking for work, in **Texas** picking grapefruits for **Edinburg Citrus Association**, and in **Alabama** picking cotton. She had her first child, Doug, during those years. During **World War II** she worked alongside her mother and sister in a weapons factory in **Viola**, Kentucky. By 1955, Terry was living in Montgomery, Alabama, a stop in her migration that altered her path forever.

The bus boycott in Montgomery transformed Peggy Terry. "Poor whites in the South did not have much, but riding in the front of the bus was one of them. That boycott, and their getting on the front of the bus, that shook me."[5] Several weeks into the boycott, Terry witnessed **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** beaten by a gang of white vigilantes as he was released from jail. She saw the injustice of white violence with new eyes. King's non-violence in contrast to

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1 See, Mary Fair Burks, "Women in the Montgomery Bus Boycott," in *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers 1941-1965*, Vicki L. Crawford, Jacqueline Anne Rouse and Barbara Woods, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 71–83.

2 In 1946, the Court ruled 6–1 in favor of Morgan and desegregated interstate bus transportation. See Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

3 Peggy Terry interviewed by Studs Terkel, in Studs Terkel, *Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel About the American Obsession* (New York: The New Press, 1992), 51–55.

4 Ruthie B. Stein, "White Woman's Drive to Aid Poor People, She Recruits For Poor Campaign; Urges Whites to Stop Hating," *Jet* magazine, June 11, 1968.

5 D. J. R. Bruckner, "Ticket Mate of Cleaver Still Fighting, Peggy Terry Sees Struggle Involving Classes, Not Races," *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 1969.

Reflections on UIC Student Organizing in 1968

Two movement veterans reflect on their student days and on their role in the SDS

BY EARL SILBAR, WITH A STORY BY STU SMITH

When I started at the **University of Illinois, Chicago**, in **Spring of '68**, the new **Students for a Democratic Society** (**SDS**) chapter was lively and large, with maybe 20-40 people attending weekly meetings. Much discussion centered on how to understand and approach race and class in building the antiwar and antiracist movement on campus. These were big issues on a multiracial campus with large numbers of working class students in those volatile days.

To understand the development of the student movement, one must understand at least two of our inspirations, even in oversimplified form:

1. Black people's struggles to destroy **America's Jim Crow system** of racial oppression and exploitation inspired all the movements of the '60s with their willingness to challenge authority with m ass-supported, often-illegal direct actions, stand against ferocious opponents and force change.

2. The international fight to overturn centuries of white, **European domination** inspired national liberation movements across **Africa** and **Asia.** The **Cuban Revolution** and the **Vietnamese** resistance especially inspired many youth in the U.S. and across the world.

Back then, hundreds of thousands were fighting racism, an unjust war, and the everyday hassles of living in our class, race and gender-divided America. In particular, the military draft for an unpopular war threatened almost every working class young man and students coming out of college. The communist-led Vietnamese resistance with **Soviet** and **Red Chinese** support generated renewed interest in that ideology.

The growing U.S. anti-war movement mounted ever-larger demonstrations and carried out a multitude of militant local actions, yet the government's war machine consumed more flesh daily. As liberal **Democratic Party President Kennedy** acted to limit the fight against racism and Johnson expanded the war in Vietnam, more and more people turned against the 'system' and to direct action. The question thus emerged: what paths to take?

The sides in our SDS chapter became clear fast.

One side argued that imperialism was a system rooted in national and racial oppression, not especially on class exploitation. This led them to view white working class people as potential enemies with a basic interest in conserving the status quo, not as potential allies.

On the national level, this tendency would split into two factions. One, the **Revolutionary Youth Movement** (**RYM**), would become the **Weather Underground**. For more information on this tendency see **Dan Berger's** *Outlaws in America* (AK Press, 2005). The other, RYM II, turned towards the working class and formed various organizations associated with the **New Communist Movements** of the 1970s. For more information on that history, see **Max Elbaum's** *Revolution in the Air* (Verso Books, 2002) .

Our side was led by the **Progressive Labor Party** (**PLP**). We had split from the **Communist Party USA** in 1961 because of our disagreement with their support of the **Soviet Union** (whom we viewed to be revisionist) and because of their reformist approach to issues here in the U.S. We argued that racial, gender-based, and national oppression take place within our class-divided capitalism and can best be fought in that light. We thought that the exploitation of the working class is central to this system of mindless accumulation, thus giving all workers a stake in fighting our bosses and leading a revolution. In 1969 we published *Revolutionaries Must Fight Nationalism*, an essay articulating our differences with the groups that would later form RYM.

PLP's Marxist-Leninist outlook led us to advance the **Worker Student Alliance** (**WSA**), a strategy of students allying with working class struggles, fighting racism in ways to advance class solidarity, and helping win working class support to end the war and eventually overthrow capitalism. This WSA grew from a handful of PLP'ers in SDS in 1966 to become the largest of organized SDS factions by the 1969 convention.

Below are two stories from members of the WSA branch of SDS, reflecting on 1968 in Chicago.

STORY #1: ORGANIZING STUDENTS AGAINST MARINE RECRUITMENT

by Stu Smith
Lifelong activist and communist.

As a young PLP'er in 1966, I started organizing students at UIC. African Americans were fighting racism, students were concerned about the draft and opposition to the Vietnam war raged, but little of the tumult had arrived at UIC.

My goal at UIC was to build a student movement that would act against the imperialist war in Vietnam, support movements among African-Americans and sup port for workers on the job or in their community.

How to begin? While I had some experience at organizing before this, it was always with others or in the lead. Here I was on my own. One of the first things I did after enrolling was to try to develop a plan for developing an SDS chapter by talking to the couple of contacts we had at the school. Yet soon after starting school we learned the Marines were coming to recruit at UIC. I talked to the couple of contacts we had. One said we could do nothing as we were too weak and isolated. The other said we had to try to do something. This person called on her brother and his girlfriend as well as a member of another radical group to try to act.

The five of us sat down and talked about what we could do to deal with these recruiters. Indeed we were weak and didn't believe we had much support on campus. Yet the Vietnamese were fighting and dying to free their country from U.S. domination and others throughout the world were actively supporting that struggle. In the end we decided we would confront the **Marines** and question them about the war and imperialism. Clearly students couldn't object to dialogue and an exchange of ideas.

THE SCENE

The recruiters set up in a common area on the second floor of the student center. It was outside of the cafeteria in a large open space. Recruiters, as well as others, were given a small booth with room on top for information. People who want information would walk up to talk to the people staffing the booth. The area was busy with students coming to the cafeteria as well as using other facilities in the building. On the first day, the Marines got their booth assigned, then went to the booth and prepared to meet with students who wanted to kill for imperialism.

ENTER PROTESTERS

On the first day the Marines showed up, the five of us went up to the booth and asked questions. The Marines refused to answer, refused to defend the murderous adventures they were recruiting people for. Our activity was confrontational but not directly inter-

"UIC" continues on p. 29

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the mob's brutality shocked her and shook loose the entrenched racism of her upbringing. She later said, "I don't know what it was about the boycott that touched my brain and soul. I'd like to think that it was because I realized that I had been blind to the reality if the world I lived in. I do know that it was the beginning of my becoming a better person."[6]

In 1956, with the boycott still in full swing, she moved to Chicago then on to **Jackson, Michigan** before returning to Chicago. In the **North**, she felt, for the first time, her own oppression as a poor southern woman. Poor southern whites were denied housing based on their accents, police brutality was rampant, and poor white ghettos showed the highest unemployment rates in the city. Struggling with her own shame over racism and poverty, she began to feel that the wool pulled over poor whites' eyes in the segregated South was not only thinner in the North, but that a false sense of superiority no longer offered any comfort. During those years she developed an incisive critique of capitalism and understood racism as its tool.

Soon, she saw more than commonalities. She got involved with the anti-nuclear group **Women for Peace**, and was briefly a member of **Communist Party USA** in Michigan, where she lived with her second husband, **Gil Terry**. It was Gil who invited a Black friend to their home for dinner one evening—it was the first time Peggy Terry saw a white man treat a Black person with respect. Of her own racism, Terry later said, "How can you be raised in garbage like that and not stink from it. You walk through garbage, you stink."[7]

The Terrys attracted the attention of the FBI as they attended meetings with **Gus Hall**, CP veteran and organizer of numerous steelworker strikes in the 1930s. Terry's daughter, **Margi Devoe**, remembers being taken with a group of neighborhood children to integrate the local roller rink in Jackson, Michigan. Back in Chicago in 1963 Terry joined the **Congress of Racial Equality** (**CORE**). With CORE she participated in her first civil disobedience, landing in jail before the end of her first day. She was arrested a half dozen times over the next several years and met, for the first time, Rev. King. In one of her many interviews with famed journalist **Studs Terkel**, Terry captured the personal transformation she experience as part of the "beloved community" in CORE, as well as in **SNCC's** Chicago's office, saying, "Where else could I go and be treated with this respect that I've been treated with by Reverend King, the **Nobel Peace Prize** winner? No white Nobel Prize winner would pay poor white trash like me the slightest attention. Reverend King does."[8]

Terry remained active in CORE and SNCC until 1966, traveling south once again to march with Rev. King in the **Mississippi March Against Fear**. While still active in the Civil Rights Movement, Peggy Terry learned about a new organization of poor whites in Uptown from SNCC leader **Monroe Sharp**. She was initially reluctant to belong to an organization of poor southern whites. Like many whites who'd rejected their racist upbringing, she recalled feeling like she had just made a break with the racism of the South and didn't want to "get back into it" with southerners in the North. Sharp persisted, challenging Terry to confront her own shame about being white and poor. "I was finally dragged by Monroe Sharp. He said, 'This is where you belong. You haven't yet figured out who you are.... you have to really know who you are before you ever know who we are.'"[9]

AN INTERRACIAL MOVEMENT OF THE POOR

As Black and white southerners continued the **Great Migration** north, Chicago's neighborhoods received a new group of migrants in 1963: New Left student activists. Inspired by Black-led organizations that were bringing the Civil Rights Movement north, **Students for a Democratic Society** started a new project to mobilize the unemployed and working poor. According to **Richie Rothstein**, in the early Sixties "SDS still believed in the possibility of change within the framework of America's formally representative political institutions." SDS's **Economic Research Action Project** (**ERAP**) was intended to rouse those institutions, to "demand that resources be transferred from the cold war arms race to the creation of a decentralized, democratic, interracial welfare state at home."[10]

This was a time of openness and experimentalism in the New Left. SDS reasoned that there were "new insurgencies" brewing in America. The 1963 national SDS convention formally adopted this position in the document America and the New Era. Changes in the economy, the document argued, would lead to a Triple Revolution: cybernation, weaponry and human rights. Only an end to the arms race could let the nation expand on the opportunities presented by automation and meet the demands of the Civil Rights Movement. Racial justice could not be achieved independently of economic reform.[11] A paper written by SDS's **Tom Hayden** and **Carl Wittman**, *An Interracial Movement of the Poor?*, analyzed white communities' backlash to civil rights reform. The duo argued that demands for economic changes of tangible benefit to both Black and white poor people

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6 Peggy Terry, unpublished speech delivered to her grandson's African American history class, Columbia College, Chicago, IL, May 20, 1998. Retrieved from Peggy Terry's personal collection, courtesy of Margi Devoe.

7 Peggy Terry interview by Studs Terkel, *Race*, 51.

8 Ibid., *Race*, 54.

9 Peggy Terry interviewed by Jim Axelrod, rough transcript, Spring 1972, Berea College, Kentucky. Publication date unknown. Retrieved from Peggy Terry's personal collection, courtesy of Margi Devoe.

10 Richie Rothstein, "Evolution of ERAP Organizers," in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, Priscilla Long, ed. (Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 1969), 271–288.

11 Richie Rothstein, *ERAP and How It Grew* (Boston: New England Free Press, date unknown); see also *The Ad-Hoc Committee*, *The Triple Revolution* (Students For a Democratic Society, 1963). Both pamphlets retrieved from Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University.

Native American Organizing

BY LAUREN CUMBIA

The **Indian Relocation Act** of 1956 facilitated the movement of Native Americans from rural areas to cities such as Chicago, **Los Angeles**, and **Minneapolis**. In 1953, The **American Indian Center of Chicago** (**AIC**) at 1630 **W. Wilson** was founded to provide a social and cultural space to the more than fifty different tribes who were relocated to Chicago. AIC aimed to serve the pan-Indian community and "to promote the fellowship among Indian people of all Tribes living in metropolitan Chicago, and to create bonds of understanding and communication between Indians and non-Indians in this city." In addition, AIC aimed "to advance the general welfare of American Indians into the metropolitan community life; to foster the economic and educational advancement of Indian people; to sustain cultural, artistic and vocational pursuits; and to perpetuate Indian cultural values."

Monthly powwows at AIC were attended by hundreds of people and fostered a pan-tribal community. However, AIC also sponsored tribal clubs to connect Native Americans with members of their own tribe. In 1966, AIC found a permanent home in **Uptown** and fostered more opportunities for Native youth. For example, The **Youth Tribal Organization** was formed by Native vocational students who began organizing non-Indian residents of Uptown around the lack of affordable housing.

In addition to the activities at AIC, Native Americans in Chicago formed political groups and hosted national conferences. In 1961, anthropologist **Sol Tax** and the **National Congress of American Indians** organized the **American Indian Chicago Conference** which was held at the **University of Chicago**. This historic event brought together more than 65 tribes (totaling more than 500 attendees) who drafted a series of guiding principles:

> *We, the Indian people, must be governed by high principles and laws in a democratic manner, with a right to choose our own way of life. Since our Indian culture is slowly being absorbed by the American society, we believe we have the responsibility of preserving our precious heritage; recognizing that certain changes are inevitable. We believe that the Indians should provide the adjustment . . .*

The National Congress of American Indians believed reforms were possible within the federal **Bureau of Indian Affairs** and most tribes stood by this position during the American Indian Chicago Conference. However, there was internal disagreement that initiated the formation of a more militant group—the **National Indian Youth Conference**. The National Indian Youth Conference fundamentally distrusted the BIA to provide justice to the Native Americans and advocated change based on direct action.

By the early 1970s, militant groups comprised of Native Americans were seeking a tribal reservation based nationalism that was self-reliant and Native controlled. The **American Indian Movement** (**AIM**), formed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, later occupied BIA offices, the island of **Alcatraz**, **Fort Lewis** in **Washington state**, and the village of **Wounded Knee** in **South Dakota**. This militancy and activism is still relevant and continuing today. ◊

Note: The author sees this as research-in-progress and wishes anyone who knows more about this history to contact her or to add it to the "comments" section of this article on the areachicago.org website.

Resources:

1. LaGrand, James B. *Indian Metropolis: Native American in Chicago, 1945-1975*.

2. Simpson, George Eaton and John Milton Yinger, *Racial and Cultural Minorities: An Analysis of Prejudice and Discrimination*.

3. Weston, Mary Ann. *Native Americans in the News: Images of Indians in the Twentieth Century Press*.

4. American Indian Center of Chicago *http://www.aic-chicago.org*.

Peggy Terry at the Democratic National Convention, Grant Park, Chicago, 1968 during her run for vice president alongside Eldridge Cleaver.

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were one of the few tools to join the working class and circumvent racist reaction to civil rights. Hayden and Wittman asked, "As desegregation proceeds, what are the possibilities for alienation between Negroes and their real or possible white allies? The areas of possible alienation are twofold: between Negroes and all whites, and between Negroes and poor whites."[12]

SDS recruited students to work in cities like **Cleveland**, Chicago and **Newark** to "organize people around their felt needs" with the strategy of building an interracial movement of the poor—a northern upsurge—that could eventually be united with the Civil Rights Movement. It was the Chicago ERAP project, named **Jobs or Income Now** (**JOIN**), which most directly attempted to bring jobless workers displaced by automation into that movement. And, it was JOIN that lasted the longest of the ERAP projects. As Peggy Terry remembers it, by the time **Stokely Carmichael** made the more vocal call for whites to leave SNCC and "organize their own" in 1966, JOIN had already made inroads transforming poor white participation in the New Left. The road, however, was bumpy.

From its inception, ERAP was an experiment. Initially, the project received enthusiastic support from organized labor. Grants from the **United Auto Workers** assisted in the birth of eleven separate chapters. However, SDS's move from campus to community organizing was much debated. Some, like co-founder **Al Haber** thought it foolish to give up what the organization did well, which was to organize students. One unknown author wrote, "To split SDS into a community-oriented organization is to admit its failure on campus, to head for what seems to be an easier, more fruitful area to organize: the street people, students off campus."[13] Others, like **Steve Max**, supported the tactic but feared that the strategy of building a movement of poor people would fail if not integrated into a larger coalition with organized labor and progressive churches in close coordination with the Civil Rights Movement.

THE TEMPEST IN THE TEAPOT: CHANGING PEOPLE'S MINDS AND HEARTS

Joe Chabot was ERAP's first organizer in Chicago. JOIN's first action was to sell apples in the **Downtown Loop**, evoking the Great Depression when unemployed workers sold apples as a matter of survival. Chabot opened the first JOIN office just a few doors away from the **Unemployment Compensation Office** (**UCO**) on **North Kedzie Avenue**. With co-organizer Dan Max, one JOIN organizer would leaflet the UCO and the other would stay behind to talk with workers who visited in response to the leaflet. In the first week, roughly one hundred people came into the JOIN office. According to an internal ERAP paper, about 80 unemployed people took on a regular role in JOIN with about ten to fifteen assuming leadership roles.

After less than a year, however, Chabot seemed defeated by one of ERAP's first lessons—that change would be painfully slow, at least at first. Chabot left and JOIN moved out of the Downtown Loop. The chapter was permanently relocated to the Uptown neighborhood, focusing attention on a wider range of pressing, and therefore actionable, community issues: welfare, housing conditions, unemployment and police brutality. As more student organizers began to arrive in Chicago, JOIN also welcomed an influx of community members who became a steady force in the organization. From Uptown, Peggy Terry, Dovie Coleman and her niece **Dovie Thurman**, **Dorothy Perez**, **Dominga Alcantar**, **Mary and Candy Hockenberry**, **Virginia Bowers**, Terry's son **Doug Youngblood**, **Junebug Boykin** and **Bobby McGinness** were joined by SDS organizers **Richie and Vivian Rothstein**, **Mike James**, **Diane Fager**, **Pat Sturgis**, **Steve Goldsmith**, **Todd Gitlin** and **Nancy Hollander**, among others from both the community and the student movement.

Peggy Terry came to JOIN terrified about what she had to confront, but soon she saw an opportunity to show poor whites not only the terrain of political action but

12 Carl Wittman and Thomas Hayden, "An Interracial Movement of the Poor," in *The New Student Left*, Mitchell Cohen and Dennis Hale, eds. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 177.

13 *Students for a Democratic Society, Don't Cop Out! Stay In, Build a Campus SDS!* (Students for a Democratic Society, date unknown). Pamphlet, from personal collection of authors.

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fering. A large crowd gathered to watch. It included some of the "professional" movement types, those that talk a good game but do nothing. More importantly it included over the course of the day hundreds of students. Most agreed with us but a good number disagreed. Yet this action was a spark to start discussion but wasn't enough to go further and build an organization.

DAY TWO-SOMETHING MORE

We evaluated what we did that first day. It was still just the five of us. We decided to go a step further. It was clear that students were interested in what was going on. There was a dialogue going on and it was clear many students shared our outrage at the war in Vietnam. While we wanted to put a clear political analysis of the war out there, that would take time. What the students picked up on was finally someone was acting.

We decided to sit on and around the recruiting booth. Since w e were only five, we decided to leave when the administration told us we would be facing discipline if we didn't. That second day we got to school early and sat in the chairs and on the booth. When the Marines appeared they looked at us and went directly into the administrative offices. Several hundred students were around, some just to get breakfast but many others to see what would happen. While I can't speak for the others, I was nervous and scared. Confrontation isn't natural for me and it is difficult to do. Yet we had to speak out and to act to stop the war and eventually to change the system.

After a short time a representative of the administration came out. He told us the booth was reserved for the Marines and that we were blocking their use of it. He never told us to leave! So we didn't and the Marines did.

THE AFTERMATH

For several days after this action, there were intense discussions in the second floor area where recruiting took place involving hundreds of students. We put several of the booths together so people could sit to talk about the war, recruiting, imperialism, capitalism as well as freedom of speech. The discussion, while heated, remained non-violent.

Based on this action- this spark- an SDS chapter was built that had several hundred active members. The chapter carried out many actions over the next few years including leading a complete shut-down of the university. ▶

STORY #2: THE REA WILDCAT STRIKE OF SPRING 1968, CHICAGO.

by Earl Silbar, Lifelong activist and recently retired GED teacher

In the spring of 1968, our SDS debates about class, race and nationalism were tested. Close to campus, a group of **African-American Railway Express Agency** (**REA**) workers started a picket line, demanding that REA, the UPS of its day, end its many racist practices. The conflict was on. The question became, "Would the majority white male workforce respect or cross their picket line?"

Faced with this impromptu, unofficial picket line, the white workers quickly honored this wildcat strike (unauthorized by the union through legal procedures). The majority white workers endorsed the anti-racist demands, added demands to change work practices and add benefits and in effect, they stood against their own alleged "white skin privilege" and for a fight to improve life for all. Their solidarity blew our minds. Most of us had never seen such class-based, anti-racist solidarity by white workers. The media constantly portrayed them as fervently patriotic and physically attacking anti-war marchers. We believed in the ideas of working class organizing, yes, but most of us had never experienced or seen such class solidarity in action. Seeing is believing in a more profound way, at least for me. Naturally, this strengthened our convictions and brought greater interest in our ideas among students looking for ways to change society.

Our WSA politics led us to their picket lines right away, where we met some of the workers and invited them to campus to tell their story. Some did. From that meeting, we brought interested students to the picket lines, both to support their struggle and exchange ideas. We also had a few parties where people got to know each other.

One incident stands out: we showed the movie *Salt of the Earth* for strikers and students. Banned and blacklisted when it was made in the 1950s, it brought to life a miners' strike organized by the mainly **Mexican-American** workforce via their left-wing union. Facing overt company racism, anti communist attacks, and a court injunction against picketing, the workers had to confront their own sexism as the women took over the picket lines. It was a hugely effective event for us all. REA strikers and their wives were openly crying by the end, and it was a shared moment that will never be forgotten by those there.

THE UNION INTERVENES

After some days on strike, the union officially endorsed the strike and the workers demands in order to bring it to a close. The union officials called a mass REA union meeting where they proposed an end to the walkout in exchange for some concessions by REA. Since we were not union members, normally we wouldn't have been able to participate. However, many of the active workers fought to have us invited and succeeded. I was chosen to be our spokesperson to that meeting.

WORKERS' RESPONSE TO OUR COMMUNIST MESSAGE

Since most of the workers hadn't actively been on the lines and had only heard about us, I began by explaining that we were anti-war. Most of the workers had been drafted, served in the Army, and saw themselves as 'loyal Americans.' As I spoke, they were dead silent, many with hostile expressions and arms crossed , with no nodding heads. Telling them that we saw this as an imperialist war, promoting Corporate America's global domination at working people's expense brought no improvement. I began to explore how these same corporations exploited the U.S. workforce, using examples we'd learned from our days supporting them and hanging out. Discussing this as part of a wider capitalist system basedon exploiting the working class, I explained that we saw the answer in a working class revolution and a country run by and for working people that we called communism. Heads began nodding and smiles came to more faces as they recognized themselves and their own struggle in this context. At the end, I told them that we were with them, whether they decided to end the strike or continue. The ice had cracked, and they rose to give us a standing ovation. ▶

CONCLUSION

Ideas have consequences, and both sides bear responsibility for the demise of SDS. After walking out of the 1969 "split" SDS convention, the other side took over the national SDS resources such as the membership database and office. According to then **Weatherman** leader **Mark Rudd**, "we destroyed SDS. [...] Funny how, unintentionally, you can wind up doing the work of your enemies for them. The **FBI** should have put us on the payroll." (*http://studentsforademocraticsociety.org/pipermail/denver_studentsforademocraticsociety.org/2006-November/000202.html*). For two differing views on this by Weathermen leaders, see Mark Rudd's interview (*http://www.satyamag.com/mar04/rudd.html*) and **Bill Ayers'** book *Fugitive Days* (Beacon Press, 2001).

Within a year after that final SDS convention, the PL-led SDS was mostly dead despite growing movements for women's and gay liberation, radical workers' fights, anti-corporate environmentalism and rebellious anti-war activism by active-duty military personnel.

The situation held great potential, but we and others were not up to the challenge as personal fears and the political weight of **Stalin-era** communism choked that future for PL and the WSA. For PLP's views on SDS and more, see *http://progressivelabor.890m.com*. For one take on our failures, see "Five Retreats: A History of the Failure of the Progressive Labor Party" by **D.S. Sumner**, **R.S. Butler** (**Jim Dann** and **Hari Dillon**) in *The Reconstruction Press*, 1977. ◊

also how they might wrestle with fears of loosing what little they had. She knew well that for folks in Uptown, this was very, very little. The ruling class had long stoked poor whites' fear that gains for people of color would come at the greatest loss to them. In the Sixties, the **Cold War** added trepidation that social change would mean austerity and sacrifice.

Terry brought to JOIN the growing sophistication to navigate these anxieties among poor whites. She had the soft skills of an organizer, spending hours at her kitchen table talking to people. She was a prolific writer, an insightful though reluctant speaker and she listened to people's problems without judgment. Her style and experience earned her the admiration and trust of both Uptown's new arrivals and its long-time residents. JOIN member Mary Hockenberry remembers Terry as one of the most effective organizers in the neighborhood. Terry and Hockenberry came to JOIN around the same time, along with the Dovies and Virginia Bowers. The five women became fast friends and, together, formed the core of JOIN's welfare committee, along with the backbone for its housing rights work.

Mike Laly, a working-class son of European immigrants, recalled how Terry convinced his wife that change would not necessitate getting rid of all cherished possessions, as one movement worker had demanded. "There were discussions at the time, really esoteric ones, about what people had to give up in order to be part of a revolution. I think she had heard that people should be willing to give up their teapot if the people's army needed the scrap. My wife treasured her teapot. Peggy once came to visit us; we lived in a little **Quonset hut** with salvaged furniture. My wife brought this up because Peggy was the first person in the movement she thought she could trust. Both were working-class women. Peggy said, 'No Dear, you don't have to give up your teapot. This isn't about you giving things up, it is about making more so everyone can live in dignity.'"[14]

What made JOIN different from Chicago's **Alinsky**-driven organizations at the time was its mission to organize around poor people's immediate needs with an explicit effort to address racism. Terry's influence and ability to demonstrate this vision—whether over coffee in her kitchen or when confronting the welfare caseworkers—was critical for JOIN. At JOIN, every organizer was engaged in this conversation. Mary Hockenberry recalls, "Not only did I learned a lot [at JOIN]. I really faced the reality of what [the students] were fighting for. I felt they were right. I felt there had to be changes."[15]

A WELFARE RECIPIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

JOIN emerged in the same era in which **President Lyndon Johnson** declared an all-out "**War on Poverty**." A hallmark of LBJ's domestic policy, this war was fought with an onslaught of government services, creating the **Job Corps**, **Head Start**, as well as **Medicare** and **Medicaid**. During this time, the federal government also established local **Community Action Centers** (**CAC**) under the **Economic Opportunity Act** of 1964, which promised exactly what SDS demanded: a participatory role for poor people in the administration of the welfare state.[16] However, war on poverty agencies usually confined this input to informal, non-binding dialogue. In Chicago, the city channeled CAC funds to existing service agencies leaving the bulk of the decision-making process in the hands of administrators and social workers, not community representatives as the Act stipulated. Coupled with the fact that the federal government was simultaneously intensifying poverty by destroying thousands of homes through urban renewal, Uptown residents knew "**The Great Society**" to be a charade.

As early as JOIN's first year, the organization demanded accountability from new service agencies coming into Uptown and a voice in their projects and decisions. In a statement presented to the **Urban Progress Center** on its opening day in February 1965, JOIN wrote, "No poor person in Chicago has been consulted about the City's War on Poverty plans. These facts not only reveal a contempt for the poor and for their participation in democratic decision making; they also spell disaster for the success of Chicago's plans to fight poverty." [17]

JOIN organizers had spent months surveying Uptown residents about their priorities which included day care, safe places other than the street for children to play, jobs and better housing. In one section of Uptown, organizers also found that forty-eight percent of residents were unemployed and one third were on public assistance.[18] JOIN asserted, "The Uptown community rejects the notion that an Urban Progress Center is needed to coordinate existing public services. Those services are already inadequate and coordination will not enable them to deal with an economy which cannot provide jobs with decent pay for all its citizens." They argued, Uptown men and women didn't need counseling, they needed

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14 Mike Laly interviewed by James Tracy, via phone, September 27, 2007.

15 Mary Hockenberry interviewed by Amy Sonnie, Chicago, IL, March 23, 2008.

16 John A. Andrew, *Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998).

17 "Statement on Urban Progress Centers," presented to the Uptown Urban Progress Center on its opening day (Chicago: JOIN, February 12, 1965).

18 Jennifer Frost, *An Interracial Movement of the Poor: Community Organizing and the New Left in the 1960s* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 55.

The History, Philosophy and Aesthetics of AFRICOBRA

From the Archives

Originally published in *Afri-Cobra HI* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 1973). Revised by the author, Chicago 2008.

BARBARA JONES-HOGU

In 1968, a group of artists came together at the request of **Jeff Donaldson** in the studio of **Wadsworth Jarrell** to discuss the premise that **Black visual art** has innate and intrinsic creative components which are characteristic of our ethnic group. The artists who were present at the meeting consisted of painters, printmakers, textile designers, dress designers, photographers and sculptors who felt that their visual expression was definitely affected by the fact that they were Black and that their **Blackness** contributed a specific quality to their visual expression. Many of the artists at the first meeting were members of a visual art group which was then defunct, the **Visual Workshop of OBAC** (**Organization of Black American Culture**)—who created the ***Wall of Respect*** in Chicago in 1967. This mural became a visual symbol of Black nationalism and liberation.

Once the artists concluded that we had specific visual qualities intrinsic to our ethnic group, a future meeting was set for each person to bring in their work for analysis by the group. At that meeting the following visual elements were selected: bright colors, the human figure, lost and found line, lettering and images which identified the social, economical and political conditions of our ethnic group. When we had found our common denominators our next step was to ponder whether a group of Black artists could transcend the "I" or "me" for the "us" and "we" in order to create a basic philosophy which would be the foundation of a visual Black art movement. We wanted to create a greater role as Black artists who were not for self but for our kind. Could we sacrifice the wants of self and ego in order to create the needed positive visual images of our people? Yes, we can!

A nucleus of artists felt that a collective effort was possible under a common philosophy and a common system of aesthetic principles. The basic nucleus was composed of Jeff Donaldson, painter-teacher; Wadsworth Jarrell, painter-photographer, **Jae Jarrell**, clothing designer, **Barbara J. Jones** (**Hogu**) painter-printmaker-teacher, and **Gerald Williams**, painter-student. We had all noted that our work had a message: it was not fantasy or art for art's sake, it was specific and functional by expressing statements about our existence as Black People. Therefore, we began our philosophy with functionalism. Functional from the standpoint that it must communicate to its viewer a statement of truth, of action, of education, of conditions and a state of being to our people. We wanted to speak to them and for them, by having our common thoughts, feelings, trials and tribulations express our total existence as a people. We were aware of the negative experiences in our present and past, but we wanted to accentuate the positive mode of thought and action. Therefore our visual statements were to be Black, positive and direct with identification, purpose and direction. The directness of our statement was to be conveyed in several ways:

A. The visual statement must be humanistic with the figure frontal and direct to stress strength, straight forwardness, profoundness, and proudness.

B. The subject matter must be completely understood by the viewer, therefore lettering would be used to extend and clarify the visual statement. The lettering was to be incorporated into the composition as a part of the visual statement and not as a headline.

C. The visual statement must identify our problems and offer a solution, a pattern of behavior or attitude.

D. The visual statement must educate, it must speak of our past, present, or future.

Black, positive, direct statements created in bright, vivid, singing cool-ade colors of orange, strawberry, cherry, lemon, lime and grape. Pure vivid colors of the sun and nature. Colors that shine on Black people, colors which stand out against the greenery of rural areas. Cool-ade colors, Black positive statements stressing a direction in the image with lettering, lost and found line and shape were the beginning elements which created **COBRA, the Coalition of Black Revolutionary Artists**.

As COBRA began activating their philosophy we felt that everyone should work on a particular theme, the Black Family. The group met every two weeks to analyze and criticize the progress of each member as they completed their composition. These critiques became extremely important since it gave the artist a chance to work independently and jointly while having a group of his peers point out his strengths and weaknesses. As each artist developed his expression in a COBRA philosophy and aesthetics we moved on to the second theme, "I am Better Than Those Mother Fuckers," and we are. When the second theme was finished we dropped the idea of a definite theme and decided to start identifying problems, and solutions to problems, which we as Black people experience. Therefore in the third work and thereafter each artist worked on a theme which he felt was pertinent to our existence as a people.

At this point **Napoleon Henderson**, the weaver, joined the group and we moved from five to six which later changed to seven as **Nelson Stevens**, painter-printmaker came into the group. Yet we continued to grow with **Carolyn Lawrence**, painter; **Omar Lama**, a draftsman in pen and ink; and **Sherman Beck**, a painter and illustrator. During the same period of time we moved from COBRA to **African COBRA** to **AFRICOBRA**, an **African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists**. We moved from a national perspective to an international perspective. All Black people regardless of their land base have the same problems, the control of land and economics by **Europeans** or **Euro-Americans**.

The change from COBRA to AFRICOBRA also crystallized our philosophy and aesthetics, such as:

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS

1. IMAGES, a commitment to humanism, inspired by African people and their experience, IMAGES which perform some function which African people can relate to directly and experience. The art is the people, people reflect their art, and the art is for the people, not for the critics.

2. IDENTIFICATION, to define and clarify our commitment as a people to the struggles of African peoples who are waging war for survival and liberation.

3. PROGRAMMATIC, art which deals with concepts that offer positive and feasible solutions to our individual, local, national, and international problems.

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decent work. They needed housing without rats and roaches and building inspectors that followed up on complaints.

Led by Terry, the Dovies, Bowers and Hockenberry, JOIN formed a **Welfare Union** that took up the task of confronting the paternalism of state welfare. Through the welfare project, Uptown's residents, most of them women, challenged the invasion of welfare workers into their lives and homes, urged the bureaucracy to improve communications about available services and complaints, and, when necessary, brought the community right to the door of the welfare office.

Recipients routinely had their homes inspected by caseworkers, received notices demanding educational retraining or were repeatedly sent to the Montrose Urban Progress Center (MUPC), a particularly invasive war on poverty program. JOIN member **Phrenie Simpson** wrote for the newsletter, "I got a letter from the Welfare Dept. It said I was to go to school down on Montrose for reading, writing and arithmetic. I went to high school for 3 years. 2 years ago I went to night school... A girl from the JOIN office, Casey, found out for me I didn't have to go, but I didn't know. My welfare workers didn't tell me anything about it."[19]

The welfare committee quickly realized that recipients didn't even know that they were entitled to reliable payments, basic household items, and some amount of medical care. Through JOIN's monthly newsletter, Terry dedicated an entire column on welfare rights in each issue and the committee authored a **10-point Welfare Bill of Rights** demanding, among other things, a right to write the rules welfare dispensation, a right to privacy, to decency, to enough money for food, to keep their children and to organize without the threat of aid revocation.

In June 1965, four JOIN organizers were arrested after demanding that a recipient have the right to examine the rules. **Rennie Davis** and most of JOIN's staff went with the women. When Davis announced they wouldn't be leaving, caseworkers agreed to take requests from each of the recipients just to get them out of the office. Recognizing that they needed more than the word of the caseworkers, the women led another march soon after demanding copies of the welfare policies. Hockenberry remembers, "We never saw literature from the welfare office. The policies were hidden from the public. So we walked out with about twenty [caseworker] books. And, we danced and sang."[20]

Later that year, JOIN members picketed at the welfare office demanding an increase in budgets for day laborer work as well. Terry considered this one of the "most far reaching and important" actions because they won a day laborer center in the Urban Progress Center (UPC). In contrast to predatory labor placement agencies like Manpower, they convinced the UPC not to charge a fee. At the time, the going rate was fifty percent of the laborers' earnings. Agencies like **Manpower** were also in the habit of yanking workers just before they'd logged enough time to qualify for a job site's union. This was also one of the few times neighborhood men were involved with a welfare committee campaign.

As JOIN coupled direct action with direct services, the organization expanded its services to meet community needs including maintenance of a daily job list, as-needed transportation to Chicago employment agencies and worker placement for contractors willing to pay fair wages. By that point, JOIN's Welfare Union was well organized, boasted dozens of active members and provided a model for the organization's other committees. In May 1966, the Welfare Union organized a march in coordination with other welfare rights groups nationwide. The march represented the beginning of a national welfare coalition—**National Welfare Rights Organization** (**NWRO**)—and the start of what would soon become the local **Welfare Recipients Demand Action**, founded by Dovie Coleman. Within a few years the NWRO had more than twenty thousand members. As documented by historian **Jennifer Frost**, JOIN along with ERAP projects elsewhere did actually succeed in building an interracial movement of the poor, "especially, a mass movement of poor women."[21]

Indeed, JOIN's first women's group emerged from this welfare committee. Years before the emergence of the women's lib movement, JOIN women set the stage. Women like the Dovies, Peggy Terry, Jean Tepperman, Marilyn Katz, Diane Fager, Fran Ansley, Casey Hayden, Sharon Jeffrey, Vivian Rothstein, Virginia Bowers, and Mary and Candy Hockenberry played some of the most critical roles in JOIN. According to JOIN organizer **Bob Lawson**, the welfare rights work was the organization's heart and soul, as women organizers helped build multiracial coalitions both in the city and nationally.

JOIN's **Marilyn Katz** notes, "Because so much of poverty was a women's issue, and welfare was an issue of women, of women's lack of access to control of pregnancy and their inferior status in the workplace, and, particularly in the southern white community, their oppressed status in the home. Issues of women's liberation, in a way, came out very clearly in the kind of work we were doing." Women, Katz contends, were the canaries in the coalmine whether the issue was male dominance in JOIN decision making, welfare, lead poisoning, housing or the police violence targeting Uptown's sons.

While Peggy Terry never called herself a feminist, she along other JOIN women showed that JOIN's original vision was possible, and, in doing so, outlined a vision for women's liberation and leadership that was deeply rooted in ending race and class oppression. Women's leadership within JOIN helped deepen members' and organizers' understanding of poverty, racism and sexism as combined struggles, directly informing the formation of the **Chicago Women's Liberation Union**, the oldest feminist organization in the country. ◊

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19 Phrenie Simpson, "The Welfare Dept Should Ask People What They Want, Not Tell Them What They Need," *ERAP Newsletter* (New Haven, CT: Students for a Democratic Society, June 30, 1965), 2.

20 Mary Hockenberry interview.

21 Frost, *An Interracial Movement*, 163.

[In 1968, Terry ran as the vice presidential nominee of the U.S. Peace and Freedom Party as running mate to Eldridge Cleaver. That same year, The Young Patriots Organization and Rising Up Angry grew out of JOIN's work. Together with the Black Panthers and Young Lords they formed the original "Rainbow Coalition." Sonnie and Tracy's forthcoming book insightfully traces the legacy of these groups through the mid-1970s.]

4. MODES OF EXPRESSION, that lend themselves to economical mass production techniques such as "Poster Art" so that everyone that wants one can have one.

5. EXPRESSIVE AWESOMENESS, that which does not appeal to serenity but is concerned with the eternally sublime, rather than ephemeral beauty. Art which moves the emotions and appeals to the senses.

THE AESTHETIC PRINCIPLES

(These principles were not only drawn from the work of the artists in the group but were also drawn from our inheritable art forms as an African people.)

1. FREE SYMMETRY, the use of syncopated, rhythmic repetition which constantly changes in color, texture, shapes, form, pattern, movement, feature, etc.

2. MIMESIS AT MID-POINT, design which marks the spot where the real and the unreal, the objective and the non-objective, the plus and the minus meet. A point exactly between absolute abstractions and absolute naturalism.

3. VISIBILITY, clarity of form and line based on the interesting irregularity one senses in a freely drawn circle or organic object, the feeling for movement, growth, changes and human touch.

4. LUMINOSITY, "Shine," literal and figurative, as seen in the dress and personal grooming of shoes, hair (process or Afro), laminated furniture, face, knees or skin.

5. COLOR, Cool-ade color, bright colors with sensibility and harmony.

As we expanded our philosophy we developed as a group who created messages that dealt with the past, to give definition to our existence, in the present, to identify the images and activities of our present situation, and the future that would show a direction toward purpose and solution. Our endeavors and thoughts culminated in 1970 in *TEN IN SEARCH OF A NATION*, an exhibit which was held at the **Studio Museum in Harlem**. The work we exhibited was on view to educate and was not for sale. We did not want to promote individual gain of the images but we did want to stress a unified effort of giving our messages to the people. We had plans to create poster prints of the work so that everyone could have some AFRICOBRA messages. Our endeavor was well received. It was the first time that most of the viewers had seen a group of artists jointly working together toward a concerted philosophy with images which stated to Black people "Unite," "Unite or Perish," "We Will Build Here or Nobody Will," because "I Am Somebody," "I Am Better."

Each artist dealt with their images in different perspectives. Nelson Stevens dealt with the spiritual aspect of nation building in *Jihad*, *Uhuru*, and *Ujamma*; he wants "to get as close as possible to the jihad... to images of those brothers and sisters who have never existed before," while Jeff Donaldson dealt with the modern *Amos and Andy* who are not for *Toming* but are seriously dealing with our problems with an advanced weapon. His Oshun, Oba and Yansa, the *Wives of Shango* (God of thunder and lightning who balances all debts), are three sisters who are ready for combat with bullet, belts and guns; while the "Shango Shortys" are dealing with their past in the tensions of today in a high- strung society of crystal clear glass.

Carolyn Lawrence wants to "Take the past and the present and make the new image." She records her concepts in *Pops*, a tribute to an old man, while in *Manhood* she pointed a direction of responsibility for all men. Jae Jarrell, the dress designer, laid out strong messages on her garments with strong patterns, textures and colors of *Black Family*, *Unity*, and *Manhood*.

Wadsworth Jarrell stated, "If you can get to Be-Bop, you can get to me. That is where the truth is." The rhythms of his Be-Bop can be seen in the repetitious letters and colors of *Cool-ade Lester*. Jarrell's *Homage to a Giant* pays tribute to many pertinent leaders, such as **Malcolm X**, **Martin Luther King**, **Jesse Jackson**, **Fred Hampton**, **Huey P. Newton**. His images state that we must be about *Tightening Up the Game*, and *This Time Baby* we are not going to be turned around from our objective of total liberation.

Barbara Jones-Hogu, *To Be Free*, 1972. Silkscreen print. Courtesy South Side Community Art Center.

Each artist brought his peculiar talent to the commune and exhibit. Sherman Beck, a magic maker, extended himself through the magic of his medium. Although he had no titles on his work he dealt with another realm of the spiritual essence of man which could be seen and felt in his paintings. Napoleon Henderson, the weaver, looks toward himself and Africa as his future. The title of his work does not speak of the significant symbolism, bright harmonizing colors and textures in his words "Doodles" "Cool-ade Icicles" and "Bakota."

Yesterday, today and possibly tomorrow Gerald Williams will respond to the potential for **Black Nationhood** and the need to develop that potential when he created *I Am Somebody*, *Nationhood*, and *Wake Up* to the King Alfred plan of concentration camps; while Omar Lama works toward positive images—images that will inspire Black people to a higher level of consciousness in

"AFRICOBRA" continues on p. 32

A Conversation With Barbara Jones-Hogu

INTRODUCTION AND INTERVIEW BY EDNA TOGBA

In 1973, Edward Springs, the former director of the Studio Museum of Harlem, wrote, "AFRICOBRA—African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists—from their perspective as Afro-Americans are attempting to identify style and rhythm qualities that are expressive of Black people and people everywhere. It is the age for moving beyond mere rage—it's nation time. And Black artists are searching. Black artists are immigrating into self, family, and nationhood, and celebrating the process."

Barbara Jones-Hogu was one of the founding members of AFRICOBRA. AFRICOBRA—an artist collective, consisting of painters, photographers, printmakers, textile designers, and sculptors—was conceived by artist and scholar Jeff Donaldson in 1968 here in Chicago. This was also a year in which many important artistic developments were made by Black artists and institutions. This is the period of the Black Arts Movement, inaugurated by the publication of Black Fire, an anthology of works by authors such as James T. Stewart, Sun Ra, Larry Neal, and many others. The Ebony Museum of Negro History and Arts, founded by Margaret and Charles Burroughs, was renamed the DuSable Museum of African American History as it's still known in Chicago. The first national conference of Black museums was held in Detroit, and ConFABA—Conference on the Functional Aspects of Black Art—was organized at Northwestern University.

In 1968 she was still an art student. Born in 1938 in Chicago, Jones-Hogu received a B.A. from Howard University, a B.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and an M.S. from the Illinois Institute of Technology. Her work has been in numerous exhibitions in museums and galleries, not only in Chicago but across the country—including the Studio Museum of Harlem in New York, the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, the African American Museum of Philadelphia, and the Lusenhop Fine Art Gallery in Chicago, among many others. Her work has also been included in many books, including John Pitman Weber and James and Eva Cockcroft's Toward a People's Art: The Contemporary Mural Movement; Lisa Farrington's Creating Their Own Image: The History of African American Women Artists; and James Edward Smethurst's The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s. Not only has she worked as an artist, but has also worked as a teacher in public schools in Chicago and an associate professor at Malcolm X College, helping to educate and inspire the next generation.

EDNA TOGBA (ET) I wanted to begin by asking you about what the significance of the year 1968—what significance does it have for you, and its effect on the work that you produced during that time period?

BARBARA JONES-HOGU (BJH) Well, in 1968 I was a student at IIT and I was in printmaking.... And I had just started doing, basically, silk screening at that particular period of time. The work previous to this was all based on very negative concepts of what was happening in the USA, and after I joined AFRICOBRA, which was in the latter part of 1968, it took on a more positive viewpoint, so—

ET Your work?

BJH Yes. Before it was mainly done in red, white, and blue, and black. And dealt with stars, the Ku Klux Klan, skeletons, and different things on that order—to indicate a form of racism, fanaticism and genocide. And after I joined AFRICOBRA it became more positive in terms of blackness and trying to teach, influence, inspire—you know, those who looked at the images.

ET Can you describe your interest in art in your educational developments up until that year when you joined?

BJH Well, basically I was—I started out as a painter.... I went to Howard University and I majored in art education there. I came to the Art Institute and majored in painting, drawing, and printmaking. I would have gone on and worked on an M.F.A. at the Art Institute, but they wanted you to be full time, and I wanted to work. So I left there and I went to IIT and Misch Kohn gave me a chance to teach during the day and then come in—I had a key to the printmaking room and I could come and work whenever I wished. And once you got in you could stay all night if you wished and work. So that's the reason I went there, and previous to that year they had someone that was teaching painting there—but he retired right before, so that's why I kind of ended up in printmaking and design instead. But I was mainly interested in painting.

ET Can you tell us about how AFRICOBRA formed? Who was involved, what were their roles?

BJH Well, I always say Jeff Donaldson. He is the impetus of the whole movement of AFRICOBRA. At the time he was up at Northwestern, he was a ... Ph.D. student there. And I'm sure that he in his studies thought about starting some type of art movement because we were moving out of OBAC, which was the foundation for the mural on 43rd Street [*The Wall of Respect*]. He invited each person to join the group; he asked if we would be interested in starting another group of artists. And so ... he called artists together and we met at Wadsworth

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Black Jesus, and *United or Perish*.

Last but not least is Barbara J. Jones, who states *Black People* a total people, a total force, Unite, Unite, as we learn of our *Heritage* as an African in a racist country in the *Land Where My Father Died* which need to *Stop Genocide* while Black men must *Rise and Take Control*.

We moved from *Ten in Search of A Nation* homeward with important feedback from our viewers which gave encouragement, inspiration and direction for the future... The future works of AFRICOBRA became stronger, more powerful and more accessible as we started creating silk screen poster prints which was another phase of our basic philosophy. The poster prints made our images available to a larger audience at a reasonable price. For the prints, which were a total group effort, we selected one work from each artist, especially those that had been exhibited in the *Ten in Search Of A Nation* exhibit. Carolyn Lawrence's *Manhood*, the first print, enthralled everyone in the group as we finished the last color and saw the crystallization of many trials, errors and color separations. The completion of the first print produced a quick production of the next three which were *Unite*, *Wake Up*, and *Uhuru*. The prints which followed were *African Solar*, and *Victory in the Valley of Esu*. In the process of working on the prints, we lost Sherman Beck and Omar Lama, but we gained **Howard Mallory**, ceramicist-jeweler-textile designer, who did a great deal of work on producing all the prints.

In between production of the prints, we did find time to create broader visual statements about the changing conditions of our time and our people. Our new statements related the strength and determination of **Angela Davis** and Martin Luther King, the truth and wisdom of Malcolm X, the continual fall of Black education and the need of education to be based on the history and accomplishments of Black People. Our children have put up a tough struggle to *Keep Their Spirits Free*. Our images still stressed *Nation Time*, but emphasized: *Don't Forget the Struggle*, we all need spiritual unity as featured in *Spirit Sister*, *Wholy People*, and *From These Roots* we gain strength. If we *Get Some Land Black People*, we need land to survive, for land provides the essentials which cultivate and nourish life, and *We Must Go Home with Something*. These images were the foundation for our AFRICOBRA II show at the Studio Museum in Harlem in the fall of 1971.

Nothing is continuously stable, and things must change, perhaps from young to old, east to west or vice versa or marching seconds of infinite time never to return. In our development we began to change; we first changed in position, time and space. The first to extend our commune was Jeff Donaldson who moved to **Washington, D.C.** to become the head of the **Howard University Art Department** early in the spring semester of 1971. Next to leave, Wadsworth and Jae Jarrell with one child at hand and one on the way, they moved eastward to **Connecticut**, **Massachusetts**, and later to Washington, D.C. The extension of our space relationship broke down our immediate communications and communal development, but it also built personal progress without the intervention of momentary feedback of criticism in our trials and tribulations which created a more responsive or irresponsive action. As we attempted communications across country we continued to work and develop but at a slower pace. Before long another AFRICOBRA member, Nelson Stevens, had made his way eastward to **Amherst**, Massachusetts, and what was six became five again. We began with five members in Chicago. The work of AFRICOBRA will continue to grow because we have a foundation by which we have built a strong value system of our work and a philosophy which guides us toward a common aim of artistic endeavor. The works which are exhibited in AFRICOBRA expressed the expansion of our creative effort in new media, new techniques, new styles and a new member, Frank Smith, painter.

Where will we go from here? As time moves so shall we, to a broader and more expanded commitment to our people visually, mentally, and physically. Our new visual statement shall explore the total gamut of our existence:

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE FAMILY

A. The growth of the individual from the cradle to the grave. We will express the physical, mental and emotional changes of the male and/or female as they develop from a baby to a child to teenager—adult and old age; and in so doing, we can state their trials, their errors, accomplishments and success, their character, wisdom, foolishness, etc.

B. We will make visual statements of how we see the positive or negative relationship between husband and wife, mother and child, and father and children. What type of roles are we playing and are our roles relevant to our whole existence as a people. We will extend our visual imagery to speak of our relationship and activities of our extended family—the cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents, godparents. How they created strong influences on our life, past or present? The family relations with other families or other groups of the same or different ethnic groups. We will identify ourselves visually at this time-space and record our daily activities, our values and the styles of our day. We will record our dances, our athletics, our hobbies, our night life, our parties, our meetings, our leaders, our labors, our children and their education.

OUR VISUAL IMAGE WILL BE GREATLY CONCERNED WITH EDUCATION

A. There are different contents of education, including the spiritual education of the family. This is not to replace spiritual education in the Christian church, but to state a need for a spiritual religion based on the needs of our people and a supreme being which reflects ourselves and our needs.

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Jarrell's studio—that used to be on 61st just off Stony Island—and talked about the possibilities. .... Everybody brought some of their artwork to the next meeting and we analyzed each person's artwork and out of each person's artwork something was selected to become a part of what we were going to work toward. And out of my work was basically lettering because I had used lettering before coming into AFRICOBRA, and so lettering would be part of it. I would say the bright colors came with AFRICOBRA. ...in fact we met right over there [gesturing toward Harper Court] in the coach house. Our first meeting—

ET Oh really?

BJH —it was called the coach house at that time and Bill Walker was part of it and we met right over there and there was a large group of artists that came for that first meeting for the Visual Art Workshop. The coach house—not there, but, you know, where the coach house used to be. There's a restaurant there now....We met there as a group....

ET [After COBRA (Coalition of Black Revolutionary Artists)] when did the AFRI come in?

BJH It came in later. And there was a transition—we thought about adding, first Afro-cobra, then it was African Cobra, and then it became Afri-cobra. So when it became AFRICOBRA it became an **African Commune Of Bad Relevant Artists**—even though the letters are the same, the words were changed, okay? Oh, you want me to go through the others—I mean, in terms of how it developed from there?

ET Whatever you think. You can.

BJH After [the initial themes of The Black Family and We Are Better Than Those Motherfuckers] we started just identifying problems and coming up with solutions in our imagery to the problems, and we stopped dealing in a theme for everybody to work on. As long as the theme had a tendency to deal with our experience as an African people in America then it would be used. And it expanded also in terms of whatever happened to us as a people worldwide, internationally—because you're seeing some of the artists' work, and they deal with some of the conflicts and issues that were happening in Africa and other places in their images. So, once we started working together [more cohesively] we would bring our work in, we would discuss it, we'd look at it, analyze it, critique it—you know, offer suggestions in terms of production and what to be done in terms of changing it if the person was interested, and whether we were on target...working with the concepts that we first began. Then the philosophical concepts started. And there were several—first dealing with the images, the commitment to humanism, inspired by African people and their experiences—images which perform some function which African people can relate to directly and experience art for the people—the people reflect the art and the art is for the people—not for the critic.... That was one aim that we wanted to make art that could be bought by anyone—that's why we got into the idea of doing art posters for a period of time—a short period of time, I would say. Identification—to define and clarify our commitment as a people to the struggles of African people who are waging war for survival and liberation. And that would be anywhere in the United States or on the planet.

ET You were speaking about the workings of AFRICOBRA and the first meeting coming together and choosing—each artist would bring their work and you would choose [an element]. For me one of the most striking elements of AFRICOBRA was that it was a collective—and I wanted to know if you could talk a little more about the daily workings of it?

BJH We did not work together, we basically worked separately and we brought our work together. But I thought it was very significant that we worked on a philosophy that we tried to bring together and speak about what we were doing, and that we tried to work toward an aesthetic in our work rather than just creating images. ... That's not just significant for our group but for any group. You know, I would even like to see artists get together and work on that—because I see a lot of artwork and it seems like it lacks direction.... I mean, I thought that was very significant—to me it was very positive, you know, to encounter imagery with an aesthetic and philosophy with all of those that I was working with.

ET You mentioned earlier that one of the aims of AFRICOBRA was to create, I guess you could call it democratic art—poster art, silk screenings that were purchased for not a very large sum—

BJH They were only ten dollars—I see that you have one original back there [in the gallery], because it has the Bakota head on it—okay, and it says $10 on there, so—God, they were only ten dollars!

ET But how did that aspect of it play itself out in the exhibition or the exposure to the public? How were these prints disseminated, how were they shown?

BJH Well they were—some of them were sold at fairs, some of them were shipped and sold at the Studio Museum. I personally did not sell any—

ET Oh really?

BJH —per se. But there were others in the group that actually worked on selling the prints. I worked on producing the prints. They were produced in the studio that I had, in what was Wadsworth Jarrell's studio on 61st Street, and it was a very nice studio. In fact, the sculpture that's in Jackson Park was built in the studio that we had, and we worked there in twos and threes producing, printing the silk screens in that studio. But Napoleon Henderson and some of the others were the ones who actually took the posters out and sold them.

ET It was yourself, and Jeff, and—

BJH Jeff Donaldson, Wadsworth Jarrell—because we met in his studio—Gerald Williams, Jae Jarrell, and myself. And then the others were added—Napoleon Henderson, Nelson Stevens—who are still members, the two of them are still members—Carolyn Lawrence, Omar Lama, and Sherman Beck. Sherman Beck has had two exhibits recently at the U of I—one this year and one last year or year before last.

ET You spoke about the importance of text and images—and could you just go more into detail about the relationship between the two?

BJH The text had to deal with meaning and messages so that there would not be any misunderstanding in terms of what the imagery was about—that was the basics of utilizing the text.

ET Because I think about your lettering versus, perhaps, Nelson Stevens's lettering—

BJH Nelson Stevens usually—I would call his lettering almost "headline"—because he would have "UHURU" or something at the top, or something like that. But I think Wadsworth Jarrell utilized letterings that pulsated through his composition. Each person dealt with it differently, so in mine... these are basically cut film stencils that I used for doing silk screen, and so they're all cut stencil lettering.

ET Can you tell us more about the process of creating, for example, this "To Be Free" silk screen?

BJH Some of the ones I did, I would paint them first—make a painting of them and then broke them down into colors and then make stencils from the painting in the process of doing that. Some of them were just—after I would do the first printing of them then I would decide on other things

B. The humanizing aspects of education are respect, truth, and brotherhood: The role of man: the role of woman: the role of child and family to the total group. We must be concerned about establishing positive values and relationships in these aspects of education.

C. Our visual image will express the academic education of learning one's history, circumstances and accomplishments.

D. The industrial education of producing and being productive for self and kind in the building of every component needed to run a nation.

Our Visual Image Can State Our Social Needs and Social Services

A. Health facilities and services. Visually, what is the state of health facilities and services. We will express the need to develop our own health facilities in order to safeguard the health of our people.

B. We will express the protection of safeguarding the welfare of our old, young and those in need. We must be responsible for their welfare.

C. We will visually analyze our protective forces in the police or the use of security guards. Do they actually protect and serve our communities? If not, how can this be altered? The protection of the community and all of its components should be our responsibility and should not be allocated to an opposing group.

D. We will visually express a need to establish and develop our community institutions such as cultural, social, educational and religious or spiritual centers and provoke positive actions by visually stating how these organizations should develop the philosophy and ideology of blackness and its welfare and continuous existence.

THE ECONOMIC NEEDS

A. We will visually state types of jobs available to our people and the types of skills and professions needed to run a nation are not just those that are teachers, lawyers, and doctors; but those who are also needed are people skilled in the technology of food, clothing, and housing industries. Those who make operations run such as janitors, secretaries, programmers, repairmen, etc.

B. We will be concerned about the types of businesses and industries which must be created to be self-sufficient people.

C. We will develop new solutions to different types of needs and services which employ community personnel, yet develop and perpetuate our people as a cohesive community.

Visual Statements Concerning the Present, Past and Future Political Needs and Developments

A. What type of governmental or guidance unit should be developed and put into practice and the types of rules and regulations which should govern us as a group, which would provoke the need for government and self-governmental plans over not today but the next twenty or thirty or one hundred years. We are kept from developing future programs because we are kept in an unbalanced state of either acting or reacting to our present circumstances. These methods and solutions to constant flux can be visually stated.

B. Political and group cohesiveness is needed to build a strong Black nation and to develop our total culture. Visually we can state the need for group action toward the positive needs in a cooperative direction.

RELIGIOUS NEEDS

A. We will develop an image which stresses a strong religion which has us as the base of its origin with the Supreme Being and the mediator reflecting our physical being. We must illustrate stronger ties between our people and for our people. We must develop a more concrete moral code.

In fact, AFRICOBRA can move toward stating and restating repeatedly the needs for organization, purpose and goals of our people for a stronger cohesive body and the need for racial nationalism. AFRICOBRA will not only state our problems and solutions but also state our emotions, our joys, our love, our attitude, our character, our total emotional and intellectual responses and feelings. Art can be a liberating force—a positive approach concerning the plight and the direction of our people. Visual imagery should bring us together and uplift us as a people into a common—a common unit, moving toward a common destination and a common destiny. WE IN AFRICOBRA SHALL HELP BRING THIS ABOUT.

Edna Togba and Barbara Jones-Hogu at DOVA Temporary, August 2008.

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that could be added. Usually there was always some form of design, so there's actually like a circle moving through—circle moving through all of the figures that are there in the image. And basically in silk screening you have to consider in terms of your color—so, how many colors you're going to have and where you're going to utilize them. I used a lot of gold and violet for skin tones. So, outside of that it would be repeating the green. It's not really a lime green—it's more like a grass green, and the strawberry orange—the Kool-aid colors!

ET Did you create the colors yourself, or was there, um—did you mix them yourself or was there a—

BJH Advance Silk Screen Company—I bought most of my inks from them, I know that they're no longer [in business]. My inks...were all oil based. I stopped printing because of the fact that—I had a studio on 78th and my son would get ill when he would go to my studio because of the fumes. And so I had to stop actually printing with oil-based inks, and I didn't really want to print with water-based, so I kind of just stopped printing... Because water-based colors were not as intense at the time. The colors were more translucent or transparent, and these are basically opaque colors. And I really didn't get into using acrylic inks—you know, they dry fast in the screen, and the screen becomes clogged quickly, so oil based inks were what I favored. Outside of that, in terms of doing this—this was done in a very short period of time, from the conception of it to the actual printing of it was only a few days or a day and a half or two, or whatever.

ET I had a question about—some of your work addresses themes of Black womanhood, and I wanted to know if that was a conscious stance on your part or just one of many different themes that you were addressing.

BJH Well, I have—I think most of the ones that I did for AFRICOBRA have women in them. Many of the ones that I did before then mostly had men in them. So I don't know, I don't think that that was a conscious decision that I made. It was based on whatever I was trying to address in terms of the imagery. ... It depended on what the idea that I wanted to portray and the concept that I wanted to portray in the work. So...I didn't specifically think about women, doing just women. It was based on whatever I was identifying as the problem, you know, maybe that we as women have to address.

ET My final question is—so we're now in 2008, 40 years basically after your first involvement in AFRICOBRA—and what sort of changes do you see in regards to this generation of Black artists versus the ones that you were a part of, and what is—

BJH There are more of them! And they're working in many different ways. I'm just happy to see that their—their ideas and what they're coming up with. I enjoy a lot of the naturalism that I see in some of the artist's works—the paintings and the prints. And I don't get into the city always to see all of the opening exhibits of what's, happening, you know, what has occurred with the artists of today, but I enjoy seeing their work.

ET And what does 2008 look like for you as an artist?

BJH Oh, 2008. Well, I'm a professional student, I have to say that. And I'm working on an M.F.A. in independent filmmaking—

ET Oh wow.

BJH And I'm doing that at Governor State University . I'm interested in documenting artists and their work, specifically, I guess, for the Midwest. Presently I'm documenting the work of artists in the South Suburbs, and at Governor State University right now, so, you know, they're my—I'm learning on them . I'm learning to shoot and edit ... I have a lot of editing to do. I've shot a lot, but I have to edit—so I have a lot of editing to do. So I shall see. But I've shot...Arlene Crawford and I've done something of her I haven't edited yet. Barbara Thomas—she's a printmaker, she lives in Hyde Park presently. She was a student at Governor State—and she does work on women, women's issues in her work, mostly. She does silkscreens and woodcuts. But I haven't edited what I've shot of her and her work yet. But I'm working on it. I'm working toward it.

ET Well, congratulations.

BJH I'm going to see what occurs. I'm working on it. So since I've been working in media—and I started working in media after I retired. I was taking some courses at Governor State University and I was interested in learning videography and editing—I took documentary filmmaking twice, and then the instructor asked me why didn't I do a masters, and I said "I already have a masters, I don't need one"—and he says, "Well, you should think about it." And so I did, and then they said "Oh don't you want to be a part of it," and I said "Yes, I'll sign the petition!" And so that's how I came to work on an M.A., and then an M.F.A.—and I hope to complete it by 2010.

This conversation was a public forum held at DOVA Temporary Gallery in August 2008. A complete version of the transcript, including audience discussion, will be made available as part of Issue #7 on www.areachicago.org.

Introducing

The Chicago April 1968 Oral History Project

*Very little gets said about the riot that raged after the murder of **Martin Luther King**. Yet this history is ever-present, written large in the vacant lots and boarded up buildings along once-busy **West Side** business districts. The point of this project has been to speak with those who were most impacted by the riot, but whose voices we have not heard: the residents of communities that experienced violence and disorder. In the earliest stages of the project I realized that the “official story” contains errors and biases; and the voices that compose it are heard from only selectively.*

*A caption in a colorful, two-page spread on the year 1968 in the **Encyclopedia of Chicago** reads, “Some two miles of the commercial heart of **Lawndale** on **West Madison** were little more than charred rubble.” **Madison Street**, as any **West Sider** can tell you, does not run through Lawndale. A harmless typographical error, but indicative of how those on “the outside” often fail to consult the knowledge of those most intimately connected to the events they study.*

Follow the story as it develops at http://april68chicago.wordpress.com. *For more information contact* samuelalove@gmail.com.

—Sam Barnett

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Diane Gardner: We had reports in school about Martin Luther King. We had to learn some of his speeches, that he was a **Civil Rights** leader. Just the basics.

Geraldine Haracz: Martin Luther King wasn’t a big a deal to a lot of people at the time. He was just another protester, so to speak. Somebody else to listen to, another voice. Although his was more of a reasonable one, the peaceable person. Others were more violent in their behavior, but they wanted to be heard.

Mary Ann Alexander: I wasn’t looking for the **Great Black Hope**. He didn’t change anything too much ‘cause we still had housing problems.

Joan Green: He was the voice for a lot of Blacks back then. We felt that we finally had someone that could voice their opinion in a way people, Black or white, could understand.

Al Johnson, Sr.: By me being a child I used to think that he was a troublemaker. It seemed that every time I would see the news he would be in these marches and there would always be trouble. I figured he was the one that was inciting it. I didn’t understand at the time. But then once it was explained to me what he was doing and why, then I got a clearer understanding of what the peace movement was all about.

Clarence Langworthy: Everything he said and did was for the benefit of the Black man. I wouldn’t say he was no saint or nothing like that, but I respected him because I knew how it felt to be segregated. I was born in 1927 in **Eudora, Arkansas**, thirteen miles north of the **Louisiana** line, right across the **Mississippi River**. It was ‘yes, sir’ and ‘no, sir.’ If I was walking down the road I would have to get out of the way otherwise that white man would run me down.

Barbara Townsend: I didn’t know anything about him until his death.

Mercedes Williams: You could feel something was going to happen. The way he talked, looked like he knew something was going to happen to him. It seemed like he preached his own funeral.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Mary Gordon-Dixon: My brother was wounded in the **Vietnam War** that day. I was still at school. My mother then sent for us to come from school and then she told us what had happened to my brother. They would be shipping him back stateside, to the **Great Lakes Medical Base**. His wound was in his stomach area and his leg, he had a lot of shrapnel. They had to put a metal rod in his left leg.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4 – THE WEST SIDE

Al Johnson, Sr.: My family and I were sitting at home watching the news. At that time **Vietnam** was the topic because every time you turned on the TV you saw something concerning the war. There was breaking news that Martin Luther King was shot and killed in **Memphis, Tennessee**.

Barbara Townsend: My mom was getting my hair done so when we went to church on Sunday morning she wouldn’t have to do anything but just brush over it. We had the radio on because we didn’t have a television, and when it came across that Martin Luther King was killed there was silence.

Al Johnson, Sr.: My mom, I can remember her screaming and crying. My father, he was really upset. He grabbed her, to try to calm her down. I just dropped my head and started to cry.

My siblings, by them being young, didn’t have any understanding of what was going on or who Martin Luther King was. It was a disturbing moment for me, a very disturbing moment.

Barbara Townsend: I don’t know how much my mother knew about Martin Luther King and the things he was doing, because I didn’t know anything about him. It was quiet. I didn’t know what questions to ask.

Diane Gardner: We were watching television and it was interrupted and the house got quiet. My mom said, “Lord have mercy.” I remember sadness, crying. Shortly after that was when people started pouring out of their houses.

Al Johnson, Sr.: People came out of their apartments screaming, “They killed him! They killed him! They finally killed him!” It wasn’t a riot, but people were really angry.

Our apartment faced the corner, **Maypole and Lake**. We stood out in front of the apartment, I could see people running up and down the street, some holding their heads, saying “I can’t believe this.” Cars had stopped in the streets. People were losing their dag-blamed minds.

My dad told people to calm down because doing that is not gonna bring him back, it’s just going to make things worse for people in the neighborhood. Some people listened but some cursed at him, you know, “F-you, they killed our leader.”

Prentiss Alexander: I was working a second shift. I got home, man, there was no lights in the neighborhood and my street was black, over on **Jackson**, near **Pulaski**. Just black. No street lights, no lights in the house because the electricity was off. I barely got out of the car, man, I looked out the window and people are turning cars over. And then the stuff hit the fan, man.

Delores Williams: I was working as a nurse in the burn unit at **Cook County Hospital**. I was working a 3 to 11 shift that day. We all just stopped. It was just maybe a minute. My thoughts were, how could this be? What’s next?

After we got over the initial shock we all met up in the lobby, downstairs on the first floor, and the unit administrator, **Ms. Hunt**, said we would be starting a disaster plan. One nurse asked, “Do you think we will have trouble?” and Ms. Hunt said, “I am willing to bet it’s going to be a riot, because Dr. King is dead.” We knew that he had got shot, but we did not know he had died until she came over.

The riot actually started on the fourth. The backload of people coming in started between seven p.m. and eight p.m.. Many of these people had been assaulted, some of them had been taken out of their cars. Some people stated that they had been hit by bats. One man, his nose was broken in two places. The jaw was fractured. We had one lady, she had went into labor and she had been hit with some object and apparently some person had kicked her in the head with a heavy shoe. She lost that baby. She almost bled to death.

I worked until three o’clock the next day. In the p.m.. 24 hours.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4 – THE SOUTH SIDE

Mary Gordon-Dixon: Most people’s parents was just getting off of work, and some of the older people were out. It was April, it was nice, it was the beginning of spring. People was running through the streets yelling, “Dr. King’s just been killed! Dr. King’s been assassinated!”

I saw people that was just getting off the bus, walking into the building and somebody said, “Did you just hear? Dr. King got assassinated!” And they would breakdown and cry right then and there where they were at. People were crying on the elevators.

Malcolm Smith: I see everybody out on the streets, I mean, the whole neighborhood out in the streets, people just runnin’ around crazy. A whole crowd of people runnin’ around the streets yelling, “Martin Luther King got killed!” I saw all the bigger guys, older than me, grown-up people, they tearin’ down things, pullin’ down things, bendin’ up things, all this kinda stuff.

All down **35th**, all down **39th**, all down **43rd**, all down **47th**, **Michigan**, **Indiana**, **South Parkway**, anywhere

there were stores at, things were hit. The owners were out there saying, "You can have everything." They was like throwin' their hands up, "You can have everything, just let us go."

Jamesetta Mixon: In our neighborhood people began to gather outside, across the street, and some were talking about tearing things down. There was a lot of cursing, people saying things like: "Those MF's killed the only man who didn't do anything to them." "Let's retaliate, we got all these white people in our neighborhood selling us bad food." All kinds of things like that.

My friends and I, there were probably eight of us, all in our late teens; we were gunned up and on the roof of the church across the street. We sat on that roof for maybe two, three, maybe four hours. We were going to shoot at the police or anything white that came into our neighborhood. That was the plan. Nobody could see us but we could see everything.

We had a grocery store called **Red Rooster** on **State Street**. I never had any bad experiences there but it used to smell sometimes. The food was just not the same quality you would find in a white neighborhood store, and it was much more expensive. The Red Rooster burned down that night, which I later thought was a dumb move because now we didn't have a grocery store. But at the time it seemed right, get Whitey out of the neighborhood.

Another store on the corner burned. People even burned down the little newspaper stand on **51st and State**. There was looting down **47th street**. People were breaking into stores; televisions, jewelry was being stolen, a cleaners on 47th was broken in to, owned by a white person. It was a mess. But it was all in retaliation because of King's death.

The police did not show up until the fires started. They let us destroy things in our neighborhood before they showed up.

When the police did arrive none of us fired a shot. We were afraid to; none of us had taken anybody's life. We still had the violence in our heart to do something, but to take a life; we just couldn't take that step. I do believe if push had come to shove some people up there probably would have. If there had been a point that they were facing **The Man**, the pigs, as we called them then, I think some of the guys might have because they had those tendencies.

After the fires had started, we climbed down from the roof and the guys loaded the guns into a truck parked off in the alley, before the fire engines arrived. The guys took off and we went back to our homes. We felt like we had lost because we didn't do anything, but now that I think about it we won because we could have lost our lives.

THURSDAY, APRIL 4 – THE NORTH SIDE

Joan Green: We was in the house. We lived on the nineteenth floor of **Cabrini**. **1119 N. Cleveland**. Those were the red projects. 1906, in 1119. It was just panic all through the building. I cried because I saw the older people crying. They was telling us, "They killed Martin Luther King because they didn't like that fact that he was speaking out about prejudice."

Clarence Langworthy: I was working at **3700 North Lincoln**, the **Green Mills Corporation**. When I started in 1965 there were only three Black people working there.

I had to go through **Belmont**, the people there they'd roll their eyes or keep an eye on me, see what I was doing, stuff like that. I knew I was being watched. At a place on **Lincoln and Grace**, I used to have lunch there, there was a few people who said some things I didn't like, pertaining to my race and what went on over on the West Side. I got into a little scuffle, just words. But I had no fear of traveling over in there.

LOOTING

Diane Gardner: Mobs of people destroyed everything, I remember a lot of broken glass. We lived right by a jewelry store so jewelry was on the ground, but my parents had put the fear of God in us, so we wouldn't touch anything.

Mary Ann Alexander: My mom was watching my kids, she lived on **Karlov**. I had to go right into the heart of the looting. I remember a guy with a TV, people with alcohol. And they weren't trying to get out the way, they were walking just like you and me would, with the stuff! No fear.

Al Johnson, Sr.: Anything people needed for the home they went out and got. Some were church members, and they went out and did this stuff. My future-wife's uncle went out and got him a lot of suits and clothing. I still see him often, we were discussing that. He regrets that he did that.

Some people who had looted a clothing store offered my dad some suits but he refused to take them. He said nothing good would come out of this. A guy told him, "You're foolish, you got a family, I know you need this." My dad said, "Yeah I need it, but I don't need it this way."

Janice Rolling: My father, he did loot, cause he came home with a lot of stuff, he and my brother.

Mercedes Williams: Oh Lord! It was terrible!

Janice Rolling: He always provided for us.

Mercedes Williams: Oh Lord! Oh! I don't want to talk about that.

Malcolm Smith: People were going into stores, taking everything. Clothing stores, food stores, shoe stores. You'd see people with all kind of big bags. Every drunk on the corner had a new pair of shoes, new clothes. (Laugh) People was fighting over shoes, pushing each other down, trying to snatch stuff. Some people didn't even go into the stores; they'd wait until you came out and snatch it then. It was a riot. People had so many shoes and clothes, so, I seen them start doing it, we start doing it too.

My friends egged me on. "You might as well go in; everybody else is getting something…" I kept on hesitating, I was standing there holding out, saying, "Ah, I don't wanna go and do all that." I was too scared to go in the store. So I just said "I might as well go on in there and (smiling) get a couple bags of shoes." (Now quiet and serious) I got a couple bags.

How'd them shoes fit?

None of 'em! I didn't know what I was doin', shoot. I think I ended up with more women's shoes than I did men's shoes. You didn't have time to look at nothing! You had to grab cause everybody grabbin'. Just grab whatever; grab, put it in the bag, and get out the door!

Prentiss Alexander: My uncle got killed on **Madison**. He told his sister, my auntie, that he was going to get him a TV. She tried to warn him, you know, don't go out there cause Mayor Daley put out a "shoot to kill" order. But he went anyway. And they never found his body. He probably got shot in one of them burning buildings and got burned up. He was around the 4200 block, around **Karlov** there.

Joan Green: The police didn't stop anyone. They stood there and let a lot of it happen. **Pioneer** and **Del Farms** (two grocery stores near **Larrabee**) were burnt down and after that they never rebuilt.

Jamesetta Mixon: My friend Evelyn's boyfriend lived on the West Side, and he came to visit her that weekend and told her that a lot of stuff got burnt up. He was glad about it, and he felt people should have done more. He said he wasn't in on the arson but he did loot two television sets. He gave one to Evelyn, so she had a television in her own bedroom, something nobody had in those days. Many black people could not even afford one television.

Prentiss Alexander: They wanted any excuse. They were poor, poverty-stricken. The white man killed King, the white man suppressing us in the ghetto, and now we retaliate. Go out there… take a suit, don't buy it, you can steal it. Take the TV. Most of those people probably didn't even know who King was. Any excuse to go out and loot and take the things they wanted.

RIOT

Clarence Langworthy: If he would not have been killed I don't think there would have been a riot.

Malcolm Smith: I don't think I went into a second store. After that, that's when it really started sinking in, when people started snatching folks off the bus it just turned me upside down.

I'm seein' the city buses stop, and people are snatching people off buses, just beatin' people off the bus and I thinking, 'Oh Lord now they're taking it to a whole new different level.' People were breakin' car windows with bats, oh Lord have mercy, people just snapped, they was fed up. They didn't care if they lived or died no more. They was just out there, takin' it to the killing floor.

Al Johnson, Sr.: One Caucasian instructor, **Mr. Don Orton**, we feared for his safety so a couple guys and I escorted him to the **El** so he could make it home safely. I had to catch the bus from **Damen** all the way to **Maypole**, and that's when I got firsthand what was actually happening.

On the **Roosevelt** bus I saw fires, people running everywhere, busting out windows, some people even fighting amongst themselves. I saw people coming out of stores with TVs. A grocery store, **Big B's**, was attacked. A restaurant next door was vandalized. The only place that they didn't touch, which was crazy, was the liquor store.

Geraldine Haracz: Teachers usually had to leave the building by four o'clock. This particular Friday they had us

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all leave by three.

I was thinking, "Just get me home, just get me past this street. I'm on Central Avenue now, let me get to the **Expressway**. Let me get to **Pulaski**." As I was driving I could see the police closing off streets, parking their cars across certain streets. They were directing traffic towards different routes.

I saw people going in and out of buildings, but they weren't carrying anything. They could have just been hurrying home themselves. I saw storekeepers closing buildings, putting up their wire fences. I did see some bricks being thrown, I could see smoke in certain places. I knew better than to stop.

Al Johnson, Sr.: When I got to Pulaski, thank God there was a bus waiting right there. There was a white guy on the bus and a gang of people tried to attack him. He's just sitting on the bus, minding his own business, and he's in a predominantly black neighborhood heading north, so I imagine he was trying to get home. He got off the bus and ran, which I think was a bad idea.

Mercedes Williams: We had to go through an area they were tearing up. Them young boys, all you had to do was snap your finger and somebody would go off. It didn't take much to start something.

Janice Rolling: She made us get on the floor of the car. She didn't want us to see anything that was going on.

Mercedes Williams: I seen the water, but I didn't see the fires. There was water everywhere.

Clarence Langworthy: I lived at **4300 West End**, just two blocks north of Madison Street. While the riot was burning I could stand on my back porch and could look out and see the flames. That's how close it was, I could see the flames up and down Madison. I never did go over there and get involved.

Barbara Townsend: We could see the fire light up the sky, the redness in the background.

Prentiss Alexander: You couldn't go downtown to the **Loop**, you couldn't go down **North Avenue**. Or into **Oak Park**, the **Oak Park Police** had it blocked off. I had to go to work, I couldn't call my boss and say, "King is dead, I can't come to work." I had to make it to my car and be at work by four o'clock.

Joan Green: We wasn't supposed to go out, but I snuck out. That was the first time I had ever seen **Army** trucks, other than from the TV! The **National Guard** had guns, I had never seen anything like it. And you didn't see not one Black face amongst the troops. When they was patrolling the area, you didn't see any Black. I was like, how is that? I remember people throwing rocks at the Guards, because I guess they were invading our space, our community.

SHOOT TO KILL

Prentiss Alexander: I was at my house on **4009 Jackson**, and I walked over to Madison to go to a restaurant. The police were out and a little boy threw a rock at them. He threw it right over my head. I looked and about six, seven police pointed guns at me, I had to dive on the ground. I yelled, "It wasn't me! It wasn't me!" That little boy thought it was funny. I wanted to kill him. If I had caught that little boy I would have killed him.

Jamesetta Mixon: I do remember the "shoot to kill" order, but I can't remember the day or time I heard about it. But I was terrified. To me it was like a **Hitler** thing, a mass genocide, only instead of putting people in gas chambers the police could shoot them down in cold blood on the street. Nobody said outright that the mayor had issued that at the time, that came out later.

At that time my brother would just go out with his friends, go all over the city. We were afraid for him and his friends because we knew that "shoot to kill" was aimed at no one but black people. My mom had tried to convince my brother to stay home, but he wouldn't do it.

Malcolm Smith: Monday or Tuesday, that's when the National Guard came in. They had a loudspeaker, they even had tanks out there. "You are ordered to get off the street. Six o'clock is curfew. If you are caught on the street after six o'clock you will be arrested or you will be shot on site."

That's what the exact words were, I remember it so plainly, those words. It made me feel really scared. It made me feel helpless too.

Geraldine Haracz: I heard students talking about it that Friday; it was whispered that policemen had the order to "shoot to kill."

Daley was never one to keep his temper. I think he said "shoot to kill" to keep the agitators from deciding to do more. You have to realize that with what happened in **Detroit** [in July 1967], it seemed to be the same thing happening here after Martin Luther King. It wasn't planned, but it was expected. And yeah, the police said they had the order to shoot to kill.

The public's knowing about the "shoot to kill" order came at the end, after everything had calmed down. The police knew it was an order that had been given, but the general public did not know. The only reason I knew was because policemen lived in my neighborhood, and they told me things like that.

AFTERMATH AND LEGACY

Joan Green: You know how today adults will talk and children will just sit there and listen to the conversations? Back in those days if company came over for our parents, our parents asked us to get up and go in the back. We knew the rules of the house. You could not sit there and get in an adult conversation. So I wasn't hearing what the adults said. Kids weren't allowed to get into an adult conversation.

Mary Ann Alexander: A lot of times we don't want to be the bearer of bad news to our children.

Barbara Townsend: Church was an uplift. We had teachers in the congregation, and in talking they gave us our history, a sense of who we are, and that we could still do things. They gave us a history of what Dr. Martin Luther King was about and how he had benefited us.

Diane Gardner: As a kid I thought, where were we going to live? I thought we had to move.

Clarence Langworthy: When I finally went over to Madison Street, I think it was a week later. The police was over there all the time, and there was nothing really to see. Stores burned, business gone. Nothing pretty to look at.

Janice Rolling: It looked like a ghost.

Mercedes Williams: It's never been the same.

Janice Rolling: Madison and Pulaski never came back. And it had top stores up there.

Prentiss Alexander: I was just 26, 25 years old. I had a different perspective on Black people because I thought they had more going for them during that time, with **Black Power**, and different movements. I thought Black people had it together.

Malcolm Smith: Black people didn't plan this. It's not like a person got together and sit down and plan this, "We gon' hit this, we gon' hit this." It just exploded, like an atom bomb went off. We wasn't used to livin' that way. We had a harmony, a peace.

Mary Ann Alexander: Nothing was any different with me. It was work as usual.

Barbara Townsend: The block I lived on, now that whole block, there's only one building standing, one building standing from there on the side of the street I lived on.

Malcolm Smith: I think most of the people was saying, "Why did you tear up things in your own neighborhood? Why didn't you go outside the neighborhood and tear up other stores? Why didn't you go into **Bridgeport** and tear things up?"

How would you answer that question?

How would I answer that question? Why didn't we go into Bridgeport? Basically, I think one reason is that when you frustrated sometimes you just get the closest thing to you. Just like when you come home from work and you got a bad job, you've had a bad day, and you take it out on your wife 'cause she's the closest one to you. Basically that's what I think it was.

Diane Gardner: If you were to go on the West Side you'll still see boarded up buildings, from '68, to this day. They never redid the neighborhood. It's still destitute.

Clarence Langworthy: I've seen progress. I've seen more Black people in businesses. Housing has improved since then, quite a bit. I've seen my neighborhood improve, although not as well as I want to see it. I've seen jobs hire more Blacks, male and female. Black people are in politics. Many new schools built, although we still need more. I don't glorify the riots, but I say sometimes you have to do things to wake people up.

Delores Williams: The riot destroyed hope, it destroyed morale, I think it put a bigger separation between Black and white.

Diane Gardner: I remember waiting for help but help never came. To this day, help never came.

◊

68/08 The Inheritance of Politics and the Politics of Inheritance
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This issue was co-edited by Aaron Sarver, Daniel Tucker and Rebecca Zorach

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Image: Ellen Lanyon, *L.B.J. Doll*, 1966. Wood, string, paint, 37 1⁄2 x 21 1/2 x 2 3/8 inches (as photographed). Collection of Betsy Rosenfield. Photo by Tom Van Eynde.

Read more in article *1968: Art and Politics in Chicago* on page 59.

Image by Chris Stain. Taken from *Reproduce & Revolt* (edited by Josh MacPhee & Favianna Rodriguez; Softskull Press, 2008), a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics for activist use. If you would like to get a copy of this book, check out *Justseeds.org*

Then & Now: Legacy

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEN AND NOW? This is the basic question of any effort to research, produce, uncover, perform or re-invent history. In this section of 68/08 you will be introduced to people who are attempting to deal with the connection between one moment and another through a variety of tactics: re-enactments, re-readings, historical research, performance, documenting, anniversary celebrations and commemorations. While the last section showed us examples of histories we don't usually hear about, this section addresses the nature of history as the subject in and of itself.

What motivates these investigations into recent history? Why are Chicago's residents so concerned with the '60s? Is it because they want to rehash old debates or live in the past? Or is it some sense of unfinished business?

This section shows us that there are a variety of approaches which can be employed to question the relationship between one moment and another. Contrast **Rick Perlstein**'s arguments that **Republicans** just cannot let go of the 60s with **Ben Shepard's** *What If* approach to hypothetical history. Compare the earnest effort to mark and celebrate a passing history in **Frank Edward's** report back from the **Young Lords 40th Anniversary celebration**, with the reflections of a first-year teacher in **Chicago Public Schools**, **Eve Ewing**, examining the challenge of responsibly teaching the history of 60s social movements. Looking at the work of **BLW** alongside **Bert Stabler**'s *Reenact '68* and **Paige Sarlin**'s *Letter to the Reenactors*, we are introduced to three distinct arguments and approaches to embodying actions and events from the past.

Whatever approach is used, it is clear that people want to connect themselves to history they find meaningful and inspiring. In a culture that treats each passing year with amnesia of lessons learned, it is inspiring to see so many people trying to make sense of our collective past in critical, meaningful and embodied ways.

—Daniel Tucker

Keywords to consider

LEGACY, REENACTMENT, AMNESIA.

The Right to Dissent: A Press Conference (1969). Courtesy Chicago Film Archives.

Chicago Women's Graphics Collective, *Sisterhood is Blooming*, 1970. Silkscreen print. Courtesy Estelle Carol.

Archiving 1968

Selections from an open-ended conversation held at **DOVA Temporary** in early September, 2008, with four individuals engaged in archiving projects that relate to 1968. We talked about the work they are currently doing, the challenges they face, and their strategies for the future. Thanks are also due to **Judy Roothaan** and **Nathaniel McLin** and others for their questions and comments during the conversation.—Rebecca Zorach

Archiving 1968: Faheem Majeed Curator and acting Executive Director of the **South Side Community Art Center**

We are the last of one hundred and ten or so art centers from the **WPA** art centers—**Works Progress Administration** program, part of the **New Deal**. We opened our doors in 1941. **Eleanor Roosevelt** was there, and it was broadcast coast to coast—it was quite a big deal. Predominantly the artists that they focused on were artists of African American decent, because the art guild that was there found issues with finding legitimate spaces to show their work. The Art Center has collaborated with many artists, fostered many artists over the years—**Gordon Parks**, **Elizabeth Catlett**, **Charles White**—very influential artists. A lot of the **Harlem Renaissance** artists that became very well-known were actually Chicago-based, and went to **New York** to find fame, but for a lot of them the South Side Community Art Center is where they started. **Gwendolyn Brooks**—her first poetry class was actually at the Center. Gordon Parks—his first room was at the Center. My role is a very interesting one, coming in completely as a novice, just a student and an artist, actually—coming in looking for support, I received help from the Center about five years ago. So after I was set up and was able to support myself, I wanted to give back to this institution. It started out as volunteering and then eventually it transitioned into leadership over the years—just after many observations and times put in. So one of the very interesting things dealing with the institution is this amazing collection that's dating back to the 1930s that's been tucked away for some time. All these amazing original pieces—**AFRICOBRA** prints also WPA artworks, some of our earlier works are 1930s. But just kind of how to deal with it now that you're the curator, how to make this accessible, how to make it kind of fit within a more current context, that's been my challenge.

One of our goals is to create proper storage—partnering with other institutions like the **Art Institute** to figure out how to start archiving and restoring these things in ways that make sense so that they can be utilized by the world. We have this amazing collection of **Barbara Jones-Hogu** prints along with a couple other pieces (and since she had that flood, we are one of the only institutions that have a collection of her AFRICOBRA works, since a lot of it was literally washed away). Currently we are in the process of really analyzing how to build proper storage and space for storing these valuable works, and archiving them from literally the ground up. In the past it was very nonchalant. People would just come in, there would be a handful of people that would come in and say "Hey, I need this," and just kind of throw it up on the wall. Some things had been damaged over the years. I do have the flexibility to do some things and create a system rather than having to live by that system. So it's been a very educational experience.

The fun thing about my position is that a lot of this history kinda comes alive. So one of our biggest wealths of information are our constituents who have kept the Center alive, literally, through ups and downs—from the **Red Scare** to the '68 riots, through all these various things. I just got a birthday invitation from one of our members who's ninety. And so that's another thing kind of documenting these personal stories is very integral to the institution. So it's really juggling from constituents to the artists to the collection to this late 1800s **Georgian Revival** building. I've had success recently, getting a sizable grant from **American Express** through the **Partners in Preservation** program of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**. One of the things I really depend on is partnerships. So rather than going and trying to get funding for myself, I'll try to pull someone else in, or a couple of different institutions in and submit together, and usually funders are more eager to, you know, fund multiple things—get a bigger bang for your buck. But still, it's a day to day challenge to try to figure this out. The smallest things make the biggest differences in a small institution like ours.

We were not designed as a collecting institution. None of the WPA art centers were. Actually, there was a time when they ordered all artwork done by WPAers to be burned. Destroyed. So there was a handful of people that kind of broke the law and saved the stuff. Now the **GSA** [**General Services Administration**] has recognized the folly of doing that, and you're like, "Well, thanks." But we're one of the few institutions that's legally able to own WPA artwork. Because we stayed afloat and we were able to make this transition, and so we actually own all the work. But we can't sell our work. So they're actually going—the GSA is going and finding all of these WPA artworks and pulling them off walls—the majority of the works in post offices and government buildings, people are just kind of taking them and putting them in their offices, because they've been sitting around forever. But basically, the majority of the work that's in our collection was created either for the institution or in the institution. So we didn't purchase the work, they were just made there.

[It's not hard to get people to talk about difficult times like the 1960s.] My only conflict with collecting oral histories is literally the ability to have someone do it. I have endless amounts of information. I have—one of the great things about that I—once I stepped into this role of leadership at the Center, what was amazing was the masses of people that were so supportive and ready to give information. So doors were open to me that weren't necessarily there before. History just pouring out everywhere. I had members, like I said, in their nineties. I have current members. I have all these—those connections, they branch out into all these things. My only concern right now is I have twenty people I want to spend several hours with (on oral history)—but I'm one individual. So I'm really trying to lean on institutions to bring them in and make it into a collaborative thing and set it up where they go in. Because I think that's just as important as the collection, those stories. And I know a lot—I've learned a lot of the stories because I just sit there and listen. I'm just a sponge—I just take it in. But it needs to be recorded. ◊

The Legacies of the Sojourner Truth Organization

Interview with Michael Staudenmaier

BY DANIEL TUCKER

In 1969, there was a national meeting in Chicago of the large U.S. student group known as the ***Students for a Democratic Society*** *(****SDS****). At this famous meeting the group's leadership split into factions—signaling that the ideological and organizational tensions which were not being addressed properly within SDS were finally bubbling to the top. The organizations that came out of that split and their subsequent further splintering make up a great deal of the fragmented Left we have today. This is one reason why it is important to make sense of this history. The split as I know it involved the* ***Progressive Labor Party*** *(****PLP****) on one side and the* ***Revolutionary Youth Movement*** *(****RYM****) on the other. The RYM groups eventually split as well: several original RYM leaders formed the* ***Weatherman****, and the other groups and factions oriented less towards armed struggle formed the* ***RYM II****. The RYM II led to a number of prominent groupings now associated with the term* ***"New Communist Movement"*** *(****NCM****), such as the* ***October League*** *and the* ***Revolutionary Union****—to name a few. These NCM groups morphed and disbanded in ways too numerous to address here—but some of the contemporary organizations that came out of their path include the* ***Freedom Road Socialist Organization(s)*** *and the* ***Revolutionary Communist Party****. Another lesser known group to come out of RYM II was the* ***Sojourner Truth Organization*** *(****STO****), based largely in Chicago from 1969 until the mid-1980s. In this email interview with Chicago anarchist organizer* ***Michael Staudenmaier****, Daniel Tucker explores the legacy of this lesser known but important group. Michael has been working for several years on a history of STO, currently in blog form at* http://sojournertruth.blogsome.com, *with plans to develop it into a book in the near future. Michael has also worked with former STO members and other movement historians on the online archive of STO writing at* http://www.sojournertruth.net.

Background in Brief: "STO was founded in Chicago at the beginning of 1970, and for the first several years its activities were limited to workplace organizing in the Chicago metropolitan area. In the mid-seventies, STO shifted its political work away from factories and toward anti-imperialist solidarity work. At the same time, it expanded geographically, first merging with like-minded groups in ***Kansas City*** *and* ***Iowa****, then growing to include groups in* ***Denver****,* ***Portland****,* ***San Francisco****, and elsewhere. As the eighties began, the group shifted strategically once again, this time toward intervention in what were called "new social movements," such as student and anti-nuclear struggles. Around the same time, the group shrank again, losing all of its non-Chicago membership by 1984 or so. Not too long after, the Chicago group dissolved, and STO ceased to exist." (*An Organization of Revolutionaries Who Tried to Think: The Sojourner Truth Organization and its Legacy for Anarchists *by Michael Staudenmaier, 2006)*

DANIEL TUCKER (DT) Let's start with a bit of personal history. It is my understanding that you encountered members of STO while a relatively young anarchist working in groups like **Anti-Racist Action** and other anti-authoritarian projects associated with anarchism in the 1990s. Can you say a little bit about the intergenerational exchange that occurred between yourself and former members of STO? How important was that interaction for the development of your politics? Why don't you think it happens more often? What is it about STO that resonated for someone working during a relatively stagnant period of anarchist activity in the U.S.?

MICHAEL STAUDENMAIER (MS) First, a brief correction: I wouldn't describe the mid-nineties as a "relatively stagnant period" for anarchists. In fact, it was actually a time of modest growth and enthusiasm, which probably peaked with the **Active Resistance Counter-Convention** held here in Chicago in 1996. The event drew 750 anarchists to town from all over **North America** to talk politics and protest the **Democratic National Convention**. It was in the run-up to AR that a number of us younger anarchists met a crew of former STO members who were still in Chicago but mostly withdrawn from activism. As far as we could tell, they were drawn to us because we were committed anti-capitalists and anti-racists. They weren't scared off by our anarchism, even though they weren't anarchists. They liked our commitment to direct action and our openness to new ideas. For ourselves, we were intrigued by the history of this group we hadn't ever heard of (STO), and by the willingness of the former members we met to accept us where we were at despite our obvious political differences.

Personally, I think of this encounter as having been absolutely pivotal for the development of my politics, and I think several other veterans of that experience would say the same thing. At the time, in addition to the largely white anarchist scene, I was also actively involved in supporting the **Puerto Rican independence movement** and in particular the **Albizu Campos High School** that was (and still is) part of the **Puerto Rican Cultural Center** in **Humboldt Park.** I soon learned that STO had its own history of solidarity work with the Puerto Rican independence movement, and I learned a lot from the ways STO had navigated that work. I also was drawn to the particular analysis of white supremacy that STO had put forward, which I found to be much more sophisticated than anything I found within anarchism. Plus, STO had a history that seemed to balance the need for theoretical debate with real action and organizing efforts. So, I acted like a sponge and soaked up what I could of the background stories of the various people that I met; I also developed a decent collection of old STO publications that eventually became one of the reasons I decided to pursue researching the history of the group.

Finally, I should say that this was one of several different intergenerational encounters I and other young anarchists in Chicago and elsewhere had during the 1990's, often with an older generation of non-anarchist radicals. I'm not so sure they are as uncommon as we tend to think they are; I have a suspicion that we (younger radicals) tend to de-prioritize them in our collective political narratives, although I don't have a good explanation for why we do this. Maybe it's a fear of passing judgment on our elders, or perhaps it's a reticence around acknowledg-

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Archiving 1968: Sherry Williams

Founder and Director of the Bronzeville/Black Chicagoan Historical Society

This is a huge undertaking that my children encouraged me to take on because they were very tired of my giving history lessons and driving down **Michigan Avenue** pointing out the **South Side Community Art Center**, **Dr. Burroughs's** home, the **Elliott Donnelley Youth Center**, you can just go down Michigan Avenue and point out the home—the former home—of **Joe Louis**, the **Brown Bomber**—I mean, just Michigan Avenue alone, you're not gonna even travel further east. Quite often as I head to my mom's house I will point out all of these historical places, give note to the incredible people and the contributions that African Americans have given to the city, to the nation, to the world. And they got quite bored with it and said, "Why don't you start a historical society?" And this would have been in 1999. I lived at 4538 **South Forrestville**—and so when I began the endeavor, I started with the home that I lived in and found out just by documenting the house I lived in and the houses that were to the north and south of me and across the street that quite a few of the residents who were still living there, and some who had moved or passed away, had incredible histories about what they had done in their lives. Two doors to the south of me lived the first female African American principal for the City of Chicago. So I could just go on and on and on talking about sites, places, people, events that have occurred in Chicago that contribute to the fabric of what has taken place in the nation.

And so when I was invited to participate in this conversation about the year 1968, the first thing I thought about was what did I have that was currently within our archives that reflected the year 1968. [I brought] two photographs. One was the photograph of the murder of **Fred Hampton** [in 1969], and the other was a picture of him speaking in front of an audience in downtown Chicago. And I thought those two photographs to be a pivot for myself, because I was born in 1960 and I was all of what, seven years old? Eight years old? It shocked me, and when the shots rang out on the **West side** of Chicago, not only did it ring out on the West Side, but the shots could be heard on the **South Side**. And although I was very young, I could quite vividly remember the tensions in the air, the atmosphere that followed his murder. And I remember vividly seeing the presence of the **Black Panthers** in the community and my mother's response.

I came from a family of sharecroppers. My mom moved here in 1942, to **18th and Archer** which was a community commonly known as **Chinatown**. And it still is a community commonly known as Chinatown. And in this mixed bag of ethnic, cultural, religious variations, my mom managed to keep ahold of a shotgun that she'd brought up from the South. And so when all of the things that were taking place that followed the murder of Fred Hampton was affecting the South Side community I lived in which was **Englewood**, I lived at 1023 **West 59th Street**. I witnessed and remember my mom coming out with her gun and making the statement that if anything is going to happen I'm gonna protect my family. My dad was away hunting. All my family had grown and hunted forever. So I grew up eating deer and possum and squirrel and whatever else my dad was shooting... We always had a garden. My mom still today makes soap, cha-cha, jelly, jams, quilts—so we came from a family that knew how to do things with our hands.

And so now I was seeing my mother taking a protective role, a role that I had never seen before, in the absence of my dad. And so when I look at the year 1968, I can't help but reminisce about these things that I felt and I sensed that happened, and why it happened, and was triggered by the murder of Fred Hampton. I was eight years old, I had never experienced death from a family member. I hadn't lost an aunt or a cousin, or a puppy or anything. So having to be explained about death, and more importantly having to be explained about a murder was—I mean, even today I mourn the loss of any—loss of life. But particularly I still mourn, respectfully, the loss of Fred Hampton's life. He was twenty-one years old. I have a daughter that's thirty. And so I can't help but reflect if—what if I lost my son or my daughter. How would I be able to move on?

Our mission is to preserve, protect, and provide African American history and culture of Chicago. It of course expands beyond Chicago because so many of those African Americans that migrated here have strong connections to **Mississippi**, have strong connections to **Tennessee**, to **Georgia**, to much of the **South**. And of course we have a relationship to slavery. And so quite often when I am experiencing a research project, or we are doing a presentation, or we're documenting something—the history goes beyond just a person being a resident of Chicago. And so our mission has been just that—to preserve, provide, protect, and present African American history and culture of Chicago.

We've been moving more toward being a museum. We currently don't have a space. For four years we were housed in the **Swift Mansion** on **45th and Michigan**, and we used that space as a way to display and do presentations on African American history and culture. Partnerships have been so vital for us. Without collaborations we wouldn't be able to continue to do the work that we're doing. And what we've been doing mostly in the past two years has been presenting joint partnership programs through the efforts of the **Field Museum** and the **University of Chicago**. So for instance we did a collaboration with the **Polish Museum of America** on dance, and so they brought in seven provinces of Poland and showed and demonstrated dance—and we brought in the African American experience of dance. So those type of partnerships is what has been able to keep us at least actively presenting African American history and culture. ◊

Sojourner continued from p. 41

ing our political debts outside our identified ideological tradition (in this case, anarchism). In any event, the point, it seems to me, is to talk about these encounters and encourage more of them.

DT You've written about STO's contribution to the popularization of the concept of "**White Skin Privilege**," which builds on the legacy of **WEB DuBois** and other Black radicals from reconstruction to civil rights. You have also commented that their take on this idea did not manifest in the kind of moralizing-sermonizing guilt-ridden manifestations that the theory is often accompanied by today. What was different about the way STO used the concept of white privilege than the way it is used today? Can you point to aspects of history that have been lost, from W.E.B. DuBois to **C.L.R. James** to STO, that would be useful for analyzing race and capitalism today?

MS STO began from a class analysis, trying to figure out what prospects existed for what **Marxists** called "proletarian revolution." They understood that white skin privilege functioned as a barrier to revolution, because it made working class unity (across races) far more difficult to achieve. Thus, as one former STO member put it, "the first thing was equality." This amounted to a strategic orientation rather than a guilt-laden moral stance, which makes the STO version of the white skin privilege analysis very different from some of the more academic-oriented versions of the theory common today within the **Left**.

Another difference was the way STO attempted to apply its analysis in multiple areas of organizing, especially within factories during the early 1970s. In that context, the (mostly white) members of the group saw their primary task as supporting radical initiatives arising within black and latino caucuses or committees, and rallying other white workers to these struggles. It's not too surprising that some people would criticize this approach as "moralistic," because it rejected the largely standard logic that workplace struggles needed to build themselves around the immediately apparent material self-interest of all workers. To be honest, the "moralism" charge was both true and false. True, because STO did tend to romanticize the struggles of Black and (to a lesser extent) latino communities, on the assumption that these struggles clearly represented the proletarian revolution in embryo, when in fact they were reincorporated within capitalism just as the previous generation of progressive white labor struggles had been. But false, because the broad strategic approach of generating unity across race lines within the **U.S. working class** (and, further, unity across national lines within the **global working class**) was in no way dependent upon any sort of narrowly moralistic guilt-tripping. If privileged workers couldn't see the short-, medium-, and long-term benefits of organizing in solidarity with less privileged members of their class, then there was no hope of ever creating mass anti-capitalist movements that could challenge the generalized misery of the system. This is as true today as it was in 1978, or 1968, or 1938, or 1868, or . . .

Another thing that is largely forgotten in the crush of writings on "critical whiteness studies" is the black origins of the theory of white skin privilege. Historians like **David Roediger** have highlighted the role of Black radicals like W.E.B. DuBois in this process, especially his analysis of the "public and psychological wage" that white workers received after the **Civil War** that led largely to the cross-class alliance between white workers and the white ruling class, against the surging black movement that emerged from the Civil War. Other Black radicals, such as **Hubert Harrison** and C.L.R. James, advanced similar ideas in the period before **World War Two**.

Until the late 1960's, the white left was supremely unconcerned with this problem, despite its regular reemergence. STO co-founder **Noel Ignatin** (now **Ignatiev**) and a working class intellectual named **Ted Allen** did their best to popularize a singularly unpopular set of ideas within the white **new Left** at the end of that decade. STO was one of the only left organizations to emerge from the sixties committed to an analysis that is now so commonplace that even mainstream **Democrats** speak regularly in the language of privilege. (Other groups tied to the white skin privilege analysis included the **Weather Underground** and its various descendents, though STO also tended to be highly critical of these groups for going too far in "writing off" the prospects for revolutionary activity among white workers.)

In a way, the biggest difference between the origins and early development of the white skin privilege analysis and its current manifestation is the difference between scholarship and analysis that emerges from direct engagement with social movements (be it the **NAACP** for DuBois, the **CIO** for James, or the **Civil Rights Movement** and the New Left for Allen and Ignatin), on the one hand, and the situation today where – with a handful of important exceptions – academics studying these questions tend to be defined primarily by their position within the university and only secondarily by their location within social movements. And I say this as someone who finds real value in some elements of academic discourse, who considers the academy a reasonable and valid career choice for radical intellectuals. The problem doesn't lie with radical academics, but rather with the real limits of currently extant social movements. As those movements expand and become more radical, the bulk of radical academics will follow suit.

DT STO organized independent groups (outside of the unions) within Chicago factories. With so little manufacturing in the city today and so many people working irregular, flexible, contract, and/or non-profit jobs with little hope for unionization—what about STO's approach to labor and work could be applicable today? Are there success stories or failures from their past that would help people interested in addressing work-place organizing in today's radically altered labor landscape?

MS This is the proverbial $64,000 question, and I don't have any solid answers. There have been enormous changes in the landscape facing working people over the past forty years. One long-time member of STO who I interviewed was able, without any apparent effort, to rattle off a list of more than 50 factories in the Chicago area where STO had a presence at some

Archiving 1968: Michelle Puetz Director of programming at Chicago Film Archives

Chicago Film Archives is a relatively new institution. We're about six years old and formed out of the former 16mm lending collection at the **Chicago Public Library**. And we're focusing on collecting regional moving image history, so looking at Chicago's history of film production with an emphasis on industrial, educational, amateur film—which were what Chicago was sort of known for mid-century. And there are several collections at **Chicago Film Archives** that pertain to Chicago's history in '68, specifically in relation to the **Democratic National Convention**. One of those is a collection of material that was donated by **Franklin McMahon**. We have a bunch of audio cassettes of his, material that's on quarter inch tape and on cassette that were recorded in the mid-'60s to the early '70s, and he recorded political rallies and has a bunch of tapes from the '68 DNC, both speeches from inside the convention and then interviews that he conducted with protestors outside, in the park and on the street. We have a film that's called *The Chicago 8 Conspiracy Trial* that's by Franklin McMahon. It's sort of an animated collage of his drawings from inside the courtroom put with his audio recordings. And then there are video copies at the archive with two films that are pretty important that come in the aftermath of the DNC riots—*What Trees Do They Plant?*— a documentary made by the City of Chicago immediately after the events of August '68 which defended the actions of the police and was broadcast nationally on over one hundred and fifty TV stations on September 15, 1968. And then *Seasons Change* which was a one hour rebuttal that was made by the **ACLU** in response to *What Trees Do They Plant?* And what I'll talk about today is a series of film modules—short films that comprise a 1969 series entitled *Urban Crisis and the New Militants*.

The **Film Group** was started in 1965 as sort of a straight-laced commercial film production company, and they made advertising and commercial spots and industrial films in Chicago. And as the social and political unrest of the '60s began to take hold they turned their cameras to the streets, and sort of radicalized by what they saw, they drastically switched gears and started producing these really forceful documentaries—examinations of civil rights and anti-war movements inspired by the ideals of the movements and the people that they encountered. They created this ***Urban Crisis*** series as a dramatic new approach to educational filmmaking. They introduced the methods and concerns of cinéma vérité documentary and dispensed with the conventional modes of educational filmmaking, primarily having these talking-head voices of authority narrating the events that people would see unfolding on screen. Instead they turned their cameras to the real-life events that were taking place on the street, unfolding around them, and crafted films that relied solely on the footage and synced sound events that they were capturing—which really forced the audience to discover for themselves the films' meanings without being told what they were seeing. And the films in that *Urban Crisis* series focused on the events of the chaotic final two days of the DNC, and then as well on some events surrounding and leading up to the '68 riots, including **Robert Lucas's** 1966 march across the city line at the **Cicero** and the violence that ensued.

We've tried to pay careful attention to preserving the spirit in which the films were made in their original utilitarian purpose. The big question that we're struggling with is how to translate that message and how to translate the spirit of the original footage—and what these films convey now. The challenge that we're facing practically is how can we translate the spirit of the films into new technologies such as DVDs, web video access. One of the important questions that we faced in beginning to research the materials was how were the films originally viewed, what audience were they originally intended for. They were intended for use in the classroom, **Chicago Public Schools**—the prints that we have came from the Chicago Public Library's lending collection of 16mm films. And as described by the filmmakers, they comprise "a unique classroom aid" in talking about the events of 1968—"they teach by raising questions rather than by attempting to answer them"—which I think is a really powerful statement. They're presenting intellectually provoking situations to students. The specific struggles and crises that they chronicle are long over, but the underlying political, social, and constitutional issues that the films elicit are as vitally important today as they were forty years ago. What must we surrender in pursuit of increased security? What are the boundaries between the authority of the State and the rights of the people? How does our government's actions around the world affect or reflect our political and social life in America? What are the duties of citizens to protect and expand our rights? How does propaganda control the framing of political discourse, thereby setting limits on expression? Those are just some questions that come to mind—and I think the films remain as valuable a tool in exploring those questions today as they did in 1968. Like I said, the preservation of these films has raised issues that, as a young institution—we haven't faced with other preservation projects. And it's instituted—at least for me personally—a new way of thinking about film preservation and the importance of preserving materials like this. The filmmakers are there, they're in these crowds of people, they're developing this material immediately afterwards, editing it, and putting it out there later that year. And because they're made in that moment of immediacy, with this principle of asking questions rather than answering them, they don't explain anything, there are very few intertitles, people aren't identified. So that presents a really unique challenge.

As an archivist, as a cultural institution, how do we create a context for this material and also remain true to the spirit in which they are originally produced? So that they still do pose those questions. The materials were treated by the filmmakers as sort of disposable—the original materials were missing, they weren't really made to be seen forty years after the fact. So it's been a real challenge for us to figure out ways to make them accessible. And from a practical standpoint, of course, our biggest challenge is funding. I mean, figuring out sort of policy, access, and ways to disseminate this material. And for the preservation of the films, we got funding from the **National Film Preservation Foundation** which is typically an institution that funds the preservation of films that have artistic and cultural importance. So for films like this you have to sort of make a very particular case for materials that have historical importance but that aren't necessarily great art. And that funding offsets the cost of transferring the 16mm original prints to 16mm negatives, getting archival positive copies printed, getting 16mm distribution prints made, and then getting video transfers—and getting the films archived both on video and on DVD. Because while 16mm is this very stable archival format, it's really difficult for most people now to view—most people don't have film projectors—so we're trying to figure out ways to make the material available on video for people who are interested in researching.

My hope is to bring the films back to the public schools. ◊

point during the 1970s; just as quickly he concluded that the vast majority of those workplaces no longer exist, having succumbed to **deindustrialization**. As you note, the unionized workforce has shrunk dramatically as a result of this shift, but another major change concerns the character of mainstream unions. When STO began, it was hard to find any major union that wasn't completely corrupt in ways that would have done the first **Mayor Daley** proud. But just as the second Daley regime has successfully incorporated a range of progressives and radicals (including at least one founding and long-time member of STO, who is now a prominent consultant to Daley), so has the mainstream labor movement fully incorporated most of the sixties and seventies labor radicals. Both the **AFL-CIO** and **Change to Win** leaderships feature real corruption, but they also include people and ideas that were once relegated to marginal reform caucuses and opposition slates. The sort of anti-racism and labor militancy that is commonplace within the leadership of mainstream labor today was, forty years ago, encountered just about exclusively at a leadership level in the **United Auto Workers** (**UAW**).

This example is instructive for a few reasons. First, some of the most inspiring radical labor movements of the late 1960s, especially the **League of Revolutionary Black Workers** in Detroit, emerged from direct challenges to the supposedly "progressive" politics of the UAW leadership. Second, at several points in its history, STO lost members due in part to its inability to develop a coherent critique of the sort of non-crooked business unionism associated with the UAW, and some of these members later became active within the UAW bureaucracy. Third, the UAW is now most well known among labor militants as the union that collaborated with the **Big Three** automakers in dismantling one of the most secure social safety nets ever achieved through labor struggle. (And, in my day-job world of accounting, I shudder to think of what the UAW's balance sheet will look like for 2008, now that they have absorbed the future cost of defined-benefit pensions owed to their retirees.)

So, it seems to me that the new "progressive" labor movement probably has more of the same in store for the rank and file. At the same time, I can't fault people who view mainstream labor as the only game in town, and I definitely applaud efforts like the recent victory by rank and file **Teamsters** against old-school corrupt mobsters in local 743. It seems to me that radicals need to work with people where they are at now, not where we would like them to be, and in a union town like Chicago that often means within the AFL-CIO and **WIN**. That said, not every labor struggle is a union struggle, and radicals need to be more attuned to and supportive of working class struggles that don't fit neatly into a trade union context. (A great example here is the **March 10 Movement** and the **May Day** immigrant marches of the past few years, which mobilized a largely non-union section of the working class.)

One question I ask a lot of people has to do with pivotal sectors of the economy. STO focused its early efforts largely on what was called "heavy manufacturing" (big factories making steel, cars, consumer durables, etc.) because of two key factors: first, it was an essential component of the U.S. economy, the kind where workers had the leverage to shut down the system if they were inspired to do so; and second, it was one of the only places in a segregated city where black, white, and latino workers interacted on a regular basis. In an ever more globalized economy it's hard to figure out what part(s) of the economy fit the first criterion, although the second part is clearly descriptive of a range of arenas, from the service sector to healthcare to transport. One former STO member (herself now an organizer for a CTW union) even suggested to me that the answer to my question might not relate to workplaces at all, that it might be better to focus on working class communities. There are certainly no easy answers here, but I think the general question of where radicals with limited resources should focus our efforts is an important one that has been insufficiently attended to in the recent past.

DT Any last words on the legacy of STO? What does it mean to you to be writing this history of this organization from the past? Are you nervous about 'getting it right'? This seems to be a big challenge in writing histories of the left, especially of the post-60's "**New Left**"—we are still living with the inherited organizations and rhetoric from that time period. Many of the leaders from then are still leaders today, but there is so much we don't know and that people will not tell us about what really happened then. How can we learn from this history when so much of it has been misrepresented or never told at all?

MS I'm very nervous, and I think that's one of the main reasons I have procrastinated as long as I have on finishing my manuscript. I didn't live through the events I'm describing, and I'm concerned that I won't be able to "capture the flavor," as one former member put it. In general, however, former members and others I've interviewed or corresponded with have been highly supportive of my efforts. People have shared memories, documents, and photos with me; and almost everyone I have spoken with has put me in touch with at least one other person who had something interesting to say. I'm certain there are a lot of things that I will never know, either because no one thinks to tell me, or because people simply feel more comfortable leaving some things in the past. I don't really have a problem with that; I imagine that I would behave similarly if someone ever asked to interview me about **ARA** or whatever.

My goal is to tell a story – the story of a small revolutionary group over a number of years—and along the way share some themes: the white skin privilege analysis, the idea of autonomy, dual consciousness and hegemony, workplace organizing methods, anti-imperialism and anti-fascism, feminism, anti-capitalism, and so on. I'm clearly not the only person who could tell this story, since among the former members of STO are a number of widely published authors, but so far as I know I am the only person currently working on this little bit of forgotten history. Similarly, this story is only one of many that might illuminate the themes I've mentioned, but I can only speak to the work I am doing.

One nice thing about my project is that it already has a built-in audience, and I don't mean primarily college students studying labor history or race relations. There are a number of small groups of radicals all over the U.S. today that take direct inspiration from the legacy of STO, and I hope that groups like these can utilize the history I am writing in their ongoing work. These people help keep me "honest," in the sense of doing my best to do justice to STO's history. At the same time, I also feel a level of responsibility to the former members I've interviewed, some of whom I count as friends and comrades. It's not easy having two masters, the past and the future, but this is what all radicals face, whether we are writing history or organizing workers or whatever. ◊

Archiving 1968: Estelle Carol

Director of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union Herstory Project

The Chicago Women's Liberation Union *Herstory Project* is an online archive. You could also call it an online museum. The museum documents a very tiny bit of history—it's the organization, the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, which only existed between 1969 and 1976. But its relevance is that it's a very unique expression of women's liberation in this country. The Chicago version of women's liberation is quite unique. We were the **Midwest** contingent of the women's liberation movement—and felt we were being shortchanged by the other archivists and the other authors who were writing histories of that movement. They mostly wrote about the **West coast** and the **East coast** and kind of bypassed and skimmed over Chicago and the rest of the Midwest. So the relevance to 1968 is that the women's liberation movement (I don't call it the feminist movement because that's not what it was called back then) was spearheaded, was forced up into history largely because of of the events of the **Civil Rights** movement and the anti-war movement and the **SDS** and the student movement. It was all those things coming together that created the Chicago Women's Liberation Union in the way that it was, which was an extremely radical, very loud—I guess you'd also call it a socialist-feminist organization. And that made it different than most of the other women's movement groups like the National Organization for Women. And their roots came directly out of the civil rights movement and the student movements and the anti-war movement because the people who started that group in 1969 cut their organizer's training teeth on those other movements. They were trained by the people in the **South**. They were white women who went down to the South to work with the Civil Rights **Freedom Rides**. They were trained in the anti-war movement on college campuses—and there were some really sharp gals at that time and they learned their lessons well and they transformed what they'd learned about how to organize a radical movement into a movement of women. But they wanted to do it different. They wanted to do it as an equality movement, they wanted to do it as fairness for all people—anti-racist issues and class issues. So they were very consciously a movement for working women.

And they called themselves socialist-feminists—they had a conference, a founding conference—and they wrote papers on it and so forth. I was an artist and I'm still an artist—that's how I earn my living. So in 1970, since we were starting the Chicago Women's Liberation Union, I started the **Chicago Women's Graphics Collective**, which was a work group of the Women's Union—and we did collective art. It was my group—so I'm really attached to it! It's my history. There were other people in the Women's Union who were organizers in the traditional sense, you know they created rallies and had meetings and had newspapers and went out flyering and went to communities and organized people and all kinds of issues of employment and childcare—but what I did personally was create the art to pull it all together—the culture and the glue of our movement. We felt that our music and visual arts had to accompany any major revolution. We felt we were creating the revolution of women. So we just got a lot of women together—most of whom were not formally trained artists—I was one of the few who actually had formal training as an artist, and so I taught a lot of the rest of the women how to do printmaking.

So we did silkscreened posters. And you can see them on our website. We have an online museum, it has about seven or eight hundred pages, it's an enormous site. So among other things on the website is this gallery of posters and the gallery of photography and an audio gallery of rock music and so forth and so on. We market and we bring our culture of that time to young women, mostly in women's studies programs in universities—by reproducing in smaller versions the original silkscreen prints. I took the digital files and I made small archival quality digital prints, which we sell from the museum site at our online store. And the money is how we fund our work. So we didn't feel like we really wanted to be beholden to foundations. I mean, because we were so radical and because the women's studies movement is much less radical than we are and they control the money, we had to find another way to fund our work. So that's what we do. We sell the art. And we get a steady enough income—I mean, this is a very tiny archive; we're just documenting the history of like eight years of one organization. But it's really an important piece of the history of the women's liberation movement that we want all young people to know about. So our main focus is to get the attention of young people.

So that's what our posters do. They're visual and they're striking. And so people go—and I bring them to all the women's conferences and the women's studies gatherings—and I put them out on the table and the young women come by and they buy them, stuff like that. And we have posters that we popularized from other movements. Some came from **Cuba**. One by **Leslie Nevramont** was tied to a video that we made in the '70s about the maternity center which was being forced to close, it was kind of an activist project with a poster tied to it. It was a home-birthing center, it was an amazing institution that no longer exists. Another one was done by some of the lesbian gals in our group. We all worked together pretty well. We had some disagreements, but in general.... You can order these online at the museum store. A lot of the other posters that the Women's Graphics Collective did were to publicize other movements, because they always felt that they were part of a much larger movement. We did a poster to support the **United Farm Workers** organizing. And a lot of other events. So the other thing that we do, if anybody wants to get ideas about how to popularize the art—is that we make baby ones and we make them into refrigerator magnets—and so the young women just grab these up, because they're cheap. So anyway, the point that I'm trying to make with all these things is that if you put everything out there on the web and you make it flashy and accessible and cool and it's always there and you know how to do the search engine optimization so that when you type in your word you come up top in *Google*—if you do all that stuff than you don't have to organize the academics and the writers and the schoolteachers—because they find you. I mean, we're constantly getting calls from people who want a speaker and a picture and a poster. ◊

Autonomous Grassroots and Non-Profit Organizations

An Interview with Eric Tang

BY DANIEL TUCKER

***Eric Tang** is a researcher, writer and trainer with a background in community organizing for over ten years in the **South Bronx**. He recently took a job in the **African American Studies and Asian American Studies programs** at the **University of Illinois at Chicago**. In this email interview, he discusses his contribution to the important 2007 book* The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex *(ed. INCITE! South End Press, 2007). Tang's essay deals with the history of the non profit/501 (c) 3/NGO sector, how it came to be, and what it means for grassroots organizing today.*

DANIEL TUCKER (DT) You write about the idea that young people inherit the legacies of past social movements. What are the most prominent ideas at work today that you understand to have a direct lineage to a 20th Century social movement? What does that mean for our political imaginations today—what we think is possible and desirable?

ERIC TANG (ET) I think that the immigrant rights movement is one clear example of legacies. The "opening" of immigrations is often though of as an outgrowth of **Civil Rights**. And just as the Civil Rights is an unfinished liberation movement, so is immigrant rights. But our political imaginations have been all but crushed under the weight of pragmatic reform—the "get what we can out of this conservative administration and Congress" strategy. On the one hand, I think we do need to be political realists, but on the other hand I don't think that should mean that we fail to talk about, or brusquely push aside, some real discussion on what a truly transnational community and immigration policy can look like. To be sure, the social movements that sprang to life 40 years ago talked a lot about living in a post-imperialist world, they attempted at times to illustrate it in their rhetoric and platforms. The **Black Panther Party** and the idea of revolutionary intercommunalism comes to mind. Granted, it was inchoate, but, hey, at least they weren't afraid to think big and imaginative.

DT What is the most prominent organizational structure that has been inherited? What are some of the implications of that inheritance?

ET I'm not sure if inheritance is the right word. I think the structures we see many movement organizations adopting today to be the result of a historical rupture or disjuncture. The dominance of the **non-profit mode**l in social justice movements today is the result of a large gap that exists between the autonomous movements of the late-1960s and 70s and the activists that came up during the late 80s and early 1990s, at the denouement of **Reagan-ism**. There are very few institutional bridges that connect the social movement left of the 1960s and 70s to the present. As such, the philanthropic wing of capitalism that stepped into the chasm during the late-1980s and early 1990s, introducing the new social movement activists to a new vocabulary: civic participation, advocacy, service, public-private partnership, etc.

DT Many of the leftist organizations of the '68 era were either squashed by government intervention and/or destroyed by internal conflicts. Some organizations turned towards the process of building political parties with revolutionary as well as reformist agendas. What politically or economically shifted where the left began to take on more of a non-profit structure? What did that jump from collectives, alliances and organizations to Non-profits mean for the ideas? What did it mean for the work people were doing?

ET I have a lot of respect for the **baby boomers** who came out of **new left** movements and then decided to shift into the non-profit system with a reformist mandate. I think they understood that, yes, a combination of state repression and bad sectarian mistakes are to blame for the decline of their movements, but this didn't mean they were going to just give up during the 80s and 90s. in my view, what mattered most to them was continuing to make a contribution—to stay relevant. And if this meant starting a politically acceptable and respectable non-profit, or perhaps joining the biggest non-profit of all—the university—then so be it. Better to do that then take a purist path and be ineffective. That so many of us (and I include myself in this category as a scholar activist in his early-thirties), have continued to work in the non-profits, that it's become all we have ever really known, is our problem, not theirs.

DT Some baby boomers had (and have) loot (as you have stated in your essay for *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded*). That fact combined with the dismantling of the welfare state meant that people that cared about others people had to step up and form new and current service agencies. With time we've seen a consolidation of some larger non-profits social services and a disappearance of others. Where do you see social services going in the coming years? What would a radical program of direct-service along the lines of a **Black Panther/Young Lords/Brown Beret/Young Patriot/etc** "Survival Program" look like today? Is that what we need?

ET I think the shrinking/collapse of the social state and the rise of **neoliberalism** in **U.S. domestic policy** is not rhetoric—it's a firm reality. The question is: should our strategy be to put this thing in reverse? Are we simply to rollback on conservative gains and call for a new **New Deal** and **Great Society**? I'm ambivalent about this. I believe in the socialized state. But I don't think it's about going back so much as it is about re-imagining the state. The social welfare state can be preserved through acts of local autonomy and not just large bureaucracy. At the same time, I think that communities have to understand that there will always be aspects of their collective livelihood that the state shall have no monopoly over –the Panthers and Young Lords understood this well. They imagined and created survival programs that the state just wasn't quick enough to implement let alone envisage. This gave the communities the confidence to run their own programs, redefine the citizenry in their autonomous zones. When the state finally caught up, they "bequeathed" the survival programs to the state, and then moved on to the next set of contradictions. This relationship between the autonomous movements and allied elements of the state is sorely missing today. ◊

Educating '68

Lessons to Learn and Un-Learn

BY EVE L. EWING

During a recent discussion about progress and failures in Chicago's public schools, I was challenged to define the purpose of education. My companion proposed that the goal of education is to teach human beings about their own fundamental freedoms—to teach them that they are free on earth, free to think and act as they wish, and free to craft their own vision of the world. While I found this definition inspiring, it struck me as pointedly individualistic, and in that sense incomplete. I suggested another definition: perhaps the teacher's role is to educate the student about her place in history, about the spirit she has inherited from those who have come before her and her responsibility to nourish it and carry it forward.

While what followed was a heated comparison of the two definitions, I believe that the educator's path falls between the banks of these two ideals. Our aim should be to rear human beings who carry a deep understanding of their own fundamental freedom, and of their lineage and its implications. Each of these forms of knowledge must inform the other. The understanding of history and one's place in it must engender a profound self-respect as well as a sense of duty, and these should both inspire and guide the actions of a free human being. In return, the knowledge of fundamental freedom should catalyze emotional and intellectual creativity, so that history provides a platform for improvement as opposed to a cause for societal stagnation.

Why do we teach? As a social species, we seek to perpetuate the values we believe make for a "better" population of creatures, a society richer in "goodness." As I have proposed, the "good" human being is one who knows his or her past and is empowered to create her or his future.

As we commemorate the 40th anniversary of this year of tumult, we must ask another question: Why do we teach 1968? In commemorating the year, we are celebrating its characters for their radicalism in thought and spirit. We teach young people that they should appreciate the aura of political brilliance that hummed and glowed in 1968. But is is it a valuable lesson? It certainly has the potential for worthlessness. In May '68 and its Afterlives, **Kristin Ross** makes an effort at reclaiming the narrative of this explosive month in **French history**, writing that the event itself has been "overtaken by its subsequent representations," and that it never ceases in "asserting its eventfulness." The same claim could be made about 1968 in general as a reified concept, a fact that would seem to subvert its actual import: how significant can an event really be if the greatest evidence for its significance lies in its own insistence and reiteration as a significant event? In more pragmatic terms, why teach 1968 if its sole lesson is the importance of 1968?

It was this pitfall of possible uselessness that plagued me even as I made the announcement this June to students who had been doomed to summer school—condemned to a summer of my company. "For our social studies unit this summer," I said to the congregation of sleepy, sweaty adolescents, "we will be learning about the **Chicano Movement**. Can anyone tell me what Chicano means?"

As the centerpiece of the unit, the students viewed the 2006 film ***Walkout***, produced for **HBO** and directed by **Edward James Olmos**. The film is about a series of student-led walkouts that took place in **East Los Angeles** in 1968, and centers around "Paula," an honor-student-cum-revolutionary who is torn between her desire to please her parents by obeying school officials and her desire to fight for the rights of her Chicano classmates to be offered a quality education. Driven by a new sense of purpose, she makes the decision to ally herself with other radical students and the militant revolutionary **Brown Beret** organization to organize peaceful protest in her high school. The film is equal parts coming-of-age story and history lesson, as the shifting tide of the society around her is reflected in the changing current of Paula's own heart.

I knew the students would find the film compelling, but was that enough to justify spending valuable instructional time on it, instead of on the curriculum I had been given? The other teachers I worked with were delighted at my idea, because a) it involved watching a movie, b) it involved discussing **Mexican** issues with Mexican students, and c) the combination of these two factors ensured that the students would be interested, and we all know students learn more when they're interested. Fine and good, I thought, but I wanted to make sure they learned something worthwhile. I wanted them to understand their lineage in history.

So we watched the film. Twice a week, they would watch, rapt, as Paula transformed from mousy good girl to sign-waving Chicana warrior. We would watch a

Rick Perlstein on Richard Nixon and the Politics of Division

INTERVIEWED BY AARON SARVER

In 2001, **Rick Perlstein** released his debut book, *Before The Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus*. Praised by both the left and right the book announced Perlstein as a credible historian of the **Conservative movement**. A self-described **New Deal Democrat**, his second book, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* received similar praise from pundits across the political spectrum. I spoke with Perlstein, a **University Of Chicago** graduate and **Hyde Park** resident three weeks before the **Presidential election**.

AARON SARVER (AS) Can you define what you mean by the term **Nixonland**?

RICK PERLSTEIN (RP) Nixonland was the term **Adlai Stevenson** used to describe the land of slander and scare, basically the dirty politics associated with **Richard Nixon**. But I point out in the book that Adlai Stevenson's campaign wasn't innocent in that regard. Basically Stevenson said if the **Republicans** were elected, **Eisenhower** would die and Richard Nixon would be president and we can't afford to have Nixon's finger on the button. So I reworked the word Nixonland to mean the condition in which two sets of Americans believe the other guy, if they prevail, will destroy civilization. Nixon is a great figure to organize that idea around because, of course, Nixon and the people who supported him believed he was saving civilization against the barbarians. By the same token, those who opposed Nixon thought that everything that was good and dear and true about America would collapse too.

AS How did things shift so radically from 1964 to 1972?

RP Let me start with an example from 1968. June of 1968 was the assassination of **RFK**. **Bobby Kennedy** won this resounding victory in the **California** primary and was possibly on his way to winning the **Democratic nomination**. None of the 1968 memorial issues of ***Time*** or ***Newsweek*** will talk about that as the cataclysmic event that it was. The real harbinger of the shift in American politics to come was the fact that an incumbent liberal **Republican, Congressman Tom Piccolo** got his hat handed to him on primary day by this far, far right guy who was against teaching evolution in the schools named **Rafferty**. Eventually Rafferty went on to lose, but the reason I tell this story is it really is an allegory. And it's an allegory about how there were these subterranean energies against the dominant liberal order that the mainstream media wasn't really noticing at the time.

On **Election Day** in 1964 all the pundits pointed to the results in California, where **Lyndon Johnson** won by a million votes and they said that America had accepted the **Civil Rights movement**, accepted the fact that we've ended segregation; this is a mandate for liberalism in America. What they didn't notice was that on the same day, on the same ballot, a referendum against open housing won by a million votes; even within the apotheosis of liberalism there always were these conservative crosscutting forces.

The shift was always latent, it became manifest when in 1965-1966 there were riots in city after city, especially the **Watts riots** in **L.A.**, which was seen live on **TV** because of the first news helicopter. The first **Civil Rights bill** that would have impacted the north as much as the south was the 1966 bill, which had an open housing provision, and it attracted the most negative mail of anything the **Senate** had ever seen. As the world seemed less stable in 1967, '68, '69 a politics that appealed to people's innate longing for order and stability became more and more attractive. To the point that Richard Nixon in 1972 was able to win just as big a landslide arguing against liberalism as Lyndon Johnson did in 1964 arguing for liberalism.

Nixon didn't care what was best for the country, he cared what was best for Richard Nixon and for what would help Republicans win elections, hence his politics of division.

AS Can you talk about how Nixon exploited those divisions in America?

RP Nixon welcomed disunity when it advantaged him politically. My favorite example is right after his inauguration in 1969, he got a memo saying that there would be violent campus protests this upcoming spring and he wrote across the face of the memo, "good". He welcomed this because he could then kind of pose as the savior from all this violence and division. It wasn't far from that point to Nixon and his team recognizing politically that by stoking division they could exacerbate their own political power. So by 1970, on the campaign trail for congressional candidates they're intentionally letting into rallies violent foul-mouthed anti-war protestors, so that Nixon could turn that into the subject of his address, "look at that, that's what we're fighting. That's why you need to elect Republicans."

The division and anger becomes politically addictive, had Nixon been able to tamp down the anger and the passions that were indicative of Nixonland he would have an incentive not to do it. By 1972 it became more and more obvious that what **Pat Buchanan** labeled the "strategy of positive polarization", the active conscious attempt to divide the country in two, on the bet that the Republican half would be bigger, had come to define Richard Nixon's political strategy. So you have Richard Nixon watching the **'68 Democratic Convention** on TV and basically cheering, this is great, this is an opportunity. Which is a very poor position from which to lead the country.

Nixon didn't think up this playbook on his own, he learned a lot from **Reagan's** 1966 campaign in California. When Reagan ran for governor of California in 1966 it was amazing to see how unbelievably condescending the press was towards him when he won the nomination, *Esquire* magazine said, 'well the Republican party isn't that hard up, at least they haven't nominated Lassie.' We remember him as the sunny optimist who was smiling all the time, but in 1966 he was this figure who harvested the rage of the California middle-class, at these ungrateful college students who were spitting on their privilege and taking over buildings.

In 1966 Reagan mid-wifed this whole political vocabulary of backlash. Politicians didn't even really see these things as opportunities. Reagan's pollsters told him to stop mentioning the uprisings in **Berkeley**. They said it didn't show up in their polls as something people cared about. Reagan said, 'I don't care, every time I mention it I get a standing ovation.' It was Ronald Reagan who got people thinking about it as casting a vote against student uprisings. When Reagan won against a previously popular incumbent liberal Democrat, by quite unfairly tying him to the uprisings at Berkeley,

"Nixon" continues on p. 46

segment of ten or twenty minutes, then talk about racial identity, about social activism, about inequity in education, about the Chicano Movement. They listened attentively when I spoke, and participated enthusiastically during discussions. When the unit was over, I interviewed them individually as an assessment, in lieu of a project or a paper-and-pencil test.

When we spoke alone in the hallway, I was fascinated at their responses. They had all unequivocally enjoyed the film. On a visceral level, it touched them—they recalled key scenes with shining eyes, and spoke admiringly of the film's heroes as though they knew them personally. But whenever the conversation veered into the subject of ideas, and not actions, their thoughts were shaky. These responses from 14-year-old **Bianca** are typical of what I heard. My questions and comments are bolded:

> *I liked the movie, because Paula and her friends fought for what they really wanted, and they never gave up.*
>
> **When is it okay to break the law?**
> *When you want to fight for something that you really want to do.*
>
> **Even if other people get hurt?**
> *Yeah. everybody's fighting for something that they want to believe in.*

Carlos, 15, said something similar:

> **When is it okay to break the law?**
> *When people won't listen to you.*

Every one of the students said, without a moment's hesitation, that he or she would be willing to risk injury, imprisonment, or even death in protest, but they tended to make connections to a sense of personal certainty—"standing up for your beliefs"—rather than mentioning an overarching sense of justice or human rights. And I was disappointed. I had expected thoughtful explorations of self-identity, musings on the rights of the individual versus the needs of the collective—proof that I had a class full of **Abbie Hoffmans** in the making. What I got was the understanding that my students, for some reason, were having enormous difficulty seeing very far past their own noses.

Some might say that they were simply too young to have an expansive notion of justice, although my belief in the emotional abilities of the young makes me resistant to this explanation. Maybe the film itself was too emphatic in representing emotionally dramatic moments, without reinforcing the grander ideas behind them. Maybe, upon further reflection, the students will come to understand what I wanted them to understand. But for the time being, what I ended up with was emotion and mimesis. They felt something, and it inspired them to want to replicate what they had seen. And this is the true danger in teaching 1968—not that it is devoid of lessons, as I had originally feared, but that it can instruct us in the wrong things.

Those who participated in the events of 1968 (or who did not, but feel that they can claim it by proxy) castigate today's generation of youth for its (perceived) apathy and inaction; in sum, this generation is guilty of being too dissimilar from the other. "The kids do have their own war now, but not much of an antiwar movement," griped **Rick Perlstein** in *The New York Times*. The '68 standard-bearers, frustrated by what they view as the paralysis of America's youth, are filled with noble intentions to pass the torch of social action. But we must understand that teaching 1968 cannot simply be about teaching students to replicate the actions of others.

Discussing his film, Edward James Olmos said in an interview that "the idea of bringing about social change by way of non-violent behavior is the strongest single method that we have, of making ourselves understood and *understanding ourselves better*." [Emphasis mine]. Indeed, social action can be a rite of passage, as much about the inner life of an individual as it is about the machinations of a big world. Is this amoral? Is it okay for protest to be an act of individualism rather than an act of pure altruism? It seems inevitable. The personal is political; in adolescence, the political seems to be almost exclusively personal.

What did I intend for these students? What was I trying to teach them? I certainly did not intend for the students to learn that social action is about assuming one's own beliefs as flawless, and was perturbed to hear them imply as much. In my earlier reference to the need for the educated individual to understand her role in a "lineage," I mean it broadly. I did not only want them to learn what it meant to be Mexican in 1968, or a student in 1968, or even what it means to be Mexican in **Little Village** in 2008. I want them to know all these things, but I want more for them. History is an ample room. I wanted them to know their place in a long story. I wanted them to see not exclusively the past or the future or the present, but all three together. I wanted them to see themselves erect in the center of a river flowing from source unseen, toward an equally invisible destination. To only replicate the past as a silent witness, or to only swing, reckless and ignorant, at the future, is the fate of the uneducated. In teaching 1968, we must instill students with the ability, in knowing, to watch the ways of others and create, not a replica of old significance, but a new thought for a new time. ◊

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he brought a new thing into the world; this idea of the politics of backlash against social change could win elections. Reagan was the pioneer, but Nixon who didn't campaign that way in 1966 when he was campaigning for congressional candidates, went all in on that strategy and by 1968 his slogan was 'vote as if your life depended on it.' His slogan was 'the first civil right of every American is to be free of domestic violence.'

AS So as we fast forward to 2008, **McCain** is literally campaigning against the same people Nixon did in 72, one example is **Bill Ayers**.

RP Right, but it's not working. As we hold this interview **Barack Obama** is a good ten points ahead in the **Gallup poll**. I have a bunch of conservative friends who email me all kinds of things, and one emailed me about a supposed tie Obama had to a supposed **Communist**. And I said great, 'if you can just slowly and patiently explain to every voter under the age of 35 what a Communist is maybe you'll win the election.' They're talking about what Bill Ayers did during the 70s, if you can explain to voters under 35 what the **New Left** was, and why they were bad then maybe you'll win the election.

They're tried to squeeze the juice out of an orange that's been pretty well dried already. It worked in 2004; they were able to harvest the surplus rage at **John Kerry** for having been an anti-war activist who pointed out the atrocities of the soldiers in **Vietnam**. The question is whether we're still living in Nixonland? There's two ways you can go with that, one is the game is up. But Nixonland campaigns have failed before. Republicans lost in 1970 and the reason people voted for Democrats was the economy was so bad and people thought Democrats had a better message on the economy. Maybe Democrats can prevail in 2008 because people are focused on the economy instead of their cultural resentments. Or maybe it's the case that the old cultural resentments no longer signify anymore and Republicans have literally reached the end of road.

AS Why aren't the Ayers attacks working? Is it just because as you mentioned earlier that people under 35 or 40 don't understand the '60s?

RP Sure. There's a saying in politics, 'if you're explaining, you're losing. It's just not a clear message for most people and the people for whom it resonates, that proportion of the electorate is smaller than ever before, we just have a younger electorate.

Also, the connection is pretty tendentious, if Barack Obama was so eager to hang out with radicals why did he only hang out with one? There were lots of radicals he could have hung out with. Also, people are focused on the economy. It's a cliché, you can turn on the TV any time and that's what you'll hear. And quite explicitly McCain and his surrogates have said they don't want to talk about the economy.

AS Your point about Obama hanging out with only one radicalis significant because there's a lot of 60s people in Chicago and in Hyde Park ...

RP It's amazing that they could only find one connection; it shows how assiduous Barack Obama probably was in avoiding 60s radicals. It shows that at heart Barack Obama is temperamentally a very moderate person. He built his career very carefully and he made as few associations as he could. To a certain extent this election is a referendum on the declining significance of the 60s. ◊

What if Chicago had been an orgy?

BENJAMIN SHEPARD

Notions of play interact ceaselessly with efforts focused on emancipation, pleasure, social protest and pluralistic democracy. [1] While the **Yippies** and the rock band **MC5** offered a bit of playful spectacle in **Lincoln Park** during the Chicago riots of 1968, it is difficult to confirm they had anything to do with shifting the predominant story line of the streets. Yet storylines were changing everywhere. By 1968, the war was starting to feel interminable. Years of peaceful protests, escalating to angry marches and clashes were not achieving anything significant. And many were contemplating more controversial tactics, including abandoning principles of non-violence.

Tom Hayden and several members of the old SDS leadership called for activists to expose the violence of American democracy at the **Chicago Democratic Convention** in 1968. Bring out the monster, Hayden suggested. Riots followed yet a phase of movement ended. Much of the counterculture departed demoralized; supporters distanced themselves. **Nixon** was elected, the **Vietnam** war continued, and the secret domestic war by the U.S. secret police forces, both **FBI** and **CIA**, moved into high gear.

However, many questioned the tenor of the protests. They wondered whether the outcome would have been different if protesters had launched a loving spectacle, rather than a rioting body to be beaten down. What if activists had strived to bring out the best in the police, rather than torment them? What if they had shifted the polemic of protest from confrontation toward joy? Could the dynamics of protest and community building have resulted in a more effective resolution? Shortly after the raucous 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, **Allen Ginsberg** was invited to conduct an interview about the counterculture for ***Playboy*** Magazine. The poet, a veteran of protests, ruminated about a different outcome in Chicago, had collective energies focused on creating an orgy of activism rather than on a riot. For Ginsberg, there had to be an alternative to Hayden's bringing out the monster.

Ginsberg described the ways dance and play, yoga and street theater, chanting and singing, could serve as alternatives to the riots and street violence that accompanied the a "**Festival of Life**" of Chicago 1968 and possibly shift power dynamics.[2] In the face of mass police repression, Ginsberg envisioned, "Organized chanting and organized massive rhythmic behavior on the streets, shamanistic white magic, ghost dance rituals, massive nakedness and distribution of flowers might have broken through the police-state hallucination-politics theater wall." Ginsberg regretted that there was less of an effort on the part of activists to speak to a generative spirit. "Now, nobody got naked in Chicago, but the few times there was communal chanting of mantras, that proved helpful." Ginsberg hoped the chanting minimized what could have been a much more dangerous confrontation. "[I]t did stop the violence; it really calmed several scenes where police didn't have remote-control orders to attack. But it didn't stop all the violence..."

Rather than a "morbid" uniformity, which most youth groups were rebelling against, Ginsberg called for a reinvigorating "theatricality of disorder" and pleasure capable of cultivating a truly pluralistic democracy, built on a respect for both difference and pleasure. The aim would be to unleash a politics of joy which truly honored the possibility of pleasure and social connection rather than the every day experience of ruthless competition, greed, and war.

Asked by an interviewer if he was kidding, Ginsberg replied that he was quite serious. "Life should be ecstasy," he explained. "We need life styles of ecstasy and social forms appropriate to whatever ecstasy is available for whoever wants it." In the months and years to come, the nation would learn more and more about what Ginsberg was talking about with the ascendance of **Gay Liberation**. Ginsberg's flights of fancy offer a narrative trajectory for what gay liberation activism would look like. Here, a form of community building would emerge that focused on affect rather than rational ends, with an aim toward a new democracy of pleasure. Herein, democratic ideals including pursuit of happiness found their expression in a movement built on both respect multiple forms of eros and queer difference.

Ginsberg's musings reflected a growing movement at the time, involving a new cohort of social actors looking to the politics of play as an alternative to both violent confrontation and boring politics. This was a politics which rejected the ruthless use of technology to spread war, the application of logic to condemn sexuality, and the application of rationality of reject personal freedom and liberation. For Ginsberg, playing with power would be far more appealing than overwhelming others or violating Gandhi's principle of non-violence. In contrast to the violence of the **Red Army Faction** (**RAF**) in Germany, the **Weather Underground** in the U.S., the **Red Brigades** in Italy, and other groups which utilized violence as a lever for social change, nonviolent play is compelling. Only months after his 1969 interview with Playboy, Ginsberg stumbled upon the riots which put Gay Liberation on the national stage. 'They've lost that sad look," Ginsberg would declare exultantly of the newly-liberated protesters.

Out of the ashes of the **New Left**, Gay Liberation would stress the defense of pleasure as a valid aspect of its agenda. For Ginsberg, whose breakthrough 1955 poem *Howl* celebrated those who "screamed for joy" while "being fucked in the ass by saintly motorcyclists," queer politics offered a rejection of the politics of prohibition in favor of the politics of pleasure, authenticity, and social connection.[3] Play and pleasure, resulting in the connection of performance, would be central to the gatherings of a new tribe which shaped the gay liberation movement in the 1970's.

While Gay Liberationists embraced the politics of pleasure and play, the practice and philosophy behind it was nothing new. **Herbert Marcuse** wrote about it; **Beat Movement** writers as well as the Yippies and **Situationists** famously practiced it—turning pranks into a work of art.[4] The Yippies made use of absurdist parodies and humor as a tactic to stop the Vietnam War. Rejecting notions of work and social hierarchy, the Situationists put a premium on free expression, play, and sexual liberation. The philosophy was best embodied within the calls for the exhaltation of imagination and desire during the mass strikes in **Paris** in 1968. Two U.S. journalists witnessed the scene first hand. "This very widespread revolt against the old forms of established authority was accompanied by an acute and profoundly enjoyable sense of liberation," **Patrick Seale** and **Maureen McConville** wrote in *Research #11: Pranks!* "All sorts of people felt it in all walks of life. A great gust of fresh air blew through dusty minds and offices and bureaucratic structures."

Building on these traditions, Gay Liberationists were to fashion an entire movement based on the political efficacy of play in action. Many of those who had been involved with anti-war and **Civil Rights** organizing helped make such a notion a reality.

This spirit helped propel the culture of both **New York** and **San Francisco** queer organizing circles. The highly participatory theatrics of San Francisco's **Cockettes** thrived in this unofficial fun. Play is always anything but work. As the decades proceeded, this spirit overlapped with the do-it-yourself ethos of punk, **AIDS** activism and the global justice convergence actions of recent years. These movements embodied the boundary transgressing politics of play. Play vs. work, sex vs. war, pleasure vs. inhibition, if play is anything it is about the dialectics which make pursuit of happiness an authentic dynamic of democratic politics. ◊

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1. This piece is excerpted and adapted from a two-volume study on play and social movements (full references will be available in the book version).

2. Citations from Allen Ginsberg in this and the following two paragraphs are from Ginsberg, A. 1969/2001. Interview with Paul Carroll. *spontaneous mind. Selected Interviews 1958-1996*. New York: Perennial/HarperCollins: New York.

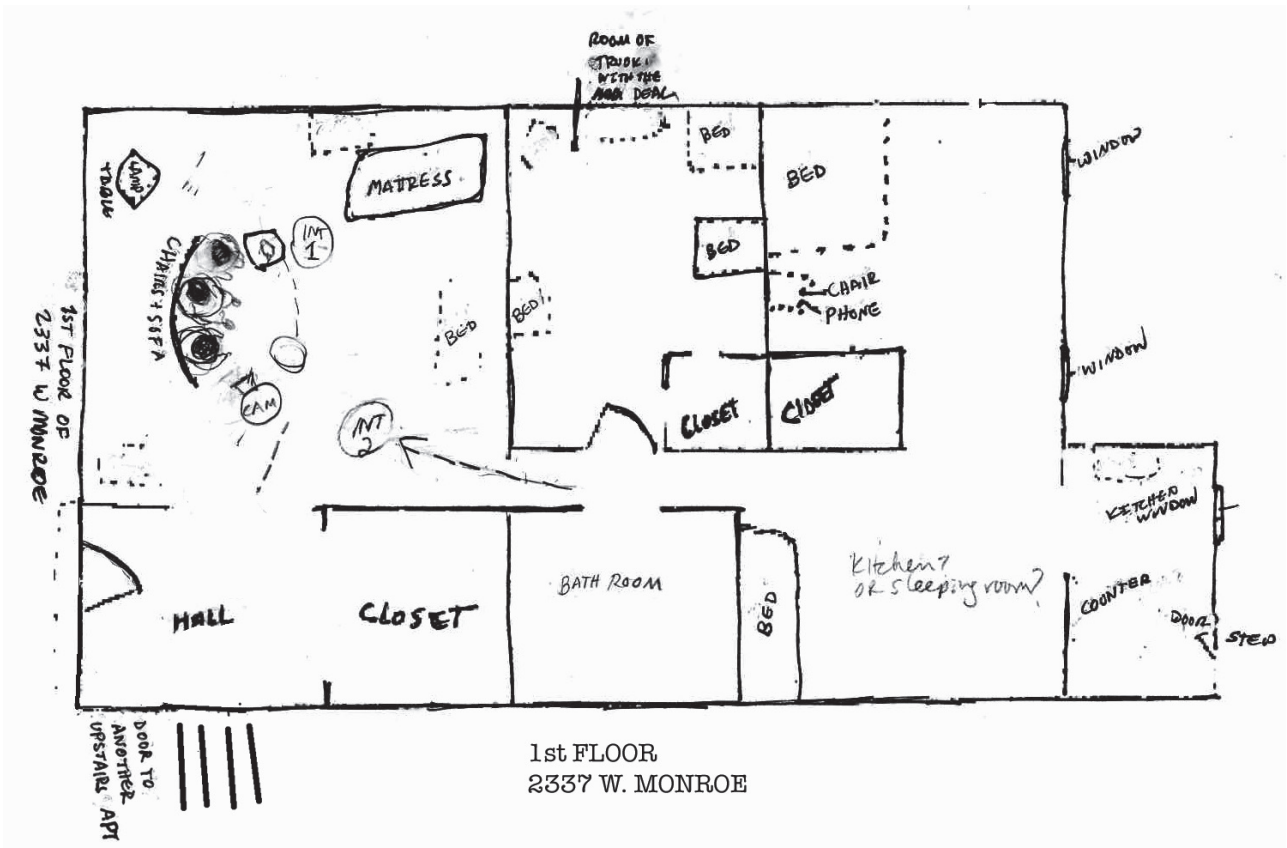
3. From Ginsberg, A. 1973/78. Interviewed by Allen Young. *Gay Sunshine Interviews*. Edited by Winston Leyland. Volume One. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press.

4. *Research #11: Pranks!* (1987). San Francisco, CA: Re/Search Publications.

Left: Fred Hamtpron images are screen photographs from Videofreex, *Fred Hampton: Black Panthers in Chicago*, available from Video Data Bank Chicago. Image courtesy of Video Data Bank, *www.vdb.org*

Below: Floorplan image is an artists rendering of a foorplan of 2337 W Monroe St, Chicago—the home of Fred Hampton—provided to the FBI by Hampton's bodyguard and police informant William O'Neal.

Floorplan is from BLW's *Shooting Fred Hampton*, it is an artist rendering that superimposes the position of interviewees and interviewers in the Videofreex tape onto the floorplan of Fred's apartment drawn by FBI agents based on information provided by William O'Neal. The floorplan comes from public FBI documents; it is also reproduced in Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, Agents of Repression, South End Press, 2002.



Rehearsals

A performance group reflects on their approach to embody historical speeches and documentaries from the late 1960s and early '70s.

BY BLW

In 2004, **BLW** attended ***PILOT TV: Experimental Video for Feminist Trespass***, an event that opened felicitously with artist/curator **Dara Greenwald's** presentation of some archival activist videos that were not readily available at the time[1]. Troubled by our captivation with these documents, we tried re-enacting them with a small group of Pilot co-participants. We found this process of re-speaking produced a certain friction that was both intense and interesting. We were confronted by many questions: from how we learn about radical histories, to our own capacities for imagining radical, systemic change today. We have since expanded this procedure of re-speaking, to include other recordings from social movements of the late 60s and early 70s. Rather than producing re-enactment performance for a viewing audience (our work would be dreadfully boring as something to look at), we aim to create participatory situations that further nuance and specify these questions.

The archival recordings that inspire our re-speaking include press conferences, speeches and interviews recorded during the 5 month long strike at **San Francisco State College** in 1968; the final known interview with **Fred Hampton**, Chairman of the **Illinois** Chapter of the **Black Panther Party**, videotaped in late 1969 by the **Videofreex Collective**; and the 1973 speech delivered by **Queen Mother Moore** at **Green Haven Federal Prison**, recorded by the **People's Communication Network** (**PCN**). We chose these because the difficult material they present provokes us to think-about violence and militancy, about the role of media in relation to memory and forgetting, about our decreasing capacities for collective outspokenness and about the how people are organizing today in response to economic oppression. Re-speaking workshops involve researching the historical conditions of the source recordings and inviting participants to take on the roles of speakers and camera operators. Almost from the onset, we experience our distance from these political struggles and our own strangeness in the language and positions we are trying to embody. We have never produced a "proper" reenactment; we have instead sought out something politically potent from the failure of our performance to be convincing. Eschewing theatricality, we search for the basis of the speaker's conviction, forcing ourselves to consider how we might build our own capacity for radicalism, for doing and speaking radically. What kinds of redirections and transformations might be necessary? For us, the perhaps counter intuitive approach of looking backward is about understanding what actions and risks it might take to remake ourselves. This means beginning with the persistent insertion of the memory of the past into the present, so that it does not just go away, and proceeds by bringing other people into that memory, rather than leaving them to stand outside of it, as spectators. These group experiences in re-speaking lead to productive new questions. We point here to three instances from our efforts, and to the inquiries these experiments have triggered.

The Videofreex interview with Fred Hampton was recorded in Chicago shortly before his assassination. Made to be televised, the intense conversation reviews the Panther's legal woes, and then goes on to extol their work as community organizers, emphasizing the need for political education and community self-determination. What we do not see on the tape is that, at the time the interview was taken, the **FBI** had already infiltrated the organization and plans for Hampton's assassination were underway. We struggle to summon the idealism of Fred and the Videofreex. We stumble as we quote him: "We're going to keep going out there setting up some examples, some new revolutionary programs that people can basically relate to, because basically people are progressive and basically people are revolutionary. No, we're not worried about them killing anybody because … anybody that tries to deal with wiping out the leadership of the Black Panther Party is dealing with a time-wasting… futile effort to seize some type of power that can never be seized because it's a type of flowing power, it's a type of unending flow of this power." What of our relationship with others, with the inherent desire and capacity of people to liberate them/ourselves, with power as something embodied and shared? When Hampton says, "people learn basically by observation and participation," we understand we are lacking the experience of living differently, of building examples for ourselves, structures we can participate in and which can change us.

Our reconstitution of moments from the 1968 San Francisco State strike begins with research on the years of organizing across different communities and subject positions that preceded the 5-month walk-out. We restage press conferences in which the **Black Student Union**, the **Third World Liberation Front** and a range of white student and faculty groups who speak their platforms for education in the service of liberation. "…you've got to start with the poor and you build from that base and you get up to the students and you get up to the faculty and… and that's why this campus is closing down,

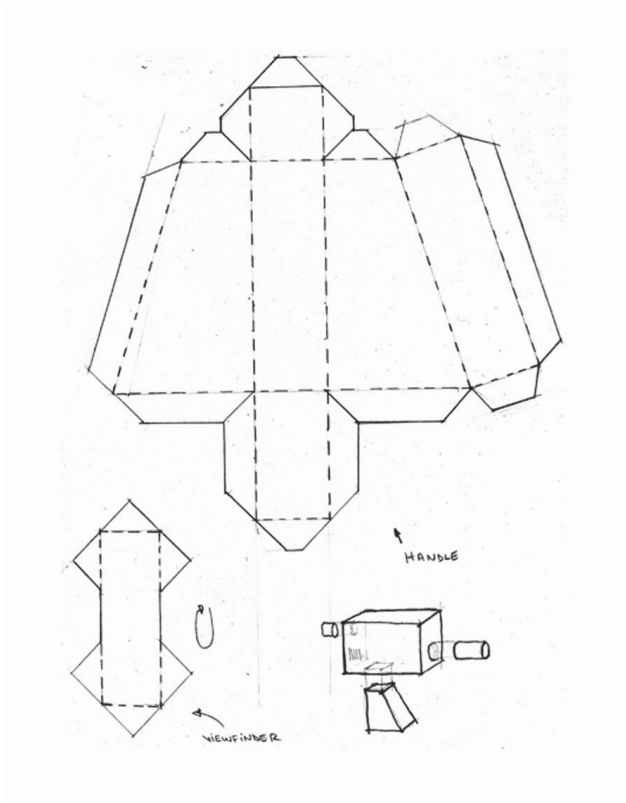
"Rehearsals" continues on p. 48

1. The Videofreex pieces are now more accessible: they are in the collection of the **Video Data Bank** at the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago** and have been catalogued (see *http://www.vdb.org*).

Clockwise from top:
Queen Mother Moore images are screen photographs from People's Television Network: *Queen Mother Moore Speech at Greenhaven Prison*, available from Video Data Bank, Chicago. Image courtesy of Video Data Bank, *www.vdb.org*

Drawing by Sarah Lewison inspired by the Queen Mother Moore interview, from one of our respeaking workshops

Drawing of a diy video camera from one of our respeakings



Rehearsals continued from p. 47

because the people of San Francisco have begun to see that from way down in **Los Angeles** and way out in **Sacramento**, the forces of the Right are trying to crush us, and the people of this city, the important people, the minorities, the poor have risen up and said to **Ronald Reagan**, and make no doubt about it, that's where it's coming from, they've said to Ronald Reagan, 'no you're not going to do it here.'" We are forced to deal with the historical distance between the radical ideals of the strike and its ambivalent conclusion, in which **Black Studies** was institutionalized as an academic discipline, while the revolutionary popular education programs were eradicated. How can we survive such "victories," how can we remobilize after the cooptation of radical dreams and practices within institutional and increasingly corporate structures? How can we re-imagine culture and education as part of struggle politics? We understand this is once again a time for struggle, but also a time for study—for meeting with others, for organizing in response to isolation.

Queen Mother Moore comes to Green Haven prison in 1969 at the invitation of **Think Tank**, a self-directed prisoners study group that formed out of the catastrophe of **Attica** to develop strategies for community education and empowerment. Think Tank worked with other groups inside and outside prisons, including **PCN**, the radical media collective who recorded the event. In the recording, Queen Mother Moore tells the story of a community that arms itself to confront the powers that seek to silence **Marcus Garvey**. "...Everybody's gun came out, and this is what they said, Speak, Garvey speak! Speak, Garvey! with the guns in their hands. Speak Garvey speak..." Power is collectively seized, passing between the collectivity and the individual as the mandate to speak. Queen Mother Moore tells this story both as a witness to this transferal and as a vehicle for its redirection towards those who are witnessing her. It is a demonstration of the power of speech itself: the witness to speech later becomes a speaker who speaks to someone else who is a witness who can (must) then speak. Speech is revealed as a connectivity that moves through us, rather than originating with us, and we ask ourselves who has seized space for our speaking? How do we form communities that enable and mandate speech? As our questions accumulate, so does their sense of relevance and immediacy.

We began writing this on October 1, 2008, as the **1st Brigade Combat Team** of the **3rd Infantry Division** returned from **Iraq** to become the first **U.S. Army** brigade in a century to be deployed in an "enduring mission" of domestic law enforcement. This follows **George W. Bush's** October 17th, 2006, signing of the **Defense Authorization Act of 2007** which allows for militarized police round-ups and detention of protesters, "illegal aliens," "potential terrorists" and other "undesirables." We are witnessing an expansion of the war on terror on the domestic front, in the form of increasing preemptive detentions based on expanded **Patriot Act legislation**, and the redefinition of dissident speech as "terrorist." In this indefinite deployment for some unknown civil strife, we see two vectors converging: a build-up of pre-emptive force against expression and autonomous organizing, and the collapse of the speculative economic balloon.

We understand we are being targeted and attacked—physically and economically, as people with other kinds of desires for how to live. What does this mean for those of us committed to nonviolent struggle? It is less and less possible to be polite, to politely refuse. We struggle now to recognize the ways in which the repressive apparatus of 2008 operates within the structures of global power. If we think of the late '60s and early '70s as the beginning of the neoliberal enterprise and today at its culmination, what can we learn from those whose words we are re-speaking to enhance our own capacities of organizing and making community? First, we recognize that our own subjectivities are implicated in today's economic formulation: a fact that presents danger and opportunity. The danger is we too might be swept into the calculus of decaying connection and identity, as people are pitted against each other in the economic sphere. We see too, there is opportunity, even an imperative to build new forms of connection, working with others to confront an economic system that continually produces catastrophes at all different scales.

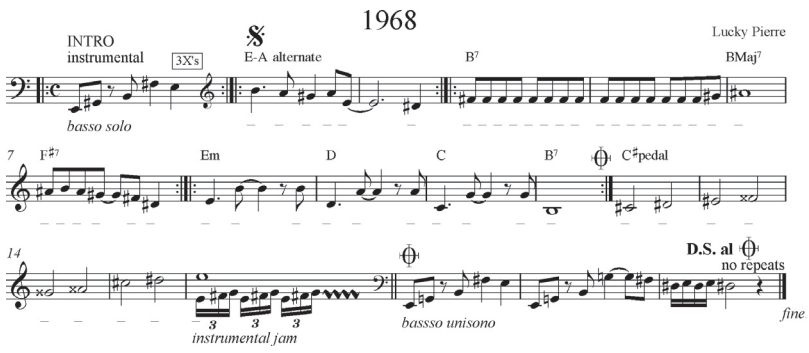
Learning from those whose words we are re-speaking, from the ways they found each other, and from our own stumbling "rehearsals," we understand that we will make mistakes, and that it is through the awkwardness of learning that one builds capacity. Seeking a practice that moves through speech and into action, our recent work has consisted of organizing public meetings and hearings under the general title *A Meeting is a Question*. The public meetings are in a sense the insertion of the workshop situation into specific public contexts; for us, the workshop format continues to be useful, because it presupposes small groups of people working through something together without the security of predetermined outcomes or solutions. In San Francisco, we conducted meetings at the **Bechtel Plaza**; in **Philadelphia** we instigated an ad hoc coalition with other artists (**Think Tank that has yet to be named**), local organizers, journalists and residents to develop languages for addressing the future; in Chicago we organized a weeklong series of public meetings to investigate **Millennium Park** as a site of preemptive coercion. Using discussions, physical exercises, interviews, presentations, public recitations we try to produce different effects and affects that interrupt and repurpose the spaces in which we are working. Our goal is to develop methods that would allow us to connect with each other, to imagine how we may move forward literally from the ground, from where we are. ◊

Lucky Pierre

Concurrent with and related to Lucky Pierre's ongoing project *Vietnam & Modernism*, Lucky Pierre devised two sets of instructions for actions to be performed. One set is to be performed in 1968 the other in 2008. Please pick one or more action and perform.

17 Actions for 1968

The following actions are to be performed in the year 1968. If you do not live in or cannot get to 1968, they may be performed in another year. Please account for any temporal gaps or regret. **ACTION:** Voice Piece for 1968 (after Emmett Williams). Step into Chicago. Proceed to the Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave. Ask the concierge if it is 1968. Exit. **ACTION:** Life/Art. Choose one of the following tasks and decide whether the task is art or life. Complete the task. 1. Fuck 2. Eat 3. Pray 4. Sleep 5. Protest. **ACTION:** Go to Haymarket Square. Paint your legs black. Check with Weather Underground. Wear earplugs. Wear a helmet. Go to the Electric Theater, Clark and Lawrence (with blackened legs). Sign up to be an extra in the film Medium Cool. Stay and listen to Country Joe. **ACTION:** Go to Frank Lloyd Wright's Waller Apartments, 2840-58 W. Walnut St. Climb to the roof and look out across Garfield Park. Make a list of words to describe the color of the sky. (Bring fire extinguisher, wear heat-proof jumpsuit, helmet.) Take the list to the opening of Lake Point Towers, 505 N. Lakeshore Drive. Tape list to front door. **ACTION:** Make an appointment to meet with Mayor Richard J. Daley. Tell him that you are from the future. Tell him his son will be mayor. Tell him his son will be considered a more successful mayor. Discuss ways to protect Richard J. Daley's legacy (a gun?). **ACTION:** Dig a tunnel under the place where you will live in 2008. Climb into the tunnel and understand this to be the difference between winning and losing. **ACTION:** Choose a building on the street you live (in 1968.) Enter it and demand all residents confess to having attempted your murder. **ACTION:** Find your parents. Tell them you are from the future. Have them explain the following: Prague Spring. Yale University going co-ed. 24,000 Marines involuntarily sent back to Vietnam for second tours. Cincinnati Bengals founded. Apollo 8 orbits the moon—crew reads from the book of Genesis. The birth of LL Cool J. The birth of Ol' Dirty Bastard. The death of Yuri Gagarin. **ACTION:** Go to the SDS headquarters in Chicago. Go to a meeting of FALN. Go to a Black Panther organizing event. Go to a Chicago City Council session. At each location, announce your homosexuality. Demand your rights. See what happens. **ACTION:** Listen for the birth of counter-insurgency war theory. Predict its use as an institutionalized operational procedure in many more failed wars. **ACTION:** Put your ear to the ground. Listen for the sound of your freedom sending people underground to fight for theirs. **ACTION:** Feel the air of moral righteousness escaping your country like the Apollo 11 will escape the atmosphere next year. **ACTION:** Return to Congress Hotel, 520 S. Michigan Ave. Ask again if it's 1968. Ask a young bellhop if he has been on strike for five years. Tell him he will be. Ask the concierge where the nearest hospital is. Go to Cook County Hospital. Donate a pint of blood. **ACTION:** Find a large field of flowers. Select 100 of them to send to your enemies. If you do not have 100 enemies return each day until you do. **ACTION:** Show everything about yourself to an older person you don't like very much. **ACTION:** Close your eyes. Imagine being in the Air National Guard. Know that this will be more convenient and pleasurable for you. Have friends buy you drinks. Talk to pretty girls. **ACTION:** Move to the country from the city. Put your arms out in front of you and feel the energy of the land. Realize it's mostly in your head. Damn or celebrate circumstance and ambition. **ACTION:** Write lyrics to the following song.



Instructions for Creating 1968 Song Lyric

Use this format:

1. verb adverb preposition noun
2. conjunction adverb pronoun verb pronoun
3. preposition noun pronoun verb
4. interjection
5. adverb pronoun verb
6. noun
7. verb preposition pronoun
8. adverb
9. adjective
10. noun.

-OR-

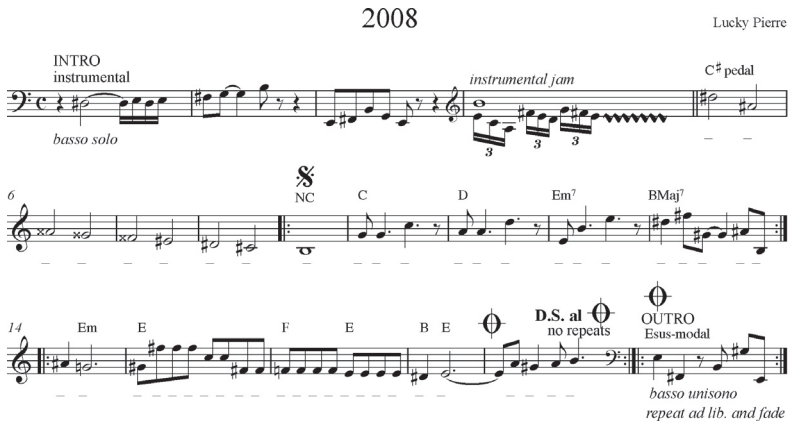
Write 48 syllables.

Don't worry about fitting or not fitting lyric to the above music. We'll deal with that.

E-mail completed lyrics to Lucky Pierre at *1968Song@luckypierre.org*. Lucky Pierre will record your song and send you an MP3 of the recording. For examples of completed songs, go to *www.luckypierre.org/AREAsongs*

13 Actions for 2008

The following actions are to be performed in the year 2008. If you do not live in, or cannot easily be in 2008, the pieces may be performed in another year. Please account for any temporal gaps or regret. **ACTION:** Step into Chicago. Choose either "ambitious" or "over-ambitious." Perform the following tasks: 1. Comprehend the last eight years. 2. Make believe a kitchen match is an Iraqi civilian. Light and extinguish 500,000 to 1 million of them. 3. Get a new credit card, preferably from China. Spend $720 million in one day. 4. Feel upbeat and confident that your government is making good decisions. 5. Kiss the person(s) you love most. Know you will never see them again. **ACTION:** Go to the Museum of Broadcast Communication at the Cultural Center. Pin a note to your shirt that reads: "Take a picture of me with cardboard cutout of Ray Rayner." Ask the guard if it is 2008. **ACTION:** Shift your fence so your neighbor's backyard is now part of your backyard. Inform your neighbor that he/she hasn't been properly caring for their yard. Tell your neighbor that you'll be caring for the yard until they are capable of resuming care. Hire the best lawn care contactor that money can buy to care for the new backyard. Sell any apples from the apple tree, the roses from the rose bushes and the vegetables from the garden. Watch crab grass spread from the claimed backyard to other neighbors' backyards because the contractor's contractor didn't have any plan for controlling crab grass - they only cut grass. Begin a neighborhood campaign to take over all blighted grass. **ACTION:** Go to Margies Candies at Armitage and Western. Eat a hot fudge sundae. Avoid focusing on the "patina". **ACTION:** Go to the abandoned Block 37 "superstation." Drink a bottle of Green River. Pretend you're getting to O'Hare 20 minutes faster. **ACTION:** Go to the unused railroad tracks along Bloomingdale Avenue and dream of bike trails. **ACTION:** Purchase a happy roll of gift-wrap. Carefully wrap and package a bit of your joyous freedom. Fly to another country. Give the gift to the first person you meet. Give the gift at gunpoint. Don't plan your escape. Call your mother. Tell her you're fine, couldn't be happier, can't wait for the sun to rise. Tell her you're doing all you imagined you'd be doing at this age. Tell your roommate or lover the same thing. Find new ways to say it enough times to begin believing it. Proposed location for 2008 performance: Intersection of circumstance and ambition. (aka. Logan Square?) **ACTION:** Go to the northernmost train stop on Chicago's elevated train system. Stand in the suburbs. Ride the train to the southernmost stop. Stand in the city. Try to see the city's southern limits more than 30 blocks away. **ACTION:** Count the number of signs in Chicago with Mayor Richard J. Daley's name on them. **ACTION:** Go to the video fountain in Millennium Park. Imitate the faces. Spit water on a child. **ACTION:** Go to Chinatown Square at Cermak and Archer. Eat at Lao Sze Chuan. Notice one table divided into three with a purple sharpie. Be happy about that. **ACTION:** Tell your friends you are a homosexual. Describe your sexual practices to them in detail. Demand that your married friends stop referring to their legal spouse as their "partner." Tell your friends you are an atheist. Tell your friends you are NOT a Progressive. Tell your friends you ARE a Liberal. **ACTION:** Loudly declaim the following William James quote: "It is but the old story, of a useful practice first becoming a method, then a habit, and finally a tyranny that defeats the end it was used for." **ACTION:** Write lyrics to the following song.



Instructions for Creating 2008 Song Lyric

Use this format:

1. adjective
2. noun
3. verb preposition pronoun
4. adverb
5. adverb pronoun verb
6. conjunction adverb pronoun verb pronoun
7. preposition noun pronoun verb
8. verb adverb preposition noun

-OR-

Write 47 syllables.

Don't worry about fitting or not fitting lyric to the above music. We'll deal with that.

E-mail completed lyrics to Lucky Pierre at *2008Song@luckypierre.org*. Lucky Pierre will record your song and send you an MP3 of the recording. For examples of completed songs, go to *www.luckypierre.org/AREAsongs*

If it's not love,

Then it's the *om* that will bring us together

A review and document of the recently initiated Reenact '68 performance which took place in Grant Park on the 40th anniversary of the DNC protests

BY BERT STABLER

In *The Political Unconscious*, **Fredric Jameson** uses **Freudian** concepts such as repression and projection to explore literary texts as attempts to deal with capitalism's contradictions. Casting fantasy as the "vehicle for our experience of the real," Jameson addresses some simplistic excesses of other **Marxist** scholars who have unduly disparaged the importance of culture. He suggests that cultural attempts to confront past political struggles can have contemporary relevance, saying:

> *Such long-dead issues as the seasonal alternation of the economy of a primitive tribe, the passionate disputes about the nature of the Trinity, the conflicting models of the polis or the universal Empire... can recover their original urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a great collective story...for Marxism, the collective struggle to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of Necessity.* [1]

If this is true, then a reverent, spontaneous, and energetic remembrance of a monumental moment in youth activism could, without masquerading as a protest in its own right, be capable of generating its own significance.

A noteworthy attempt at such a remembrance occurred in an out-of-the-way corner of Chicago's **Grant Park** on August 28, when a group of young people staged an event in honor of the riots that occurred in Chicago forty years earlier, during the week of the 1968 **Democratic National Convention**. The event was provocatively termed a "re-enactment" of the event, which, to boast even minimal verisimilitude, would probably have needed at least a bit of staged violence to evoke the bloody clashes between armed, agitated police and largely defenseless, highly unruly young people protesting the ongoing **Vietnam War** generally, and in particular the Democratic choice of **Hubert Humphrey**, a pro-war candidate, to face **Richard Nixon** in the election that year. Organizers of ***Re-Enact '68,*** however, professed interest neither in making such a grand gesture, nor in programmatically relating the goals of the 1968 protestors to obvious analogies of the present day: namely, an unpopular war and a hot and heavy presidential race. What did occur in 2008, along with a brief musical march along **Michigan Avenue** and some free food and face-painting, was a procession of speakers, including media and activist veterans of the 1968 events, youngsters doing theatrical readings and musical performances based on those of major youth-movement figures who appeared in Chicago in '68 (**Bobby Seale**, **William S. Burroughs**, and the **MC5**, for example). There was even a mock animal election, replacing the pig of '68 with a chicken and a cock, and there was a retired police officer who knew many of the blue-helmeted boys who were told to crack hippie skulls.

The idea for *Re-Enact '68* was hatched by 25-year-old **Liam Warfield**, who spoke at the event made up (reminiscent of **Gustave Courbet's** martyrific self-portrait) as a bloody and beaten protestor. A core group of about ten young people were involved in planning and pulling it off; the organizational effort relied largely on **Yony Leyser**, who portrayed **Allen Ginsberg** at the event, and **Chip Hamlett**, who was the MC on the 28th, and the one who did what he could to obtain a city permit for the event (like the 1968 protestors, they had to do without one). At a meeting about a week prior to the event, Hamlett spoke of the group's desire to "distance ourselves from the head-smashing rhetoric" of the 1968 event, while Warfield lamented the lack of political urgency in much art of his generation, but also the lack of creativity in much contemporary activism. "The last thing we need is another protest," he said. Rather than the issue-focused performances that started appearing around the time of the major protests at the 1999 **World Trade Organization** meeting in **Seattle**, Warfield said that, while *Re-Enact '68* was attempting to encourage attendance by a variety of progressive activists, especially anti-war military veterans, the only official message the event was sponsoring was "U.S. out of Vietnam."

Indeed, while expressing predominantly leftist views, these youthful, devil-may-care organizers didn't seem to consider themselves standard activists nearly so much as artists, putting on the event to affect participants and viewers rather than to alter the course of public policy. The shape of the event seemed to follow the recent call to participate in reading aloud speeches

1. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 19.

Letter to the Re-Enactors

BY PAIGE SARLIN

> *What would it mean to re-enact the organizing?*

I've been thinking a lot about the practice of re-enactment. A practice takes material (in this case historical material) and transforms it, producing something with or from it. The practice of re-enactment has the potential to produce new forms of knowledge, more than just unearthing information about the past, de-contextualized and random, it seems to offer the potential to re-frame and re-consider the past in light of the present. That seems like a worthy task. Especially for 1968 and its surrounding years, right? A tremendously fascinating period in history, it seems to present a bounty of material for anyone who is looking for resonances, lessons, legitimacy, democracy, political radicalism, hope. But beginning with the very notion of history as a storehouse of material seems to be where re-enactment starts to go a bit wrong.

Part of the problem I see is in this focus on moments in history. Choosing to repeat this moment and not that moment is an activity with consequences, it demotes that which you don't choose and elevates that which you do. In addition, given that political struggle both responds to and reflects major contradictions in our society, the notion that a given moment can be understood in isolation from all the activity that came before it seems to close down the possibility of reconsidering the process of history making. Focusing on narrowly defined moments conforms to what we already have words and categories for, that which is easily repeatable, comprehensible, that fits within the frame of the sense of history as inevitable and fixed. It's easy to re-assemble images and video from these sorts of events, to add to the archive. But activities, events, politics that might challenge that very archive, might confront the very image of the 60s that our cultural archive reproduces and holds dear, are a bit harder to produce.

Re-enact '68 chose to re-enact some of the events surrounding the '68 democratic convention in Chicago, though consciously choosing to avoid the skirmish between protestors and the police that took place at that time. They took extremely well-documented speeches and concerts and brought them back to life, animating the words and the images of **Grant Park** from 1968 with new bodies. The result of this re-vivifying was more material for the archive, articles, images, assessments, and accounts of first-hand experience. The focus on the event though laid almost no emphasis on the politics of organizing and staging (or re-staging) the events, an aspect that a re-enactment could have included or considered as part of their purview.

Other re-enactor artists, like **Mark Tribe** and, arguably **Sharon Hayes**, have chosen to re-animate speeches in their work as well. This isn't the first time in history that politics has been conflated with the speech act (I'm thinking **Aristotle** and **Plato**) nor is it the most recent (**Obama's** campaign suggests that his speech giving ability is equivalent to his ability to lead). But I suppose for people interested in performance, there's a treasure trove of other materials that might actually supplement the narrow conception of the events that are being re-enacted. Take the case of **Paul Potter's** 1965 speech that Mark Tribe re-staged in 2007 as part of his **Port Huron Project**. One week after Potter delivered the speech to the first major national demonstration organized by **Students for a Democratic Society**, SDS set about re-printing it, sending copies of the speech to anyone who was interested. SDS saw the reproduction and dissemination of the speech as a way to build the anti-war movement, but it was also a response to the divisive red-baiting and sectarian maneuvering that had threatened to jeopardize the event and discredit SDS's organizing efforts. While Tribe's choice of speech is interesting, by focusing almost exclusively on the words and the location, his practice operates simply as a footnote. It operates as the most recent reproduction of a document that's already been categorized and captioned as significant. It offers no consideration of what it means to reproduce this document, a document with a history of reproduction. And this time, as a re-enactment, the cultural text is not even doing the kind of political or organizing work that the original reproduction was tasked with. Sharon Hayes' work is a bit more complicated, as she doesn't situate herself as attempting to re-enact historical events so much as to

made at the 1969 **Open Hearing of the Art Workers' Coalition**, organized by Canadian artist **Kirsten Forkert**, and featuring the American artist **Mark Tribe**, whose **Port Huron Project**, named after a manifesto written by **Tom Hayden** (a major figure in the 1968 showdown), has involved re-staging historical speeches by figures such as **Coretta Scott King**, **Howard Zinn**, and **Paul Potter**. Performing re-enactments not as homage but rather as art-coded commentary on intractable social dilemmas has been around at least since the **Ant Farm** recreations of the **John F. Kennedy** assassination, and is flourishing today, as evidenced by last year's group show at **MASS MoCA**, *Ahistoric Occasion: Artists Making History*, and another in Phoenix, History Will Repeat Itself: Strategies if Re-*Enactment in Contemporary (Media) Art and Performance*, both of which featured perhaps the seminal piece in this recent flurry of simulacra, **Jeremy Deller's** 2001 re-enactment of a 1984 miners' strike in **Sheffield, England**, titled *The Battle of Orgreave*. More generally, elliptical but strongly research-based work has flourished in the sphere of socially-engaged art in this decade, from **Paul Chan's** cataloguing of **Marxist** leaders' facial hair to **Alice Creischer's** statistics-informed sculpture to **Thomas Demand's** tiny diorama of **Leni Riefenstahl's** film library to **Julia Meltzer** and **David Thorne's** video explorations of state secrets.

A political program is certainly not impossible to discern in these pieces, but, at least in theory, they are operating on a different register than street protests. Direct agitation is hardly a thing of the past, relegated to internet petitions by soft-money advocacy interests; tens of thousands of people converged on this year's **Democratic and Republican National Conventions**, and, while media coverage of their adventures was far more abundant on that very internet than beyond its blurry borders, the counterculture spectacle seems to be thriving. Nonetheless, this very lack of coverage implies a factor that may be hard to simply chalk up to "manufactured consent." Many Americans might get a brief kick out of watching hooded anarchists cavort with giant puppets depicting genetically-modifed celery, but it's yet another marginal phenomenon of a fragmented social universe. It lacks the drama, the depth of meaning that, somehow or other, a large number of people manage to discover in the mainstream political process. The artwork I mentioned above, on the other hand, while undeniably elite in its sphere of reference and relevance, seems to vibrate more convincingly with the tenor of the current blog-driven political climate, combining a visionary focus on a rather vague big picture with a microcosmic attention to details and local tactical maneuvers.

Fueling the conceptual interest in mining and manipulating politicized histories is probably a shared interest in the distancing from the object implicit in both historical narrative and aesthetic representation. This is the gap that is filled in far too often, both in art and politics, by the easy flatness of irony and nostalgia, or an unsettling combination thereof. But the task of a strong ideology (ideology being unavoidable in any reading of history) should be instead to elaborate a fusion, an aestheticized vision of history. Ideology creates a story to fill in that gap, in which irony becomes apocalypse and nostalgia becomes utopia. As Frederic Jameson has it, ideology allows an individual is able to see herself "mirrored in history," through her investment in a "libidinal apparatus"—the emotional and spiritual ghost of collective action.

While the crowd at *Re-Enact '68* was small, peaking at maybe 200, people I spoke with who had stayed for several hours, spoke reflectively and reverently about the event, and seemed moved in a way that was quite distinct from the righteous fury of the protestor. The "apocalypse" event of the evening would have been a re-enactment of the 1968 scaling of the Grant Park equestrian statue of **General Logan**, a symbolic swarming and consuming of the war machine. The scaling was cancelled owing to the presence of a battle-ready detachment of Chicago's finest, who brought with them dozens of barricades, making a land-based approach to the statue nearly impossible. In my attendance at planning meetings, none of the organizers expressed the slightest interest in being arrested, which, rather than cowardice, seems merely to show a sense of what the event was—an opportunity for shared contemplation, not a tool of immediate revolution. The joy of destruction had to be found in the vicarious reminiscences of the speakers and the aural damage caused by William S. Burroughs's hand-held cassette player sound piece, as well as in a little dust-up at the end in which an animal-rights activist blasted the organizers for bringing the chickens, which had been bought from a slaughterhouse and were slated to be set free in the woods.

The "utopia" event, however, was also a direct re-enactment, and it came off without a hitch: everyone in attendance sitting in a giant circle, holding hands, and chanting the anachronistic universal syllable "Om." Human-interactive performances and sing-alongs are an aspect of both high-art and popular culture that also seems to have come back around, as in the sound-art performances of the **Lucky Dragons** group, who brought their digitally-aided group play to Chicago that very weekend. For a generation that hates themselves for having once enjoyed the Barney show, that doesn't frequently sing Christmas carols or camp songs or church songs or worker hymns, the beatific ecstasy many people feel in such a situation is something that must be seen to be believed. Nearly everyone who was around for the circle noted it as a high point in the evening. Even when the organizers practiced the circle in a preparatory meeting, it changed the entire tone of the discussion. If the re-enactment phenomenon has a political purpose , it appears to be the possibility of using stories of the shared past to envision a shared future. The importance of *Re-Enact '68* should be gauged not by some pedantic idea of "effectiveness," but by the extent it is remembered in its own right, as a simultaneously serious and light-hearted experiment in focusing the attention of a group on attempting to invent a shared moral feeling. ◊

images from left to right:
Don Rose, former p.r. man for the mob, coined "The Whole World is Watching"

John Schulz, author of "No One Was Killed," Columbia College prof

Yony Leyser as Allen Ginsberg

Nora Branck as Bobby Seale

Josh Hyman, with make love not war sign

Jon Ziemba as William S. Burroughs and Yony Leyser as Ginsberg

create new ones through unearthing the utterances of certain forgotten histories and circulating those words through new social contexts. Narrowly conceived, her even more minute focus on speech as the carrier of radical political and identity formations doesn't see history as an echo-chamber, but rather as a resource for political artists.

Divorced from the complexity of their context, the political actions of the 60s, and '68 in particular, are reduced to the most obvious or visible aspects of its significance. The labor of the movement that set that speech into motion, produced the literal context of the protest. Bringing the bodies together, organizing the buses, agitating and encouraging people to come and to protest the war is effaced. The work not of protest or activism but rather organizing is missing. In the art-historical context, one might refer to this cynically as audience-building. But in the context of politics and movement building, it's the constituting of that audience that matters. The labor involved in bringing bodies together and sustaining the relationships established in that process transforms people's understandings of themselves. No longer passive listeners, they see themselves in their connection with other people as the very agents of change, the force and power within society to stop things or make things.

In this context, it makes sense to point to the **Iraq Veterans Against the War's** re-enactment of the **Winter Soldier** hearings from 1971. In March of 2008, IVAW organized a weekend of testimony, to be recorded and produced into a film. It was modeled on the first Winter Soldier conference in which **Vietnam Veterans** (including **John Kerry**) gave testimony in front of cameras concerning the effects of the atrocities that they witnessed (and participated in). As in the 1970s, the 2008 event was a focus point of organizing for a number of months. The new Winter Soldier materials have been published on the web, in a book format and are circulating as two different films at present. This project raised lots of questions and it faced some of the same exact problems that the first Winter Soldier confronted. As an example of a re-enactment whose focus involved the labor of political organizing, the project raises more than just the question of how to use the documents of an event to help build the anti-war movement (an abstract question if ever there was one). Rather, a more pressing question comes into view: what will it take to end this war and, more importantly, what will it take to end a system that needs wars to operate? Seen in this light, all sorts of other important questions come into focus, ones which don't eddy (great image! is this word a little too perfect?) around the differences between then and now—but rather about the role of war in the economy, the problem of racism in movement building, the very question of class.

More than a matter of speechifying, re-enacting the labor of organizing can focus attention where we need it most, on producing radical change and making history, not re-making it.

The dangers I see in re-enactments of the 60s are present in the general desire to look back at 1968 that has populated our cultural landscape for the last few years, from the cover of *Time* magazine, to the various exhibitions and magazines (like this one) as well as film retrospectives. Often, it's a clear example of what **Walter Benjamin** called **Left Wing Melancholy**. Ripped from the political context, artifacts of political movements are resurrected and circulated with no attention to the politics or context in which they are produced. The metaphor that Benjamin used was that of the empty jewel-case. The thing of value has been removed, emptied out, and it's the case itself that is being celebrated, presented as the thing itself. Like the image of the raised fist, it's severed from the body of activity (and literal bodies as well) that animated it.

Given the extent of the recent economic collapse, it might be possible to imagine that some artists might take it upon themselves to re-enact some event from the **Great Depression**. Hopefully, if that's the case, they'll heed my call to focus on the labor of organizing during that period of time in which the **American Left** was organized around an analysis of the economic system, not the production of the images or notions of democracy and freedom. Does that period of time require the kind of analysis that re-enactment could provide, the transformation of understanding to ask what its problems with racism and sexism were, what were the limits of the analysis that contributed to its ability to force certain changes and its inability to bring about wholesale transformations? Absolutely—but that's a much bigger set of questions than the ones that the new left-wing melancholy of the '68 re-enactors seems to have been able to generate. ◊

Introducing

UPRISING

Documentation and reflections on a year-long performance project addressing the concepts of revolution and social change.

UPRISING #1

January 2008: Britt Lower and David Ortega tell stories and drink beet juice.

Photo by Rio Robbins.

UPRISING #2

February 2008: Vassaly performs radical truth on DePaul's quad.

Photo by Nicole Garneau.

UPRISING #3

March 2008: Nance Klehm digs in the dirt of the community garden.

Photo by Cyrus Rivetna.

UPRISING #4

April 2008: Nicole gave beet juice kisses to performers pulled from the audience.

Photo by Rick Wilson.

BY NICOLE GARNEAU

UPRISING is a series of monthly public performances exploring ideas and practices of revolution. All of the UPRISINGs are performed by a crew of volunteers who may or may not be performers, who show up wearing white clothes and learn the performance an hour before it starts. UPRISING references the fact that 2008 is 40 years since 1968, a year of worldwide revolutionary activity. UPRISING is presented by **Links Hall** in Chicago.

Rather than attempting to re-create 1968, UPRISING performances have created public demonstrations of the possibilities for a more loving, just and humane present and future. In spite of my long history as an activist and participant in many public actions of protest, UPRISING is not engaged in opposition: it is explicitly about world-building. Performances have varied widely from month to month based on venue, weather, and theme, but they have all shared a commitment to flexible structure, ambitious intentions, and sense of humor. This work is inspired by the words of the late poet **Sekou Sundiata**, who called on artists and activists to "uncover a 'transcendent' vision of society that lifts our visions to the highest possibilities of human conduct."

UPRISING has referenced 1968 and revolution in different ways each month:

* January's action involved the performance of 240 acts of love correlating to the 240 weeks we've been at war

* in February a class of **DePaul** freshmen researched campus rebellions of 1968 and performed radical honesty on the DePaul Quad

* in March we dug in the earth at the kickoff of the community garden at **61st and Blacksone**

* in April, still vibrating from the biggest earthquake Chicago's had since 1968, a roomful of people waiting for a punk show at **NFO XPO** participated in a performance including one activist's testimony

* in May participants played tug of war on **Michigan avenue**, pulling for causes we painted on the sidewalk

* June's UPRISING explored symbols and gestures of solidarity within the **Chicago Dyke March** in **Pilsen**

* in July we worked the theme of revolutionary sex/gender inside the sex club at **Bijou Theater**

* in August we waved community-created flags at the **Logan Statue** where activists gathered for the **Democratic National Convention** in 1968

* in September we asked participants in the 40-year anniversary celebration of the **Young Lords** to be explicit about what liberation means

* in October we considered the current state of revolutionary feminism at **Women and Children First Bookstore**

* in November we sent messages of compassion to the next **President of the United States**

* in December we activated intergenerational dialogue at the **Jane Addams Hull-House** for the **AREA 68/08** event

*My family and I were sitting at home watching the news. You know, at that time **Vietnam** was the topic because every time you turned on the TV you see something happening overseas concerning the war. There was breaking news, and it stated that at 6pm **Martin Luther King** was shot and killed in **Memphis, Tennessee**. My mom, I can remember her screaming and crying, and my father, he was really upset. He grabbed her, to try to calm her down. I just dropped my head and started to cry.* (**Al Johnson** Transcript)

*It blew on the **West Side**, and when **Daley** climbed in the helicopter with **Fire Chief Quinn**, scores of buildings were burning, several people had already been killed by police, dozens were wounded, and it was a devastated, looted, bleeding place.* (167; *Boss: Richard J. Daley of Chicago*. **Mike Royko**)

MAPPING 1968 THROUGH THE LENS OF 2008

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

AL JOHNSON MOVED TO CHICAGO FROM MEMPHIS, Tennessee in 1956 when he was just a young boy. It was not long after the move, however, that Al became witness to some of the most turbulent events in Chicago's history: the 1968 West Side riots. In response to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in addition to various other social strains put on the residents of the **Lawndale** and **Garfield Park** neighborhoods, residents took to the streets, looting and setting their neighborhoods ablaze. Al is one of numerous long-time West Side residents, who experienced this first hand. What his transcript captures, which historians cannot easily convey, is a perspective of the riots through the lens of a young man growing up there. As he mentions in his interview, "Being a young kid at that time I didn't understand a lot of things. Why people were the way they were, why they treated people that way, and my parents would explain things to me." Al's experience of West Side history was forged without benefit of an outside perspective that most of us look at the riots through today. Al's ability to tap into his memory of the riots makes his story of the West Side stand out. As a result of his unique experience of Chicago history he is participating in the **April 1968 Oral History Project**, initiated by local historian/activist/teacher **Sam Barnett**, which is a compilation of oral histories from over 20 long-time Chicago residents [*see more on this project in this issue of AREA #7*]. Through Al's interview, along with several others, the April 1968 Oral History Project will demonstrate how a particular story of the West Side of Chicago, preserved through the memories of residents, impacts and colors how we understand Chicago today.

When I first read the transcript of Sam's interview with Al for the April 1968 Oral History Project, I thought Al's story had the potential to cross-over into AREA's **Notes for a People's Atlas of Chicago** project. Throughout his interview, Al located specific places on the West Side where he lived, went to school, and witnessed the 1968 riots. With such specific information, we decided to re-create a map of Al's remembered Chicago with a twist. In congruence with the "legacy of '68" theme of this issue, we combined text from Al's interview with contemporary images of the West Side to create a map that is a combination of the memories of old places juxtaposed, visually, against their current condition. In order to do this, I went to the Lawndale and Garfield Park neighborhoods and took photographs of several spaces that are part of Al's story of '68 and put them together in a map of both 1968 and 2008. Our goal in making this map is to obtain a sense of how one man's memory of 1968 speaks to, and influences, the way we experience the same neighborhood four decades later. The benefit of working from a personal narrative of the 1968 riots is that it pulls us back from research and history that, while critically examining the events, cannot accommodate individual stories of these events, particularly those from a young boy who did not quite understand what the events meant at the time he witnessed them. Having an accurate history of the events is, of course, important, however our project is to access a history, or a sense of place, through less conventional means. As you are reading Al's excerpts, keep in mind that he was a teenager at the time and that his story is a local narrative colored through the haze of memory.

This is an experiment to see how we read the oral history of a place in the present built environment. How do we see Al's memory of '68 West Side alongside the neighborhoods that exists today. What can we learn from Al's story about the meaning of a place and time? Does Al's memory, as a young boy, exist in the neighborhood of today? Does it help us better understand the neighborhood of 2008? These are all questions AREA had in mind as we mapped the legacy of Al's '68.

BEFORE I WENT OUT TO THE WEST SIDE I heard several stories about the atmosphere there, particularly about the vacant and abandoned spaces that litter **Madison Street** west of **California**. Thus, I had a vague map already formed in my imagination of what the West Side would look like. When I arrived there, my visions of vacant concrete space was confirmed. While there are any number of explanations for creation of this vacant urban landscape, particularly long-term disinvestment in the area, I had in mind the 1968 riots as the initial event that eventually lead to the contemporary state of the neighborhood. Despite having this assumption, I did not know what to expect when I ventured out west on a Wednesday afternoon. In the end, this map, and article, are really the result of two Chicagos combined: that of Al's local history and of my contemporary, outsider experience.

As of September 2008, **Madison Street** in **Garfield Park**, straight west of downtown, is a smattering of abandoned lots, intermittently interrupted by catfish restaurants, liquor stores, currency exchanges, and other local businesses. If you can imagine a little kid smiling at you with a few baby teeth missing, you can get a vague impression of how the punctured urban landscape looks. Some of the lots are lushly grown over with tall grass and bushes, which could easily be converted into parks and gardens. One particular lot was converted into such a space. It is a small, triangular shaped piece of land decorated with small benches and concrete stumps covered with mosaic tiles and mirror pieces. This park is flanked by a wall to the west that, as of the summer of 2008, is a mural painted by children from the local park district. The wall shimmers in the late afternoon sunlight with the similar broken tile and mirror mosaic pieces. This beautiful park and mural are, however, exceptional moments of beauty on the street; none of the other lots are as developed. Besides the overgrown lots, there are the bare concrete rubble spaces that resemble photographs of the remains of the Berlin Wall after its destruction. Garbage, rocks, broken glass, twisted fences, and the occasional pair of old shoes cover most of the land on Madison. The street resembles an old war zone.

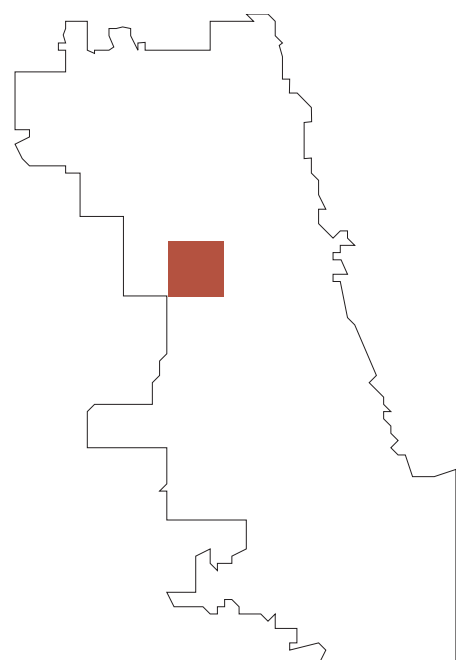
There is, however, a significant amount of street life on Madison. Groups of older African-American men circle around each other, passing the time with stories and observations of the street. They stand in front of several of the greener vacant spaces. Their presence definitely changes the war-torn atmosphere of the street into something warmer, more alive. Gathered in groups of 3 to 8, these men have chairs set up under trees and next to cars parked on the street, camped out on the street in the middle of the day, passing time with each other. The liveliness of their conversations and interactions are a stark contrast to the still vacant spaces behind them. They have converted these vacant spots into communal land and social spaces. Seeing life in front of these desolated backgrounds is rather dissonant. It seems so unlikely to find social life here, emerging out of the bleak landscape, but like the grass that grows over the old concrete foundations of long abandoned buildings, somehow it is breaking through. It is difficult to imagine this street covered in burning buildings with looters violently crashing through store windows, yet the ruins of this are everywhere. This is the modern setting for Al's memoir of 1968. While it is difficult to accurately say that the '68 riots are the reason why Madison Street has deteriorated, in addition to several other places in the Garfield Park and Lawndale areas, there is no doubt that today the area is littered with run-down buildings and empty spaces.

These neighborhoods stand as monuments to a neighborhood, and history, forgotten by the Chicagoans that do not live here; that is why it is so important to give Al's story life. By mapping his personal experience of the neighborhood, we are giving other Chicagoans access to an important part of our collective identity—not to mention a way of knowing exactly where this history exists in the space of our city. Somehow, through cartography, Al's memory becomes more than an interesting story but a real, tangible site of importance. He has re-drawn part of the city. This is how the Notes for a People's Atlas of Chicago project should work. Through mapping we re-create the physical spaces of our city and teach each other about what is important to know and remember.

Notes for a Peopl'es Atlas:

Al's '68

Map of the Westside



The text on this map is taken from Sam Barnett's Interview with Al Johnson Sr. for the 1968 Oral History Project.

For more info on the project visit http://april68chicago.wordpress.com/

The transcript was edited and adapted by Monica Barra for the Notes for a Peoples Atlas of Chicago, a project of AREA Chicago.

For more information see chicagoatlas.areaprojects.com. Dave Pabellon took Barra's photos and notes, and the excerpts of Sam Barnett's Interview and designed this map.

A AL'S HOME BY HERZL ELEMENTARY

We moved from Memphis, Tennessee in 1956 to the South Side. We moved to 31st and what is now Martin Luther King drive, it used to be called South Park Avenue. We stayed there for about 5 or 6 years and then we moved to the West Side, in the Lawndale area. We moved to Homan Avenue and then we moved to Independence Avenue. I went to Theodore Herlz Elementary School, over near Douglas Park.

B MEMORY OF FATHER

[My father] was standing out front of our apartment. I could hear people coming in and out of the apartment, in our complex, yelling, "They killed him. They killed him. They finally killed him." We stood out in front of the apartment. I was looking out the window and I could see people running up and down the street, some holding their heads, saying "I can't believe this." He was just trying to get people to calm down [...] We were right on the first floor, we were at ground level so I could see, our apartment was facing the street, on the corner. Cars had stopped in the streets. People were loosing their dag-blamed mind.

C AL'S HOMAN AVE HOME

We lived on, I don't remember the exact address, but we lived on Homan Avenue, which is like off of Douglas Avenue [...] The apartment we lived in on Homan was a two-flat and we lived in the basement apartment. And back then the housing wasn't that bad and everything was pretty much affordable. Rent back then was about $110 a month and it was well within our range. But the housing wasn't that bad.

D TEACHER ESCORT

That Monday I did go to school, it was only a few hours and things got...you know, it escalated more. One Caucasian instructor, Mr. Don Orton, excellent instructor, we feared for his safety. So a couple guys and I escorted him to the El, because he lived up in Rogers Park, and we made sure he got on the El so he could make it home safely.

E GANG ENCOUNTER

[Al's boss] did have an encounter over on 16th and Hamlin, he got robbed. Some gang members jumped him and robbed him. They shot him five times. He survived, but from that day on he always carried a .38 with him.

F AL'S HANGOUT SPOT

The drum and bugle corps originated out of a barbershop, that was the hang out. 1218 Central Park Avenue, matter of fact the building is still there. That was the place to go. It was kinda like a community center. Nothing like on the scale of what we have now, with these big buildings like the YMCA and other community centers. But the barbershop, if my mom and dad ever wanted to find me all they had to do was call Mr. O'Quinn. That kept us out of trouble.

G AL'S INDEPENDENCE BLVD HOME

When we moved from Homan we moved a few blocks north on Independence Boulevard and we moved in a three story apartment complex and we lived on the third floor. That was an experience because it was a nice looking building but we had rats in there that were humungous. I can recall us siblings and I, we'd be up at two, three o'clock in the morning battling rats. Sometimes they would even crawl into bed with us. That was horrendous. Eventually the tenants got together and sued the landlord to try to eradicate these rats, and it eventually worked.

H ROOSEVELT ROAD RIOTS

I had to catch the bus from school all the way to the Austin area where I lived, and that's when I got a first hand understanding of what was actually happening. I was on the Roosevelt bus, to go to Pulaski. I saw fire, people running everywhere, busting out windows, some people even fighting amongst themselves I suspect they were fighting cause you have some do-gooders out there trying to stop the crazy stuff going on, and some of the people wasn't hearing it.

I MADISON ST RIOTS

I saw people coming out of stores with TV's. This grocery store I told you about, Big B's, they definitely attacked that store. They didn't burn it but they definitely went in and took all the food. Right next to Big B there was a restaurant, Whoopie Burger, they totally vandalized it. The only place that they didn't touch, which was crazy, was the liquor store. And that liquor store is still standing there now. It's called Rothchild's. It was black owned. Eventually the owner shut the store down and said he didn't want to sell anymore liquor because it was going to cause more problems. This is what I hear as I'm on the street waiting for the bus.

J ROOSEVELT RIOTS CONT.

I saw places all the way down Roosevelt burning. Anything that wasn't owned by black, and even a few that were owned by Blacks were vandalized. They put up signs in their windows that said, "Black owned", thinking they wouldn't attack that store, but they did.

K WHITE MAN ATTACKED ON BUS

When I got to Pulaski, thank God there was a bus waiting. There was a white guy on the bus and a gang of people got on the bus and tried to attack him. He got off the bus and ran, which I think was a bad idea. He should have stayed on the bus. I don't know what happened to him after that.

L WHITE MAN ATTACKED IN CAR

We're going north on Pulaski, again, more fires, more looting. We get to Pulaski and Madison and I got off the bus and I see this Caucasian gentleman in his vehicle driving in reverse trying to escape a mob of Blacks trying to get at him. They were throwing bricks, sticks, anything they could get their hands on. They were really trying to get this guy and I was praying for him, just keep driving, do it, just get out of here.

M AFTERMATH ON ROOSEVELT ROAD

First thing that came to my mind; I talked to some people in the drum corps and we just walked up and down Roosevelt. I said to them, "You know what? This looks just like Vietnam." They looked and said, "Yeah, come to think, I never looked at it like that before." It just looked like a B52 came up down Roosevelt. As far as you can see nothing but fires and smoke.

N AFTERMATH ON ROOSEVELT RD. CONT.

You could see the carnage; burned out buildings, debris everywhere, some owners were sitting in front of the stores crying. I can recall saying "I'm sorry" to somebody. I told him, "I'm just so sorry this happened to your business". He said, "Don't worry, I don't think you were out here." I said, "No, sir. I'm just truly sorry this happened." I said this to a few people up the streets, and some of the guys and gals in my group did the same thing. Just walking up and down Roosevelt apologizing.

O FAT JACK'S STORE

Fat Jack was still in business. His market was on Independence and Douglas. He stayed in the store with him .38. I went down to check on him. I let him know exactly what I had on and where I was coming in at. His business was kind of like a basement store, you had to walk down the steps and go in, and it was a big apartment complex and everybody at the complex shopped at that store. He had put up gates across the window. He was crying. They didn't bother his store because of the rapport he had with the people in the neighborhood, they protected him from that. He was upset about what happened to Dr. King and was upset that the people were destroying the neighborhood.

P MADISON ST AFTER 20 YEARS

Some of the vendors started to rebuild. I guess they still had confidence in that area. So that left me with some hope. But it took a very long time before I could see any significant change around Roosevelt Road, Pulaski, and Madison. Especially Roosevelt. All you would see was burnt out shells of buildings. In the last 20 years I've seen a progress. I didn't even recognize the area when I returned to Chicago after the military. I wanted to go back to the old neighborhood to reminisce and I couldn't believe I was going down Roosevelt Road. A theatre, malls, new housing. Some buildings and vacant lots are left over from the riots but I can see that developers are gobbling it up now. I was saying, "Wow, is this the same Chicago? Or the same Roosevelt Road I remember from 1968, twenty years earlier?"

Q WHERE MLK STAYED IN CHICAGO

Martin Luther King stayed here for a while in the 60's. Matter of fact, Martin Luther King lived a few blocks from there on 16th and Hamlin, I think. He stayed there for awhile, this is back in the mid '60s.

R AL'S HIGH SCHOOL

Al's high school. Several people believe it was students from Marshall High who started the riots.

THE LEGACY OF ONE MAN'S CHICAGO

TEXT AND PHOTOS by MONICA BARRA for AREA CHICAGO
MAP DESIGN by DAVE PABELLON

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ABOUT PEOPLE'S ATLAS PROJECT

MAPS ARE TOOLS WE USE TO NAVIGATE OUR WORLD. They give us an efficient way of engaging and locating ourselves in space. The prevalence of maps in our 2008 modern lives has each of us relying on access to **Google** and **Yahoo** maps online, as well as in-car navigation systems, to get around both foreign locations and the places we call home. Maps, however, are also critical reflections of our social worlds, depicting the relationships people have to places and to each other. Demographic maps show economic and social inequalities as well as proximity and limits to our physical and social worlds. Essentially, mapping is form of communication that is multi-lingual, spanning political boundaries, histories, demographics, and imaginations. The one thing all maps have in common is that they are located in space—this space, that space—as we, the cartographers, are.

The **Notes for a People's Atlas** project initiated by AREA Chicago seeks to tap into the basic communicative functions of mapping in hopes of revealing how Chicagoans relate to and define their city through their personal knowledge. Our project is simple: take a few hundred blank maps of Chicago, spread them around the city and get people to fill in the blank. Maps embody what is meaningful to us in space—the space we inhabit. The places and locations on maps are what the public, collectively, deems important to acknowledge. The general public, however, does not participate in the map-making. Atlases and maps locate and give meaning to the places we live in, therefore AREA feels that YOUR maps is crucial to giving meaning to Chicago. The official city limits of Chicago and its neighborhoods or public landmarks do not take into account the residents' knowledge and experience of the city. The Notes for a People's Atlas is a direct challenge to this.

At AREA we are not trying to make "politically correct" maps mirroring those that are already in circulation. We find that maps have the potential to be much more. We want to tap into the power of mapping as a way of composing a work about Chicago by Chicago. We use maps to collect a people's story of Chicago for several reasons. First, maps are condensed forms of communication, dictating to the reader what the cartographer, map maker, believes is important to know. Basically, maps get to the point. Secondly, maps are familiar and transcend languages—everyone from small children to immigrants to senior citizens to young urban professionals can read and make maps. Finally, they give us a very tangible way of envisioning and defining space that shows the multiple "Chicagos" that exist for residents. By seeing what people choose to put on their maps we unveil a story about a certain Chicago tied into places and experiences that hold meaning for actual residents. Together, these maps will write a story of Chicago that acknowledges and celebrates the people's experience of the city, teaching us all about what makes Chicago our city.

This project began in 2005 by AREA Chicago and has manifested in several ways outside of Chicago. People's Atlas projects were initiated in **Zagreb**, **Croatia** and **Syracuse**, **New York**. Additionally, the People's Atlas Project will also be a part of a travelling exhibition call *Experimental Geography*, a project exploring critical cartography. AREA periodically holds workshops with loose instructions for making the maps, but for the most part the project is self-directed by the participants, the cartographers. We have blank maps, drop-boxes, and displays of the maps up in various locations in the city. AREA does not want to direct this project—we want to facilitate it.

HOW TO MAP

OUR ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON RECORDING HIDDEN HISTORIES OF POLITICAL ACTION, community life, and memories. Stories of lived and imagined experiences of spaces in Chicago. We recognize these relationships to space are subjective and constantly changing; the progressive spatial experience of the city is what we hope to capture. You, the cartographer, are encouraged to map out sites that are significant to you as someone who lives, works, and plays in this city. What do you know about Chicago that no one else does? What needs to shared with your fellow Chicagoans? You can map out local histories, political struggles, forgotten histories, places to find local art in the city, abandoned buildings, places where tourists do not go, neighborhoods where your family is from, places where you've felt un-safe, your favorite parks in the city, the best bike routes around town, places where you've seen gang violence, places you don't know in the city, interesting ways public space is used in the city, where to find graffiti walls, distribution of wealth in the city, free museums in the city, and the list goes on. You are not limited to these suggestions, we encourage you to create your own theme or subject to map. If you have specialized knowledge of the city—share, or if you're new—map the city as you've experienced or what you expected it to be. Just remember that we want maps to speak to each about the spaces we live in, so make your map friendly to the greater audience of Chicago by telling a bit about it and making it clear to read. Together these maps will form an atlas of the city written by us and for us.

Through mapping we would like to encourage dialogue. Maps have the power to communicate across the borders that separate us, sparking discussions about what is important to ourselves and our neighbors. As the maps are completed, AREA will display and present the maps to initiate and continue a critical dialogue among communities in Chicago places, events, and issues that matter to them, provoking Chicagoans to talk about, preserve, and act upon their history. These dialogues will hopefully lead to action and social activism among those who see and discuss the maps, having a greater implication for social change in Chicago. AREA uses maps to connect people and raise awareness about political and communal histories that are important to Chicagoans. Your map is a critical part of this discussion.

We hope that seeing Al's map will inspire you to make your own and understand the potential of the People's Atlas Project as a means of re-claiming the life and history of this city. We have maps in several of the following locations:

WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST – Andersonville
5233 N. Clark

THE MAP ROOM – Bucktown
1949 N. Hoyne

THE BORING STORE – Wicker Park
1331 N. Milwaukee Ave.

QUIMBY'S BOOKSTORE – Wicker Park
1854 North Ave.

AREA CHICAGO – Logan Square
2129 N. Rockwell

WOLFBAIT AND B-GIRLS – Logan Square
3131 W. Logan Blvd.

BACKSTORY CAFE – Hyde Park
6100 S. Blackstone

You can download a blank map through our website, which is the running archive of all the new maps we receive:
http://chicagoatlas.areaprojects.com

The passivity of current cultural consumption has left many people hungry to participate in something meaningful. UPRISING tries to provide models for the participation of artists, non-artists, and activists in meaningful, hope-filled activities as a strategy for building revolutionary culture. In UPRISING performances, I have seen time and time again that people WANT TO and WILL participate in meaningful projects if they are given an opportunity to do so in a way that is both safe and challenging. Volunteer performers and audience members astound me with their willingness to infuse the performances with their dreams of a better world.

One thing I noticed as the year went by is that the aesthetic and practical choice to go for complete sincerity really enabled both volunteer performers and audience members/passersby to engage with the work. I have felt like part of my job is to keep refining an explanation for what is going on that is simple, genuine, and heartfelt—and avoids art jargon or other language that might make people feel unqualified to participate. This project is not snarky, nor is it ironic. These are process choices that relate to my hopes for the relationships we might cultivate in a more humane world.

I've been politically engaged in Chicago since 1988. **The Women's Action Coalition**, **Insight Arts**, and many other groups have provided space and encouragement for my interest in cultural work tied to political movement. In this context, I decided to make UPRISING for a somewhat selfish reason: to be engaged in a practice of encouraging myself to have hope. But what has succeeded in giving me hope are the ways in which volunteer performers and audience members have actually made the work happen.

Part of me feared that a project dedicated to envisioning and manifesting positive visions for the world would be too corny to attract participants, but that has not been the case. I now understand that I have access to a lot of people who are really willing to put their life energy into activating the world in which we want to live. I have been really inspired by the ways in which I have witnessed others taking these ideas and making them fiercely their own—which is really the way world-building has to work.

The economic reality of UPRISING is that its total outside funding is $600 from the **Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs**. There is no ticket income: performances are free. To support the project, UPRISING is accompanied by EVIDENCE, a monthly photo postcard documenting each month's performances. EVIDENCE postcards are sent to subscribers who support the work at $120/year or $10/month. Links Hall provides administrative and marketing support for both UPRISING and EVIDENCE. EVIDENCE is an experiment in finding ways for caring people to be involved in the work even if they don't experience it firsthand.

UPRISING monthly performances will continue through the end of 2011. It is my hope to cull meaningful gestures, materials, and research from these performances and use them to create a new piece called CIRCULATE, which will tour to 12 different places in 2012.

We are currently seeking appropriate events and venues for UPRISING 2009-2011. If you are curious about what that might mean, please email me at *nicolegarneau13@sbcglobal.net*. To subscribe to EVIDENCE, please contact Links Hall at 773-281-0824 or *info@linkshall.org*. Documentation of UPRISING is at *nicolegarneau.com*. ◊

UPRISING #8

August 2008: Leah Mayers with flags in Grant Park. >

< volunteer performers wave flags at Logan statue in Grant Park.

Photos by Tara Malik.

UPRISING #7

July 2008: Sheelah Murthy provides a private performance for Red Tremmel at the Bijou.

Photo by Tara Malik.

UPRISING #6

June 2008: Liz Digitale Anderson draws a solidarity tattoo on a Dyke March participant.

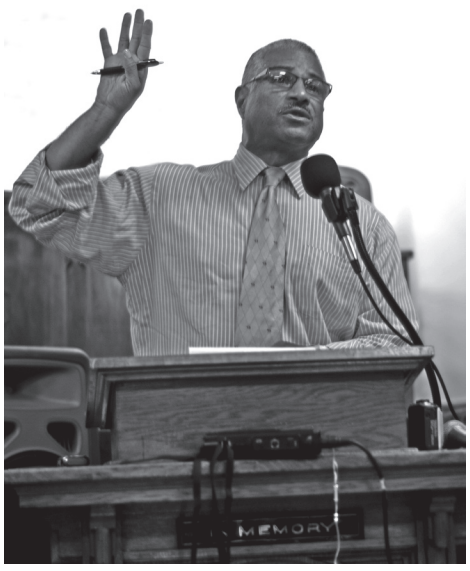
Photo by Nicole Garneau.

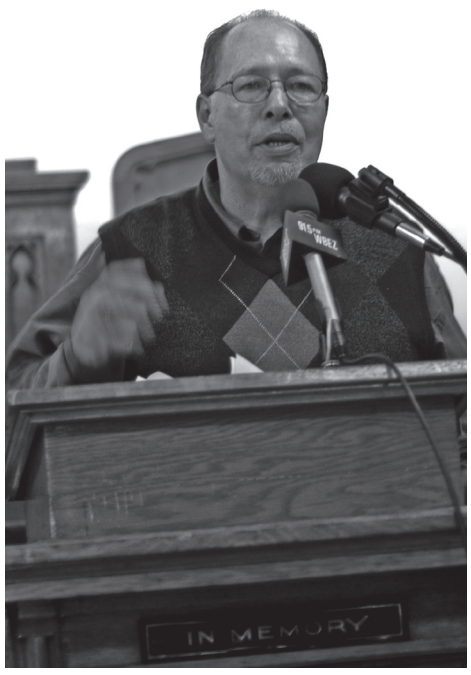
UPRISING #5

May 2008: Nicole Garneau paints in beet juice while participants play tug of war.

Photo Aurora Tabar.

Photos by Sam Barnett. Clockwise from top: Felipe Luciano, Kathleen Cleaver, Iris Morales, Jose 'cha-cha' Jimenez, David Hernandez.





Young Lords

40th Anniversary Event

This is a report back from the **40 Years of Struggle** *event held on Sept 21, 2008 at the* ***San Lucas UCC*** *in* ***Humboldt Park****. The event was intended to be a look back at the legacy and work of the* ***Young Lords****, as well as a reunion of former* ***Black Panther****, Young Lords and* ***Rising Up Angry*** *members who participated in the original* ***Rainbow Coalition****. [see archive online]*

BY FRANK EDWARDS

> *"... Defending their right to play the congas on* ***Armitage street****. Defending their parents who lived on steel mill wages and welfare bureaucratic nightmares. Defending their right to live the new* ***Rican*** *revolutionary blood. Dreams of glory and comunidad. But it was stripped away by rattailed developers while* ***Boricua*** *children ate the government cheese in the lunch program. Crucified by* ***Daley*** *machine* ***Red Squad*** *thugs because urban renewal meetings were interrupted. Crucified by Daley machine Red Squad thugs because they took over gentrifying institutions. Crucified by Daley machine Red Squad thugs because they were breaking down individuals. But their struggle, we inherit. From* ***Lincoln Park****, to Humboldt Park, to the world."*—From *Young Lords*, written and performed by **Primitivo Cruz**

In September of 1968, a group of 60 youth descended upon a meeting of the **Community Conservation Council** of Lincoln Park, an organization that served as a front for the "urban renewal" of the neighborhood. They quickly disrupted the meeting, and insisted that there would be no more meetings within Lincoln Park "until there was Black, Brown, Latino and poor White representation."[1]

During the next several months, Young Lords joined members of the Black Panther Party and the **Latin American Defense Organization** to demand a union for welfare caseworkers and dignified service for welfare recipients, shutting down the **Wicker Park** welfare office twice. They took over the administrative offices of **McCormick Theological Seminary** demanding funding for affordable housing and community programs. They seized the **United Methodist Church** at the corner of **Armitage and Dayton** and negotiated its transition into **The People's Church**, a center for community and political activity.[2]

The Young Lords waged an aggressive struggle against the displacement of the **Puerto Rican** community from Lincoln Park, for equitable access to city services, and for the liberation of **Puerto Rico**.[3] They became one of the founding members of the Rainbow Coalition, an alliance between the Black Panther Party, the **Young Patriots**, and the Young Lords which later included **Students for a Democratic Society**, Rising Up Angry, the **American Indian Movement**, and others.[4]

Their practical and cross-community organizing made them high-priority targets of Daley's Red Squad. Many of the founding members of the Rainbow Coalition were killed, incarcerated, blacklisted, or forced underground.

On Sunday, September 21st, 2008, at San Lucas United Church of Christ in Humboldt Park, members of the Young Lords, the Black Panther Party, and Rising Up Angry gathered to mark the 40th anniversary of the transition of the Young Lords from a street gang into a human rights organization, and to discuss the founding of the **Rainbow Coalition Council of Elders**.

Chicago Young Lords spoke at length on the 50-year history of displacement of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago, and the connection between community and resistance.

Introducing the event, **Jose "Cha-Cha" Jimenez**, founding member of the Young Lords, said, "We're trying to show people that we're still in the struggle... And the reason we're having it here in Humboldt Park is because this neighborhood is still being gentrified, nothing has changed, in the same style that happened in Lincoln Park and Wicker Park...The City of Chicago and Mayor Daley cannot hide from the fact that that administration has been the only administration for the last fifty years and has displaced Puerto Ricans from **La Clark**, **La Madison**, Lincoln Park, **Lakeview**, **Uptown**, **West Town**, Wicker Park, and now Humboldt Park."

Young Lord **Carlos Flores** described life in Lincoln Park. "It was a place of home, it was a spirit of unity. Armitage Avenue, which was part of a strip that a lot of us would live in, you would see that there would be restaurants like **Arroyos**, there was a record shop, grocery stores, **Martinez Barber Shop**, it was a whole neighborhood that was lively, that was vibrant. Sometimes, you would take out the conga drums if you lived there. I grew up in that neighborhood from the early 1960s until my dad sold his building in the late 1980s. Little by little the neighborhood became gentrified. And what happened in Lincoln Park is what's happening today in Wicker Park."

Chicago Young Lord **Rory Guerra** added, "It became a vibrant Latino community where people knew each other, where people could go door to door and have coffee between people...It was a good neighborhood, we were all tight-knit. We had the best hot dog stand in the whole city, **George's**, anybody who's from there knows George's. It was just a wonderful area. When we found out about the **Chicago 21 Plan** and Cha-Cha brought it to the forefront, there were so many people who had our back."

Discussing the founding of the Rainbow Coalition Council of Elders, **Kathleen Cleaver**, former communications secretary of the Black Panther Party, said, "I think it's really significant that all of us that came to make the Rainbow Coalition initially, and coming into the Council of Elders of the Rainbow Coalition, are part of a community. We came out of community resistance and community revolution...particularly here in Chicago, this is so significant. Chicago probably has a reputation of being an extremely racist town, but in this town of racism and division and hostility, here you have, coming together in solidarity, in principled solidarity, in collaboration, working on similar projects in similar communities with similar needs, Panthers, Lords, and Young Patriots."

Speaking of the relevance of the Council of Elders to today's struggles, Cleaver argued that, "we see it creeping back in, this gentrification, which is either a prelude or postlude to their practices of genocide, fratricide, imprisonment, economic disinvestment and massive, massive violence. So we stand together, our Rainbow Coalition Council of Elders."

Cha-Cha Jimenez echoed a similar sentiment: "It's a continuation, we look at our struggle as a protracted struggle. We're not disconnected from the struggle...We didn't begin the movement and we're not going to end it. We're going to contribute to it. It's a people's struggle."

He sees direct connections between the urban renewal of Lincoln Park and the continuing gentrification of Humboldt Park. "It's part of a fifty year plan to renovate the downtown area, to basically displace the poor...It's like they did to the indigenous people, buying off the land real cheap, its the same thing that they're doing. And people are like 'So what? You can't do anything about it.' But we're saying that we can. One thing that we can do is to archive the community, to not let people forget that hey, there was a community right here."

Jimenez said that Young Lords are collaborating with researchers and communities to document and archive their struggle, and are planning future events that bring together the Rainbow Coalition Council of Elders. ◊

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1. *http://nationalyounglords.com/Jose%20bio.html*.

2. Ibid.

3. For more on the Young Lords, see The Center for Latino Research at DePaul, Young Lords Collection, Special Collections and Archives, *http://condor.depaul.edu/~dialogo/pdf/young_lords.pdf*; Erika Rodriguez, "The Young Lords and Early Puerto Rican Gangs: Interview with Historian Mervin Mendez," *http://www.gangresearch.net/ChicagoGangs/latinkings/lkhistory.html*.

4. For more on the Rainbow Coalition, see James Tracy, "The (Original) Rainbow Coalition," *http://areachicago.net/p/issues/solidarities/original-rainbow-coalition/*

Interview with other Chicago organizations having '68 anniversaries

This year was the 40th Anniversary of the tumultuous year of 1968. You decided to mark that year with an exhition at **DePaul University**. Why?

"Anniversaries are often artificial markers of elapsed time, but in this case there seemed to be many reasons to revisit the history of 1968, and to consider some parallels to and differences from the present moment. Our exhibition focuses on the response of artists to the events surrounding the 1968 **Democratic National Convention**, certainly a turning point in American social and political history, when many artists here and elsewhere addressed the war, the convention protests, and related issues of race, gender, and violence. Some artists radically transformed their usual means of expression (like **Barnett Newman**), others participated in exhibitions in solidarity with protesters, some (like **Claes Oldenberg**) marched in the streets of Chicago. Those events brought controversies in the art world to a head: should art express overt political content? Is abstraction a means to avoid political issues? How should artists, and for that matter anyone, respond to political controversy? Like the coincidence, forty years later, of another charged presidential election with an unpopular war overseas, these issues are still very much with us, and the perspective of time may help us sort them out individually and collectively."—**Louise Lincoln**, DePaul University.

Louise Lincoln is Director of the DePaul University Art Museum and an adjunct faculty member in DePaul's Department of the History of Art and Architecture.

This year was the 40th Anniversary of the tumultuous year of 1968. You decided to mark that year with an exhibition and special '68 edition of ***Lumpen*** Magazine. Why?

"Many point to the events surrounding that year as the closest we came to a global rebellion against **The Man**. In these dark times we need to remember insurrectionary movements despite their many let-downs and mistakes just to give us some hope. *Lumpen* magazine's recent contribution to the mania of '68 included some interviews with lesser known figures of the era. It showed how the movements they were part of never ended but evolved. Our 40 Years issue also contained some reprints of an issue from 1996 that claimed it was reprinted from a 1968 issue of *Lumpen* (a commentary on the underground paper, *The Seed*). In 1996 the city of Chicago hosted the **Democratic National Convention** and we satirized and glorified events and individuals from '68 to provide inspiration and fodder for the forthcoming counter-convention that we helped organize during the DNC. It was a useful exercise. By reprinting our fictional *Lumpen* 1968 issue that was printed in 1996 in 2008 we were able to romanticise our own little contribution to the mythos of 1968. And to me that is what the 40 years commemoration is all about. Romance with idealism, dreams and possibilities."—**Edmar**, *Lumpen* Magazine

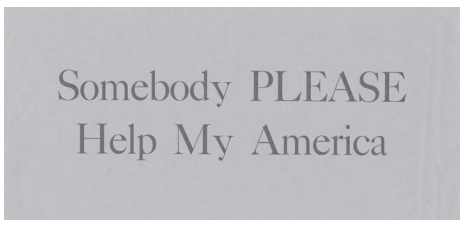
Lumpen Magazine has been publishing in Chicago since 1991. *www.lumpen.com*

Looks Like Freedom

BY REBECCA ZORACH

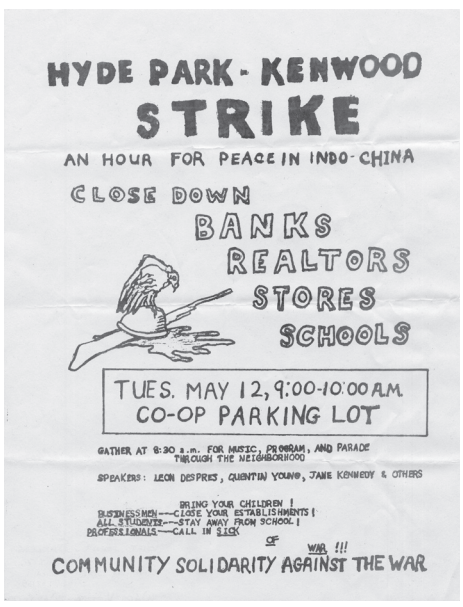
Our organizing group sat discussing the fine points of exhibition planning in a lounge area with a large picture window. Suddenly there was an arc of wingbeats, a series of small parabolic collisions: a sparrow was trapped in the room, trying, over and over again, to escape through plate glass that looked like freedom. Working together, our group managed to get the tiny bird safely outside. It was a kind of bonding experience, an emotional and somewhat exhilarating collective effort… to restore the status quo.

We decided soon afterward to call the exhibition *Looks Like Freedom*, suggesting a certain ambivalence, not about the ambitions of utopian artists and activists of the late 1960s, but about the legacy of their efforts and of the repression that met them. What looks like freedom might well be freedom—but it might be something else again. The exhibition *Looks Like Freedom: art, politics, and urban space/around 1968/Chicago* was presented at **DOVA Temporary Gallery**, a space owned by the **University of Chicago** near **Harper Court** in **Hyde Park**, from August 15 to October 4, 2008. Students from my 1968 class worked together to make decisions about what works to include and how to present them; two of them, **Maggie Taft** and **Chris Brancaccio**, also created original works for the exhibition, a window piece commemorating **Barnett Newman**'s *Lace Curtain For Mayor Daley*, and an audio piece, *Soundscape for Chicago 1968*. We also worked closely with lenders, in particular **Faheem Majeed** of the **South Side Community Art Center**, who kindly allowed us to use six large-scale prints by **Africobra artists** (chiefly **Barbara Jones-Hogu**). Finally, a major component was the programming of the space: we organized several events and discussions that brought community members together to discuss relationships between the pressing issues of the late 60s and those of today. Many of the artists and political movements represented in the show are discussed in greater detail in my editorial introduction. ◊



Top: *Somebody Please Help My America*, 1970. Courtesy Chicago History Museum.

Right: *Hyde Park-Kenwood Strike*, 1970. Courtesy Chicago History Museum.



1968: Art and Politics in Chicago

Exhibition review of recent re-showing of art from 1968 at DePaul University

BY EUAN HAGUE

On the wall outside the **DePaul University Art Museum** a photograph shows six soldiers walking, and a vehicle carrying many more, silhouetted against an eerie orange background. The image, by **Art Shay**, is of **Grant Park** in 1968. The ghostly mist enshrouding the anonymous soldiers is tear gas. Shay's photograph is uncannily similar to **Robert Donley**'s (1967) *Waiting*, a thickly textured oil painting depicting faceless soldiers who look as if they are charred black by the napalm-produced searing red and orange background. These images, two of the around fifty sculptures and photographs on display, capture the tensions of 1968. They illustrate the moments of calm between the cacophony of war and protest, the stillness before the violence. Such themes are reproduced throughout this DePaul exhibition which contains works by renowned figures such as **Roy Lichtenstein**, **Andy Warhol** and **Claes Oldenburg**, and local Chicago artists including **Ed Paschke**, **Tom Palazzolo** and **Dominick Di Meo**.

Much of the exhibition's content is drawn from three exhibitions originally held in Chicago in 1968. The first was at **Richard Feigen**'s Gallery. Scheduled for a Claes Oldenburg solo show immediately following the August **1968 Democratic Convention**, Oldenburg asked for a postponement: "In Chicago… I was tossed to the ground by six swearing troopers who kicked me and choked me and call me a Communist… a gentle one-man show about pleasure seems a bit obscene in the present context." In place of Oldeburg's planned show, the Feigen Gallery hosted fifty artists in their *Richard J. Daley Exhibition* aimed to "respond to a social crisis while maintaining the integrity of a work of art." From this collection, the current 1968 exhibit includes **Hans Breder**'s (1968) sculpture *Homage to Chicago*. One of my favorite pieces on display here, Breder reproduces a minimalist aluminum cube punctured front and back by the entry and exit wounds of a single bullet. [See *Chicago Artist Boycott* in this issue.]

The second 1968 show from which items at DePaul are displayed was the **Museum of Contemporary Art**'s *Violence in Recent American Art*. Lichenstein's (1964) felt banner *Pistol* looms over one corner of the gallery, with Warhol's black and white image of snarling police dogs biting an African American man as police with batons at the ready look on in *Birmingham Race Riot* (1964) sitting alongside.

The third 1968 exhibition from which the current DePaul collection draws was originally held a day prior to Nixon's election in 1968 and was titled *Response to Violence in Our Society*. Representative works include six screen prints from **William Weege's** 1967 portfolio *Peace is Patriotic* including a striking portrait of a lingerie-clad young woman, erotically caressing a phallic rifle with the statement "Sock it to me baby" in bold red type repeated continuously to form the background. I also liked **John Miller**'s humorous wooden sculpture *Beard* (1968). An awkward set of solid false muttonchops, complete with a handlebar moustache, Miller's inspiration was the **Chicago Police Department**'s recommendation that officers grow long hair and beards to blend in with protestors at the 1968 Democratic Convention.

What is striking is how many of these pieces are echoed in 2008's political landscape. Themes like patriotism, racism and war are explored in images like *Patriot's Parade* (1967) by **Red Grooms** and the power of political leaders and the police to ride roughshod over civil rights and, in **Seymour Rosofsky**'s (1968) *Daley Machine*, over ordinary people, are evident. The language of the **Yippie** flyers displayed here is still echoed at numerous protests against the **Iraq War**, but what is perhaps puzzling is that whereas three major art exhibitions protesting against the abuse of police power and the **Vietnam war** were held in Chicago between September and November 1968 in the run up to the election, today no similar urgency seems to animate Chicago's galleries.

1968: Art and Politics in Chicago also includes period footage of Chicago, Vietnam and the **MC5** in **Palazzolo**'s short film *Campaign: The '68 Chicago Convention* and numerous items of ephemera including convention press passes, Yippie flyers, *Chicago Seed* newspapers, and political buttons. ◊

1968: Art and Politics in Chicago was on view at DePaul University Art Museum, 2350 N. Kenmore, 18 September – 23 November, 2008

Image: James Rosenquist, *Mayor Daley*, 1968. Oil on aluminum panel and Mylar, 34 1⁄2 x 24 1/8 inches. Collection of the artist. Photo courtesy of Rosenquist studios.

Read more in article *1968: Art and Politics in Chicago* on page 59.

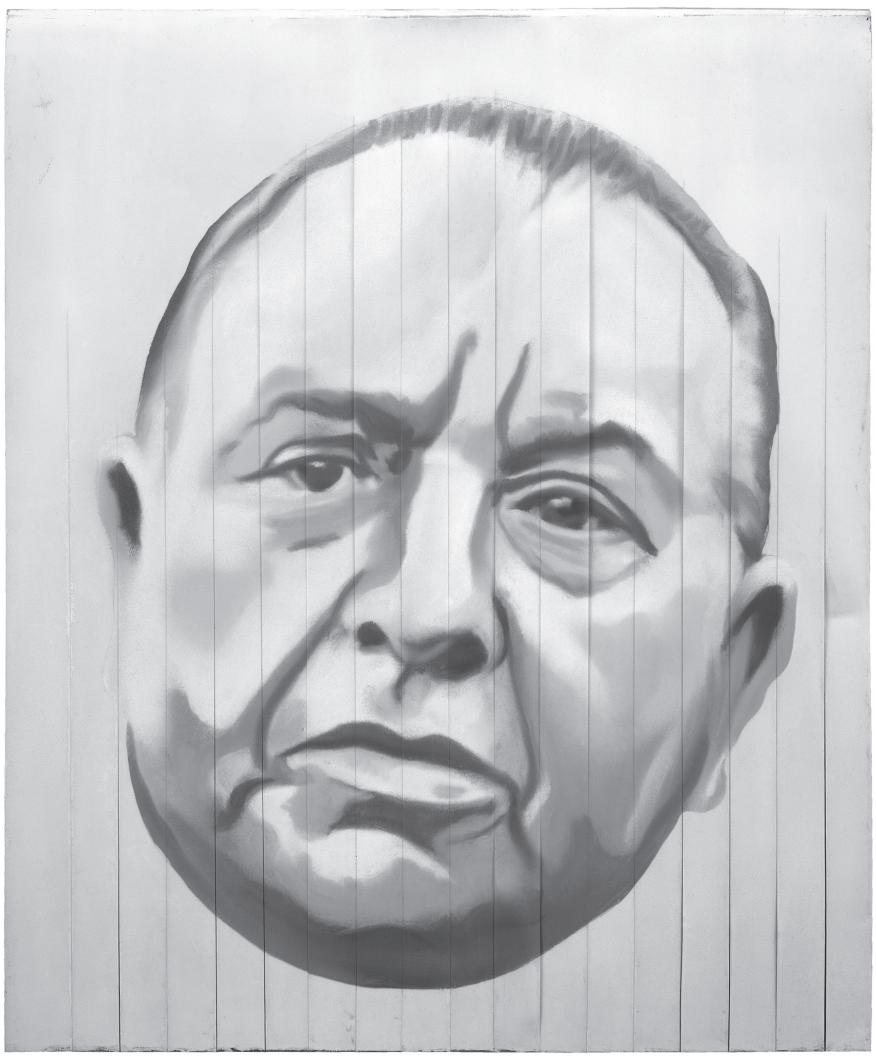
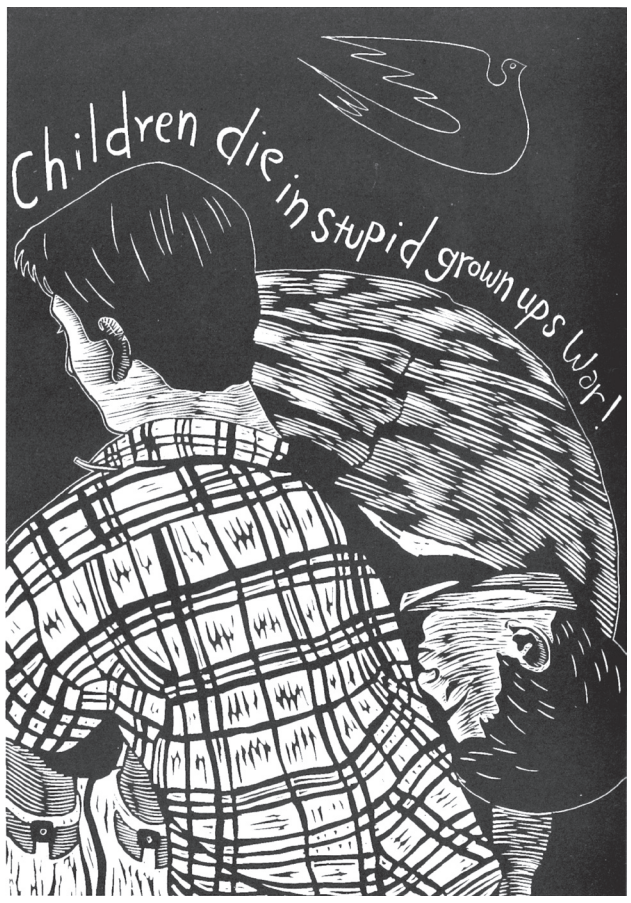


Image by Juan R. Fuentes. Taken from *Reproduce & Revolt* (edited by Josh MacPhee & Favianna Rodriguez; Softskull Press, 2008), a collection of over 500 copyleft political graphics for activist use. If you would like to get a copy of this book, check out *Justseeds.org*

Intergenerationality



"We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit."—Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society, 1962

"And the lonely voice of youth cries 'What is truth?'"
—Johnny Cash

ONE OF THE MORE ASTONISHING THINGS about the opening line of the **Port Huron Statement** is the fact that the authors—who obviously knew what they meant when they wrote "this generation"—could assume that everybody else would know too. Maybe it was that literally everyone they expected actually to read the Statement would also be part of their generation: no need to think of communicating their thoughts to the staid fathers and cheerful mothers who populated the family-friendly TV of the 1960s. It sometimes seems that **Baby Boomers** in fact invented the whole idea of the "generation"—along with youth culture, rebellion, and generational conflict. They didn't (viz. **Allen Ginsberg's** *Howl*, not to mention flappers in the '20s). But their demographic numbers gave them a sense of distinct collective identity that they added to their youthful idealism, creativity, and rebelliousness.

Maybe from the beginning it was always just a strategy for niche marketing. The invention of the "generation" outlasted the Baby Boomers' own youth; when it emerged in the late 1980s that there was a new youth generation following on the Boomers' heels—dubbed **Generation X**—this fact spawned a whole series of books on the topic of generational identity. After Generation X came **Generation Y**, which was renamed the **Millennials**; all three are sometimes lumped into a "**Hip Hop Generation**."

In the real world, though, these lines are not so distinct. People have always learned from, as well as rebelled against, the past. Despite the myths of generational conflict that we have inherited, in the 1960s many young people did look for guidance to older people, for their practical experience and theoretical knowledge. Political movements included older folks—lawyers, clergy, factory workers, housewives, organizers, professors, retired people. And some simply didn't fit easily within their generational niches. Ginsberg (born 1926) and **Jean Genet** (born 1910), hardly kids in 1968, were there in Chicago with the counterculture. **Johnny Cash** was 38 in 1970, when he exhorted older people to listen to the young. **William Walker** was 40 when he spearheaded the ***Wall of Respect***, working with a team of artists in their 20s and early 30s. Several of our contributors write of being, themselves, between generations; others have made efforts to seek out older or younger comrades to defamiliarize their own point of view. And the young of the 1960s now find that they are themselves becoming the older generation, perhaps now with power that sits uncomfortably with their political sensibilities, perhaps not—but certainly with things to teach.

—Rebecca Zorach

Keywords to consider

CONFLICT, GENERATION, AGE

Notes on Generation Monkey

Reflections from an artist and thinker who was born in 1968 about the moment of his birth year and the phenomenon of distinct branded generations.

BY DAN S. WANG

When I ask my mother what she remembers of the **MLK** assassination, she talks about expecting me to be born any day. The strands that tie the slaying of the leading figure in the struggle for civil rights and Black liberation to the near-concurrent birth of a second child to quiet immigrant parents in an obscure midwestern town are thin, to say the least. But the nation and its contradictions that produced King were the same as that which brought my father in from the other side of the globe to work for an American industry driven by **Cold War** imperatives and modern faith in technological solutions. This was also the system that produced affordable mortgages for a growing middle class, company health insurance plans covering the costs of hospital births and public school immunization regulations. As momentous occurrences take place—events which change consciousnesses and socioeconomic trajectories on a large scale, and which people spend decades afterward unpacking, trying to figure out what actually happened—life in its rawest sense, including in the very moments of upheavel, goes on: human beings die and are born by and into a biopolitical system.

The King assassination was a very big deal, one of many events that year which drove considerable numbers of people further towards revolutionary positions. But my mother, still new to the country, was distracted by the anticipation of my entry into the world, and all the hopes and anxieties that every new infant brings. Like most parents of '68 babies, mine were too involved in raising young families according to the imagined standard American model to be swept up in the fervor of the revolutionary moment, and their own formative periods were dominated by the serious business of survival and recovery in times of war, and then, post-war ruins. No time for play, they were the so-called **Silent Generation**, though I prefer to think of them as the Last Square Generation. Without parental guides and models, I and others my age navigated the countercultural landscape by ourselves, or with the help of older cousins or a long-haired teacher—anybody who could fill in the details, and regale us with stories about wild times not that long ago but that no longer seemed possible. And yet for me and probably many of us, it was not hard to keep the older cats at arm's length. That insufferable **Boomer*** smugness about "having been there" kept my fascination open and operational from a distance, but always made me recoil upon closer contact.

If those just coming into the world in 1968 were bequeathed a lingering feeling of just having missed something, '68 babies certainly did not miss the counter-revolution. The political legacy and the puritanical fallout were inherited in full, even if none of the direct experience was. True, whole groups as well as individual insurgents from radical movements had been targeted from the beginning, but the counterrevolution did not arrive in total-mainstream-zeitgeist national bloom until the dawning of the **Reagan-Bush-Thatcher era**, just in time for a new generation's coming of age. For me, reaching young adult awareness in the **Eighties** meant coming to terms with the realization that I had lived my entire life in a counterrevolutionary time. The conditions against which my youthful rebellions and experiments would be played out were already fixed to neutralize generalized revolt.

Even as they remained inspiring and instructive, the blind spots and inadequacies of the **Sixties** movements were glaringly apparent to those of us with perception unclouded by the personal investments of the Boomers (though of course we have our own baggage). In the mid-Eighties, the days of broad, unified movements were self-evidently over, and on some level hardly seemed necessary. There was plenty of work to be done, apart from building mass movements. Political activism organized around specific struggles made the most sense at the time: in **anti-Apartheid** campaigns, in justice work focused on **Central America**, or in **anti-nuclear** peace activism. Equally important were the internal struggles. Progressive, radical, and Leftist struggles had to make real progress in resolving the undemocratic tendencies that divided the earlier movements from within. I recall thinking at that time that part of our direct political inheritance—one place where we could pick up the torch—was the project of accounting for our contradictory behaviors as individuals, to extend political struggle to the formerly private sphere by analyzing the everyday language that we used, the forms of address, the complexity of our sexual and affectional desires, the processes by which our groups made decisions, our personal habits and place in a consumerist economy, and the ways our interpersonal dynamics reflected power structure inequities. At some point it became clear that mass movements, if ever they were to be re-made, had to include and represent a constellation of particular interests and commitments.

By the middle and late-**Nineties**, as large scale movements re-emerged to oppose global economic, environmental, and social injustice, but now with an attention to internal movement democracy and inclusion (imperfect, to be sure), the micropolitical work that obsessed (and, some say, distracted) the young **Gen X** political activist a decade earlier seemed vindicated, and a real contribution to what was now very obviously a multi-generational, long-term struggle.

It can be difficult to align one's perspective with those of an adjacent generation, as when the youthful activists of an earlier time adopted the term **New Left**, signalling broad generational agreement on separating their 'new' framework from the suddenly old. If as a '68 baby I find it impossible to analyze the political conditions of my world without tracing conditions back to the victories, failures and suppressions of the movements that flowered in that year, I cannot project forward without wondering about **Millennials**, the people who were very young in the fresh shadows of '89, the last year tagged as widely revolutionary. What is their popular understanding of that time, a period that I lived through and which is just now beginning to be unpacked? My cohort seems by and large conversant with the younger tide culturally—our media appetites, capacities for multi-tasking, peer orientation, comfort with ironic humor and wide ranging tastes are comparable, and similarly (if not equally) distant from Boomer culture. But politically, there exists a kink in the lineage. Unlike '68, over time the imprint of '89 ceases to resonate as a promise of liberation, but as the opening of the floodgates of uncontested market dominance the world over. At this juncture we can say that the conditions against which the liberation frameworks of '68 emerged have not, then, been superseded, but rather sharpened, accelerated, intensified. The system now encircling the globe has been made personal in the reality of Millennials being the most ad-targeted demographic group, ever. Not that they're buying—having grown up with IM, all-hour web access and a hundred-channel idiot box, Millennials are practically immune to saturation advertising, even as they grab every giveaway promotion in sight, freely sharing their personal info in the process. Head-faking the marketing machine is a point of priority in the everyday resistance practiced by Millennials. The commodification of every imaginable human need and experience might also explain why the compensatory austerity of fundamentalism grows in appeal and now provides the young with a competing framework of oppositionality.

Obviously, I accept the framing of populations in terms of generations. Generational experiences as linked to events and historical developments, and therefore character and outlook, are real, and not entirely artificial, as skeptics would have it. What remains unformed, however, is a strategy for political coordination across generations. Of course cross-generational sharing of political work happens naturally, and on a personal level we recognize the sustaining power we gain from working alongside comrades a generation younger and older than we. But I know of little analytical attention given the topic by radicals. By contrast, the gurus of business-speak are constantly producing superficial advice for Gen X managers on how to handle their Millennial underlings, or for how a 22 year-old Millennial tech contractor should approach the training of a Boomer executive. I am not sure radical cultural workers need more of such pop sociology. That said, a serious inquiry into the transmission of political experience and memory, accounting for the unstoppable emergence of young minds imprinted with touchstone experiences different than those who came before them, so that we may better understand the perceived possibilities of our time—whatever time that may be—remains as a challenge. ◊

*Even selectively using such media market terms as 'Boomer' and 'Gen X' is, on some level, depressing. But I bow to the gods of convenience—these are the understood terms.

Intergenerational Dynamics

BY CHRIS BRANCACCIO

Growing up, all of the older women I knew (mainly my two grandmothers and the grandmothers of my friends) were anything but activists. Then there is Judy. I had to interview Judy for a class assignment; I wanted to know about 1968 from the perspective of someone who hadn't been a youth, wasn't in the street, and wasn't a romantic about that summer.

What I found was something much different than what I had expected. I had spent the previous night sketching out interview questions that I thought were "respectful" but could also be telling.

As Judy and I sat down, I was immediately surprised. She led me to her kitchen and snacked on a late lunch, subsequently shooing her husband from the scene as our interview began. Two hours later and a discussion about the future of the **Co-Op Market**, **Hyde Park**, and **University of Chicago** politics; I left feeling more narrow minded and presumptuous than accomplished.

Since that Saturday Judy and I have continued a rapport. She is neither my mentor nor teacher but instead a fruitful partner for discussion. Our relationship is so important, I think, not because she is older than I but because we both care about the community, progressive politics, and changing something (anything).

It has been 8 or 9 months since I've met Judy. As our friendship developed, we tried to involve each other in one another's spheres. I constantly received e-mail updates and invitations to **OWL** (**The Older Women's League**) meetings which she headed, and in return I kept Judy up to date on my work with the **University of Chicago** sponsored *Looks Like Freedom* exhibition in Hyde Park. We have used our relationship as a way to connect and communicate despite what might seem like diametrically opposed lives. Though most of our meetings were down the street from one another—in fact, we were neighbors—I would have never known how similar the discussion of the Older Women's League were to the discussions I was having with people I considered my contemporaries. To think (as I did) that older people aren't progressive, aren't radical, aren't activist is wrong. Judy is more politically active and aware than I have ever been, and encourages me to get up and do something. It gives me hope no matter how romantic it may seem, that old age is not congruent with apathy, but instead a choice. ◊

Between Lefts

An ambitious series of interviews about generations, identity politics and labor with Chicago based organizers and activists who were active in the era preceding 1968

ERIC TRIANTAFILLOU

In this issue of *AREA*, devoted to a retrospective of the 1960s and its traces in our DNA, I thought it might be helpful to get a sense of the political climate before the 1960s. The politics we on the **Left** inherit, though heavily influenced by the 1960s, didn't miraculously begin in that decade, but rather, had roots in previous epochs. Many of us are familiar with the **New Left** (**NL**), a movement that coalesced around **Students for a Democratic Society** (**SDS**) in the early 1960s. The campus radicalism of the NL was bound up with various social movements of 1960s: the **Civil Rights movement** and racial self-determination, the **Vietnam** anti-war movement, "**Third-world**" national liberation movements, and the gender and sexual liberation movements. The remnants of the forms of political activism of the NL are just under our breath and fingertips.

Less familiar to us is the period of the **Old Left** (**OL**)[1]. The term OL in general refers to the Left before the 1960s. It was composed of various groups and tendencies: socialists and anarchists of all stripes; the big trade union organizations: the **American Federation of Labor** (**AFL**), the **Congress of Industrial Organizations** (**CIO**), the **Industrial Workers of the World** (**IWW**); the **Socialist Party** (**SP**); the **Communist Party** (**CP**); **Fourth International Trotskyites**; and "fellow travelers," those sympathetic to communism but not card-carrying members of the CP. Both the SP and the CP organized around social democratic reforms, but only the CP had an explicitly anti-capitalist platform. Marx's theory of the transition from a feudal to a capitalist and ultimately a socialist society through class struggle was adjusted by the American Left to fit the more fluid, less rigid, class structure in this country. After **WWI** and the repression of the OL by the first **Red Scare**, emphasis was placed on the mass organizing of industrial workers with the aim of dismantling the inequities of bourgeois society through steady democratic reforms that one day might lead to revolution and socialism. If you are member of a labor union or a Left sectarian group you may be familiar with the organizational structure, forms of political organizing, and even some ideological tendencies of what is called the OL.

The decade of the 1930s was a high water mark for the OL, a time when trade unions gained political power and the strength of the **American Communist Party** was at its height. The economic hardships of the **Great Depression** and the massive state intervention of **FDR's New Deal**, along with the "popular front" against fascism and a brief **U.S.-Soviet alliance**, gave the OL a platform to engage directly with the state, bringing socialist politics into mainstream American political discourse. In 1939, the American CP had 38,000 members. In 1942, at its peak, it had 50,000. 17 years later, in 1956, during the period of "**de-Stalinization**," there were still 20,000. But by the end of 1958, after the witch hunts of the **House Un-American Activities Committee** and **McCarthyism**, the CP, the most significant component of the OL, had all but collapsed. The political power of a strong trade union movement built by the OL lasted into the 1960s, but by the time the NL had emerged, the more radical elements of the OL had splintered into small sectarian groups, entered liberal politics, or died.

CONTINUITY OR DISCONTINUITY?

So what was the relationship of the OL to the NL? How did those in the NL—mostly youth—engage with the ideas and actions of the older generation? What forms of OL politics did the NL either jettison completely or modify to fit the social conditions and aspirations of their generation? How critical was the NL in their approach to assessing those aspects of the OL they found relevant or useless? Why ask these questions at all? The OL "died" a long time ago. For that matter, so did the NL. But the OL is more "dead" to us than the NL. Is this simply because the NL is closer to us in time and temperament? Or is there a more fundamental ideological divide that separates today's Left from its grandparents? Were the goals of the OL and NL actually quite similar, and how they differed was the means of achieving those goals?

I've posed these kinds of questions to a handful of Chicagoans who were politically active on the Left in the period of the 1950s to the early 1960s. With one exception, all of them were born before or during the Great Depression. Some of them felt that the categories of OL and NL weren't that helpful in explaining the complexities of those times because they make a hard distinction where often, in reality, there was none. SYLVIA FISCHER told me "there was a sense of being influenced by the Left all through that period of time. To me, it was reflected in the fact that wherever I worked I was always part of the union and very involved in union activity." She experienced the transition period less as a break and more as a continuum: "It's normal for young people to tell old people: you don't have anything to teach me. I'm not sure that any generation can say: I'm not going to have anything to do with the past, because you are automatically influenced by it. Whether you accept the specifics of it or not, you can't deal with any kind of development without having had some impact from the past onto the present."

In 1961, the editors of the journal *Dissent*, who were ideologically aligned with the **"Third Camp" Socialism** [2] of the OL, were worried that the emerging NL seemed "singularly, even willfully, uninterested in what happened before the **Second World War**." They were right "in feeling the need to avoid the errors of the past," they wrote, but made a huge mistake in thinking "they should also avoid a knowledge of the past." [3] We can see this borne out in the reflections of **Tom Hayden**, one of the "leaders" of SDS, who wrote in his memoir that SDS members "learned a distrust and hostility to the very people we were closest to historically, the representatives of the liberal and labor

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1. It's important to point out that the categories OL and NL are tools of thought and not identical with social reality. As tools for thought, they are not neutral, but rather, are socially and historically constituted, and bound to specific ideologies with specific political interests.

2. Irving Howe, Editor of *Dissent*, was a follower of Max Scachtman, the main proponent of "Third Camp" Socialism in the U.S., which was in support of neither the USSR nor western liberal democracies.

3. *Dissent 8* (Autumn 1961), 496-498.

Between Lefts – INTERVIEWEE BIOS

SYLVIA FISCHER was a social worker and an active union member since WWII. She taught for 20 years in the **Chicago Public School** system and is now retired. She was Co-Chairperson of **Chicago Area Friends of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee** in the early 1960s. CAFSNCC was originally founded as a support organization for the southern student sit-in movement and later transformed into an activist organization to fight discrimination in employment, segregation in housing and schools, and the disenfranchisement of Black voters in Chicago.

CHARLES NISSIM-SABAT is a physicist and attorney. He is originally from **Bulgaria**, was an ardent **anti-Stalinist**, and has been a member of the **U.S. Socialist Party** from 1965 to the present. He is a member of the **National Lawyers Guild**, and is active in progressive health care reform and the **Chicago Coalition Against War and Racism**.

MARILYN NISSIM-SABAT is a psychotherapist and professor of philosophy at **Lewis University**. Her mother was a member of the CP, and Marilyn grew up a red-diaper baby. She was a devotee of **Max Shachtman**, a member of the **U.S. Socialist Party** and the **Democratic Socialists of America**, and a member of **News & Letters**, the Marxist-Humanist group founded by **Raya Dunayevskaya**, from 1984 until the recent split, when she and several others formed the **Marxist-Humanist Committee**.

NELSON PEERY was a soldier in all Black regiment during WWII. 1n 1947, when he joined the **Communist Party**, it was the only nationally-integrated organization in the U.S.. For the next 60 years he worked as an organizer in the revolutionary movement while doing all kinds of manual labor across the U.S.—construction, bricklaying, steel smelting. He is currently part of the **League of Revolutionaries for a New America**. His books include *Black Fire: The Making of an American Revolutionary* and *Black Radical: The Education of an American Revolutionary*.

HYMIE ROCHMAN, originally from **Cape Town, South Africa**, was deeply involved in the **Anti-Apartheid** Movement and at one point hid **Nelson Mandela** in his home (at the time, Mandela was labeled a "terrorist" by the U.S. government). In 1963, he and his wife **Hazel** were given "one-way" passports from South Africa to **England**, where they lived for ten years before coming to the U.S., again instead of passports they were given something called "**Certificates of Identity**." He was a professor of pathology at the **University of Chicago Medical School**, and is now retired.

FRANKLIN ROSEMONT is a poet and co-founder of the **Chicago Surrealist Group**. He and other **Wobblies** started the **Solidarity Bookshop** and the journal *Rebel Worker* in Chicago in 1964, inspiring the founding of its sister journal *Heatwave* in **London**, **England**.

DR. QUENTIN YOUNG worked with the **Medical Committee for Human Rights** in support of the **Civil Rights** movement in the **Jim Crow** south. As a physician, he was a "medical presence" for people who were incarcerated and at risk of further police brutality. He helped coordinate medical programs for the Chicago **Young Lords** and **Students for a Democratic Society**, and offered medical support to protesters at 1968 **Democratic National Convention** in Chicago. He is an active advocate of a single-payer health plan and a socially just national health policy.

Altered by Ebony

BY CATHLEEN SCHANDELMEIER

In 1968, a well-dressed African American gentleman appeared at my Irish Catholic grandmother's front door requesting that my grandmother subscribe to his magazine. My grandmother, impressed by this gentleman's kind manner and sincere work ethic, invited him in and offered him lemonade. They had a nice visit, during the course of which she subscribed to ***Ebony*** magazine. I was living with my grandparents at this time as my mother had died when I was four. The subscription to *Ebony* was a life-changing event, because it became my magazine.

I was eight years old and an avid reader. I learned incredible stories of the struggle for civil rights. I marveled at the clothes, the music, the hair gels—like **Afro Sheen**. That single subscription had a profound influence on me from using Afro Sheen to choices that have selected the course for the rest of my life. I sobbed when **Martin Luther King** was shot and killed because I felt I knew him, like a kind older relative. I knew that he had made his famous "I have a Dream" speech on my 4th birthday, as that was the last birthday I celebrated with my mother. I was one of the only white students in **Alphine Jefferson's** African American history class at **Northern Illinois University** in **Dekalb** in the late seventies chanting "Black Power!". My Grandmother's subscription to *Ebony* altered the course of the rest of my life.

My family is among the few white families who go to the **DuSable Museum** on **Dr. Martin Luther King Day**. I have written a number of plays with multi-racial characters that live in an ideal world, unsullied by racism, yet have human issues to resolve. These plays have been produced at the **Chicago Cultural Center** and at the **Pine Avenue Performing Arts Center** on our great city's west side, among others.

This is a reminder to always keep an open mind, as I am grateful that my grandmother invited that gentleman in and subscribed to *Ebony*. You just might change a person's life. ◊

Between Lefts continued from p. 63

organizations who had once been young radicals." [4]

DR. QUENTIN YOUNG, one of those "elder liberals" from the time, agreed: "It's amazing how quickly the NL went from **Port Huron**, a beautiful statement really, to a kind of romantic impatience with everything, and I don't mean romantic in a pejorative sense but a descriptive one. They became very impatient very quickly. They had a difficult time achieving solidarity with trade unions. They were kind of super-activists with a rather adolescent rejection of the older generation. By the late 60s, some of them had turned towards violence, they had completely lost relevance, and helped to elect **Nixon**. So they had a short lifetime. I don't think they deserve much attention really." Because he had volunteered to assist SDS with medical support, he was given more access to the group than others from his generation. He recounted a time when he and a trade-unionist colleague were invited to a large national SDS gathering in **Michigan** in the mid-1960s: "We were the only people there who were over 30. We weren't asked to talk, so we just sat and listened to the program. One committee or group after another explained their work. We noticed how young women really dominated the lower echelon discussions. But when the leadership groups began talking they were all white boys. That didn't seem to fit with their public statements about breaking down society's dominant patriarchal structures."

FRANKLIN ROSEMONT, a high school student in the late 50s, experienced both the "rigidity" and "integrity" of the OL through student groups like the **Young Peoples Socialist League** (**YPSL**), the youth affiliate of the SP that was active on several university campuses across the country. "I wasn't really into folk music. I was a **Free Jazz** enthusiast. So were some of the others in YPSL. We had a connection on the cultural level. That was really important. YPSLs had a lot of intellectual integrity. I learned about **Rosa Luxemburg**, **Karl Liebknecht**, and **libertarian Marxism**. But a problem was that when you attended meetings or read the texts or were lectured to you got the feeling you couldn't think for yourself. It too was doctrinaire, too authoritarian…and humorless."

ORGANIZED LABOR

The three biggest labor organizations in the OL were the AFL, the CIO, and the IWW. The AFL, which began as a petty-bourgeois crafts union in 1886, was consistently the most conservative of the three. The CIO split off from the AFL in 1938 to organize mass production industrial workers, who tended to be more progressive. When they remerged in 1955 as the AFL-CIO, they were a far more moderate organization than the CIO had been alone. In contrast, the IWW, whose organizing focused more on semi- and unskilled laborers, had a more militant approach that involved direct action through boycotts and strikes. Their membership peaked in 1923, after which their power declined due to internal conflict and state repression. Though coming from very different backgrounds and political tendencies, most of the people I interviewed felt that a strong trade union movement was the backbone of the progressive and more radical politics of the OL. They lamented the precipitous decline of the political power of organized labor since the 1960s, which they attributed to both internal and external forces. Some characterized the OL as practicing a "politics of accommodation" that was able to develop consensus through strong leadership. It was this leadership that in part sustained the OL, in contrast to the "episodic" politics of the NL, which because they were so "fragmented" were unable to generate any serious power.

Here are some other perspectives on the issue of organized labor:

NELSON PEERY: "I didn't agree with everything the CP did. For example, almost all the strikes that took place during WWII were against upgrading blacks, not on wage incentives. There was a strike at **Boeing** plant in **California** (c. 1940) where 5,000 white workers walked out of the plant when they hired one black worker. That was the kind of strikes that were going on. To lump the political strikes in with the economic strikes, and say we're against strikes during the war, as the CP's 'no strike pledge' did, gave the employer an open hand to do what they wanted to shape the trade union movement for what it would be after the war. I remember the first real argument I had with the CP. They thought blacks were the leading element of the revolutionary process in the U.S.. I told them, look, African Americans are ready to die fighting to get into the system, to be an equal part of that system, rather than overthrow it. It was the **Supreme Court** that opened certain doors for blacks, but at their leisure to be sure. They weren't opened by the trade union movement. The trade union movement excluded blacks. So how could the CP have a doctrine that says that the most oppressed section of the working class is going to be a vanguard when that vanguard is so isolated and so oppressed that it has to rely on the government for protection?"

SYLVIA FISCHER: "Take a look at what's happened to the labor movement since the early 1960s. It was quite strong and now it's very fragmented. I remember when I first came to school in Chicago through **Indiana** on the train (c. 1940) I saw the steel mills and how impressive that was…you had a sense of these blast furnaces going and a country that was so vibrant and so alive. That's all dead and gone and we've become a service country. So certainly there's a total shifting of power. I think the industrial workers are what gave strength to the labor movement."

MARILYN NISSIM-SABAT: "One of the failures of the OL and particularly the Communist movement was that they moved the unions steadily in the direction of so-called "bread and butter" issues and totally stopped any interest in the work place, in the humanization of the work place. The original labor movement was a broad social movement. What they wanted was not simply more income, they wanted a humane work place. They wanted breaks. They wanted lunch. They wanted to be treated decently on the job."

CHARLES NISSIM-SABAT: "Let me give you another example of where the labor movement fucked up in the U.S.. The **United Auto Workers** (**UAW**) got their workers excellent health plans, guaranteed through the contract. But what happens to a worker who because of illness, injury, age or whatever, can no longer work? She quits her job and she has no health plan. And what happens if **GM** has to lay off workers because of economic conditions and they have no health plan? What the UAW, the **United Steal Workers** and other large unions should have done was to go to management and say listen: we can demand that you give a us a health plan or we can work together so we have a national health plan. The UAW said: why should we aim for a national health plan? On the contrary, it's better the workers have a health plan through the union. That would give them an incentive to join the union and stay with the union. So it's a capitalist competitive type of mentality for the union. The unions say, we offer health insurance, rather than saying we offer a better society. So the workers are screwed. There's no health plan for them when they're laid off."

FRANKLIN ROSEMONT felt closer to the less structured forms of organization of the IWW that relied on the self-expression of workers' diverse cultural backgrounds as sources of inspiration and solidarity. "The biggest OL influence on me was through the IWW. The old IWW really understood how important culture—music, poetry, art—was in building a strong movement." Franklin recruited about 100 people to the Chicago IWW during the 1960s. "It was

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4. Tom Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1988).

A Meadow In Lincoln Park

BY PETER ZELCHENKO

I am pacing. I'm spending the night of August 21, 2008, pacing the floor of a 10' x 8'4" x 10' cell in the downtown police lockup at 1718 **S. State**. I've spent some time mentally calculating this, based on the size of a cinder block, eight by sixteen inches including mortar lines.

I will next devote 15 minutes of my life to calculating the cell's precise volume, but this is tricky because there is an angle which will require a hypotenuse calculation, and I have no pen and only 10 sheets of valuable toilet paper. I am agitated: there is nothing to do here. My life is being wasted here. I am in a very nice suit. I am pacing.

It's only the third time I've ever been jailed. It always happens after I've tried to do something about some civic issue. This time, I had my time cut short by the chairman of the **Chicago Plan Commission** and was then arrested while standing quietly at the back of the room. They had to trump up a charge, lying that I'd "yelled obscenities." That will be easy to disprove, considering all of the witnesses—but it will take yet another little piece of my busy life, of my strained well-being.

We'd spent much of the past year suing the city to stop the **Latin School** soccer field in **Lincoln Park**, and today the field was sure to be rubber-stamped by a commission packed with **Daley** appointees. Pimps never appreciate it when you ask in front of 500 people and reporters how they can sleep at night.[1]

While pacing the floor of the cell, I realize that it is 40 years ago this week that Lincoln Park erupted. August 21 was the day the kids were in the neighborhood decrying the **Prague** action. The next day, August 22, Sioux Indian **Dean Johnson** would be shot and killed in cold blood by Chicago police on **Wells Street**, amid the growing conflict surrounding the convention.[2] The next seven days would be the **Democratic National Convention** and more bloodshed.

As I pace, it briefly occurs to me that the land I'm in jail for trying to restore to a meadow, is precisely where kids were teargassed and beaten 40 years ago this week. The ill-fated **MC-5** concert was held in exactly that spot. It was also one of the preferred sleeping areas in the bloody nighttime turf battles with the police.

Although **Old Town** and Lincoln Park today are a cultural toilet, shadows from their noble 1960s follow us through our lives, make us who we are.

I didn't understand what was happening that gray afternoon when a **Black Panther** came to our house on **Schiller Street** and warned us that whites were not safe here, that we should probably get out of town for a few days. I spent years with **Delia Cunningham** at **Second City's Parents School**, the tiny alternative school our families collaborated to build. But I had no idea that her parents Dennis and Mona were also running the **People's Law Office** not far away, nor would I have known what a law office was.[3] I did not understand the big words telling of the social strife and political violence that my dad was covering for the newspapers. And my sisters regularly went to their **Girl Scout** meetings at **Church of the Three Crosses** with **Rev. Larry** and **Katheryn Dutenhaver**'s daughters, and our family attended many community events there -- but we had no inkling at the time what the **Young Lords** did, though we saw them there constantly. I was just a kid.

I was surrounded by these and many other historic connections, and though I experienced Old Town's political heyday, I was far too young to understand what it all meant. Somehow, the ethic still filtered into me. A general mistrust of authority. A disrespect for many politicians and police officers, and for judges who are wives of politicians who were once police officers.[4]

Above all, I feel a rather reckless determination to speak out, take notes, make contact, when my inner voice is screaming at me to walk away and mind my own business. Don't you lie to me: you know very well what I'm talking about, better than most people in this city.

And the astonishing fact is that you do not even have to have grown up within it to have had the spirit filter into you. I know so many others who have spent their hours in these cells for equally good reasons.

With this, pacing alone in a jail cell, listening to the Black youth, apparently cousins, yelling in the next cell; watching with concern as the Hispanic youth in the cell across begins vomiting violently into the stainless steel toilet; pacing my hours away, counting off the seconds of my life and theirs.

The sound of our heels forever hitting the floor makes for memories of our years ago, ideations of our years to come—profound, painful, but somehow beautiful with hope. There is much to do, but I promise I will not call this wasted time. I am, after all, pacing. ◊

[1] *http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/chi-0821edit1aug21,0,3010011.story*

[2] *http://www.geocities.com/athens/delphi/1553/c68chron.html / http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/Chicago7/chronology.html http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-071231protests1968-photogallery,0,4881008.photogallery*

[3] *http://www.peopleslawoffice.com/archives/history-peoples-law-office/*

[4] See Supreme Court Justice Ann Burke, wife of the red-faced cop-turned-alderman Ed Burke. Ed, it so happens, also sits on the Plan Commission and of course voted for the astroturf.

Intergenerational Dialogue

Bob Crawford and Margo Natalie Crawford

Excerpts from an intergenerational dialogue held at the ***South Side Community Art Center*** *on October 23, 2008 between father and daughter* ***Robert (Bob) Crawford*** *and* ***Margo Natalie Crawford****. Photographer Bob Crawford defies the boundaries between documentary-style photography and art photography. As a photographer of the* ***Black Arts*** *and* ***Black Power*** *Movements in the 1960s and '70s, he captured Black urban style and the extraordinary scenes in the midst of the ordinary, notably many photographs of the* **Wall of Respect** *created by the* ***Visual Arts Workshop of the Organization of Black American Culture*** *(****OBAC****) at* ***43rd and Langley*** *in Chicago. His work has been widely exhibited and collected in museums and galleries in Chicago,* ***New York****, and elsewhere. Professor Margo Natalie Crawford studies the visual and written poetics of social movements. She is the co-editor, with Lisa Gail Collins, of* New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement *(2006), which has been widely cited in the current explosion of Black Arts scholarship. She is the author of* Dilution Anxiety and the Black Phallus *(2008). Margo Crawford is Associate Professor in the* ***Department of Afro-American Studies at University of Massachusetts-Amherst****.*

AREA *gives special thanks to* ***Faheem Majeed****, Curator and Acting Executive Director of the Center, for hosting the event.*

Margo and Bob Crawford at the South Side Community Art Center, October 2008.

MARGO CRAWFORD (MC) The first question I want to ask you is about the role of photography in the Black Arts Movement. How did it feel to be a photographer, to be someone recording this movement, were you aware, were you—**Bobby Sengstacke**, **Fundy [Billy] Abernathy**, **Roy Lewis**—consciously attempting to create this photo-documentary of a movement?

BOB CRAWFORD (BC) Yeah, it was very conscious. I mean that was our sole purpose, to document the life on the south and west sides of Chicago, especially in the '60s—the late '60s, there was just so much excitement going on in the community, so much change, it was very conscious. Yeah, that's what we were doing.

MC I'm so struck that Robert Sengstacke, recently—when he's asked about the relation between documentary photography and more "artistic" photography he insisted that in the Black Arts Movement no one saw that divide, and he insists that (his language) "there was no question about it." Implying, or insisting. that by all means, during the movement photographers clearly understand that you could record a movement and see your photography as being … documentary and also fully understand it as art. Could you tell us about that?

BC Well yeah, that depended on the photographer, as we became interested in photography. But there were influences. Billy Abernathy did things that were beyond documentary. I don't know if you're all familiar with his work but it was, just, the artistic thing just blew my mind when I first saw it. All of us were influenced by him. It all depends —all of us worked differently. Some of them were strict documentary and some were more into a "fine arts" type of depiction.

MC I'm sure you remember the exhibit, *Two Schools*, New York and Chicago, situating the work within this tension between a New York scene and a Chicago scene. And I wondered, as we think about the specificity of the Chicago Black Arts Movement, what happens when you then remember some of your images of the *Wall of Respect*, as we think about what made the Chicago Black Arts Movement (of course not entirely) different from what was happening in other Black Arts Movements across the country?

BC To go back to the *Two Schools*, I was in New York maybe three weeks ago and a number of people were asking me about this exhibit, the *Two Schools* exhibit. …But, people are still asking about this exhibit, and what was the difference between the two schools. But basically the difference was that, being Chicago, the Chicago photographers' work was usually more political. And the New York photographers' work was a little more "art," narrowly.

MC I'm struck when you tell us that part of what you remember in terms of the Chicago Black Arts visual artists scene was a focus on something that was more "political" as opposed to something that seemed more "artistic" in the New York scene, because I wonder as you think about some of your own images of the *Wall of Respect*, as we appreciate what was done in the *Wall of Respect*, do you think—as we think about what is "more artistic" and of course surely also political—was the *Wall of Respect* a move to something that was more artistic …?

BC At the time, the *Wall of Respect* was totally political. Completely, the politics, I think, someone included a picture, a photograph, I believe, of **Elijah Muhammad**, and the Muslims wanted it removed. And it was removed. There was a painter, **Norman Parrish**, one of the original painters (I went to high school with him)—he painted a panel there, but it was not political, it was deemed not political. They made him remove it; he had to remove it. I just saw him in New York a couple weeks ago, he was commenting on that. There was so much, so much politics around the *Wall*, what was going on there, some people said, you know and the whole neighborhood, the community there, it was totally political.

MC Can you tell us more about what happened at the *Wall* as poets connected with photographers, with other visual artists?

BC And the people on that block in that community. That was probably the most important thing—that it was not defaced in any way. No one defaced the *Wall*. The community people guarded the *Wall*. And they said there were provocateurs sent around at the *Wall* at the time, through, you know, the police, or whatever, and then some people didn't want certain people included, depicted, on the *Wall*, there were arguments about that, conversations I heard.

MC When you think about photographing people in these everyday poses, everyday life, you and others who were recording this movement, did you think about people being aware that their photographs were being taken, was that ever something as a photographer that you felt uneasy about or thought about as you took some of these pictures?

BC No, no, we didn't, because we became known and were part of the community. We were part of that thing that was centered around the *Wall*, but it was really interesting that none of the artists lived in this community—they all lived in **Hyde Park** or somewhere. You know. That was another thing, you know, that these people accepted these artists and musicians and things, whatever, that crossed over **Cottage Grove** and into their community, and they were accepted with very little friction. Because at this time, those were very tense times.

I remember one incident, I was standing on the corner there, 43rd and Langley, several of us, with the poet, **Amus Mor**, he's a well known poet, I think he's disappeared now, no one has seen him in a few years, that's the last time I saw him. Some young gang members over on the other side of the street there, yelled over to him. This was **Celebration Day**, there were musicians there—I think some **AACM** musicians rode up on motorcycles, with instruments and everything, there were artists, you know. These gang members on the other side of the street, 43rd, yelled over. 'Cause they were laughing at the musicians, with the motorcycles and stuff. So Amus yelled over to these gang members, "why don't you all go get some guns," so they yelled back to Amus, "why don't you all buy us some?" So that was the whole, you know, tenor of things.

MC And in the full spirit of the anecdote you just shared, I want to also remind you of a similar story that **Jeff Donaldson** told me when I interviewed him in 2002, and he was also thinking about the *Wall of Respect* and thinking about how in some of the current scholarship people like myself trying to study this movement, how we're really not able to capture some of the nuances. And I think of some of the nuances that you're helping us with today, as you tell us these anecdotes. And this is what Jeff Donaldson says in reference to his own work, painting one panel in the jazz category of the *Wall of Respect*: "I was painting **Nina Simone** when this old lady who lived across the street asked me to come over. She said 'I gotta look at that ugly motherfucker you just painted every day.' So I changed it. She had all kinds of collages and doilies that she starched so that they took on sculptural forms. Art was all around her house. And the walls were painted different colors." And I wonder as you think about that story, this memory that Jeff Donaldson has of the woman in the community telling him what she didn't like and his decision to revise it. Is that part of what you're getting at?

BC Yeah, true, true.

[*Bob looks at the slideshow of his photographs -ed*]

BC These are the panels being painted by **Bill Walker**. Bill Walker was really the backbone behind the whole Wall. **Sylvia Abernathy**, Billy Abernathy's wife, she designed the basic layout, but Bill Walker, **Edward Christmas**, **Barbara Jones** of course were the primary painters.

MC Can you tell us more about Sylvia Abernathy?

BC She was a graphic designer, and she did the basic layout and the design of the *Wall*.

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the IWW old-timers that brought art and humor to groups like **SNCC** and **CORE**." [5]

ISSUES OF RACE... AND CLASS

The 1950s are often referred to as the "silent" decade because of the perceived lack of political ferment. The second **Red Scare**, which lasted from 1947-1957, all but gutted the CP and its influential role in the OL. But depending on who you were and where you lived at the time, the '50s as a "quiet" decade is largely a myth. It was period of huge increases in productivity that led to the rise of the American middle class. Along with the increased prosperity came lots of babies. The post-war expansion of higher education through the **GI Bill** meant that more people, including working class and people of color, were entering college. Blacks were continuing to leave the rural south for cities in the south and north, increasing potential Black voting strength and permanently altering American politics. In 1955, the bus boycotts, sit-ins, freedom rides, voter registration, mass mobilizations, nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience of the **Civil Rights** Movement began in the **Jim Crow** south. The struggles for civil rights in the U.S. coincided with anti-colonial and national self-determination struggles around the world: the **Anti-Apartheid** movement in **South Africa**, the **Algerian Independence** movement, and the **Cuban Revolution**, among others.

SYLVIA FISCHER: "While I was working at **Kenwood Elementary School** (now **Cantor**) in **Hyde Park**, I met **Jim Foreman**, who later became the **Executive Secretary of SNCC**. He was the only black teacher at the school. At the time, Jim worked with a relief committee for **Tent City** [6] in **Fayette County**, **Tennessee**. Blacks who sought the right to vote were being dispossessed from their homes, living in tents. Both the **United Packing House Workers** and The United Auto Workers brought attention to their plight, providing much needed financial assistance. On our way back to Chicago from **New Orleans**, we stopped at Tent City to pick up Jim. I remember that he sat only in the back of the car and when we stopped for lunch he wouldn't sit down with us at the table. I guess you just didn't understand, coming from the north, what was really going on. I was certainly familiar with racism, but this was my first experience with conditions in the south."

NELSON PEERY: "An old drunk Irish communist once told me: "White people aren't your enemy. It's the relationship between white people and you that's the enemy. You can kill all the white people you want and someone else will still oppress you until you do away with that relationship." That was the end of it for me. I finally understood. The fact is that white people oppress and lynch black people, but the truth is that the relationship between the two is what makes it necessary. That relationship of inequality is not only from history but an integral and indispensable part of the capitalist system. If you only deal with facts and not with truth, you cannot be a serious revolutionary. Facts often contradict the truth. This is what turned me into a communist. I always thought facts and truth were the same thing, and they're not.

When we look at the 1960s, everybody could see that the industrial process was beginning to come to an end. The U.S. dominated the world economy so there was a necessity of them continuing wars against national liberation movements, of which the African American movement was a specific part. The young idealists of the NL couldn't help but attach themselves to this, especially after the **Watts** uprising (**Los Angeles**, 1965). I think identity politics arose out of Watts. The face of racial oppression in the U.S. and later the national liberation movements around the globe were suddenly thrust into the American living room. This couldn't happen in 1932 because there was no television. This made it possible to place the African American freedom movement on the American people's moral agenda. On the 18th of August of 1965 there were more Americans killed in Watts than fighting in Vietnam. It was a horror story. The **U.S. Army** invaded an American city. Now the world knew about it and it was a political question that they had to deal with. There was never a really serious **Black Nationalist** movement in this country until Watts. The CP condemned the Watts rebellion along with groups like the **National Organization for the Advancement of Colored People** and the **Southern Christian Leadership Conference** (**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**'s organization). It was the **Vietnam War** and the explosion of identity politics that prevented the unity of the whites against the blacks. In fact a huge percentage of whites, including **President Johnson**, realized they had to deal with this, that they were going to have to grant certain civil rights. There was a possibility of forcing the U.S. government to take positions they'd never taken before on questions of civil rights."

Although South Africa had its own unique history, some of the circumstances around the issue of race, legalized segregation for instance, shaped the development of the Left in ways that were similar yet also different from the U.S.. I asked **HYMIE ROCHMAN**, who was active in the Anti-Apartheid movement beginning in the 1950s, if there was a sense of solidarity with the Civil Rights movement in the U.S. that was taking place at the same time:

"We knew it was happening, but it wasn't something we were particularly interested in because the everyday problems in South Africa were so pressing. The politics of the Left in South Africa were very much affected by race, not just class. It couldn't have been just class because the mass of people were subjected to both race and class. So even though the same thing pertained in the U.S., because the majority of the population was white, it did tend to have a different history. The Left in South Africa originated in the white population. This was significant because when the Black Left-wing came onto the scene, some of them accepted the whites as comrades but there were others who felt that whites, because of their privilege and position, could never be part of a progressive movement. So there were many blacks who were progressive but they kept distance from white progressives. For example, a white progressive had a much higher standard of living and more opportunity for education than black would have at the time. Blacks had to carry passes and couldn't easily enter areas where whites lived and worked. And they were discriminated against by the government, the police, the army. They couldn't vote... they didn't have any say. Black workers who came to the cities had to leave their families behind in the Reserves. In the major cities where there was a Black Left-wing they were totally controlled. They could be easily deported out of the city. This gave the movement a disadvantage. We weren't able to bring blacks and whites together as we would have liked. The result was that you had a Left-wing movement like the **Unity Movement** that had few whites. And that's how race deformed the movement. At one time the CP had a slogan calling for a **Black Communist Republic**. Fortunately in the later years the more progressive people in the white and Black movements came together to form one progressive movement.

After I began demonstrating, most of the Jewish community would have nothing to do with me. And for obvious reasons, they were part of the establishment. You see, race masked everything. Jews would tell me: let them deal with the blacks and they'll leave the Jews alone. That was the mentality. It was almost childish to think in terms of a mul-

5. Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and Congress of Racial Equality

6. In the winter of 1960, after hundreds of black tenant farmers were evicted from their lands during the fight to gain the right to vote, they formed makeshift communities known as "Tent Cities."

Bob Crawford, Untitled (1969). Courtesy Bob Crawford.

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MC And she also designed ***In Our Terribleness***.

BC Yeah, right, she did, designed the layout of *In Our Terribleness*.

MC So as we think of the *Wall of Respect* possibly being different from some of the other murals, it could be that then we might want to think about Sylvia Abernathy as also being someone who really represents that connection between the photographers and the writers. Because *In Our Terribleness* once again brings together **Baraka's** words and the photography.

BC Right.

MC Many of the poets, when we think about what happened in the OBAC poetry workshops, many of the poets as they were influenced by each other and working together they began to think about what made a poem black, what was this black aesthetic in terms of photography?

BC I think that was what was so important, I remember I went to an **AFRICOBRA** meeting once, and I didn't realize that there was so many poets working together or writers working together or artists working together like this...I mean a whole room full of them, you know, that knew each other and were working together and, you know, it was great...

MC Did the photographers also have—

BC We did, similar, but probably weren't as organized as the poets and writers, for some reason or other, you know.

MC The symbol of AFRICOBRA, the mask with the sunglasses, I wonder, does that become a way of remembering some of the eclectic moves that happen in the Black Arts Movement, because some of the current scholarship right now, people sometimes look at the '60s, and it's not always the case but sometimes looking at the 1960s Black Arts Movement as not being this experimental art movement, but rather being this art movement that's a prelude to the more experimental work. So I wanted to remind you of something like this (the African mask with the sunglasses). Do you remember this movement as being experimental? eclectic? creating these strange mixtures like a mask with sunglasses? Does that seem to you to be part of what the Black Arts Movement was about?

BC Right, right, true, to some extent but I think most of the writers and the visual artists were following a tradition before them, you know. The photographers were following **Roy DeCarava** and people before him, and of course the writers were following works of **James Baldwin**, so...

MC [In some of your work] you're doing so much with foreground and background. I want to ask you about that. As you record a movement it seems that very often you're drawn to this foreground and background and even more tellingly people's individual bodies, their relation to a particular scene...

tiracial society. You were looked upon as being immature, as being totally unrealistic.

We used to have massive arguments at [**Cape Town**] **University** in the fellowship meetings. They were essentially between blacks who said the revolution could only come through the peasantry. There was validity. The blacks in the townships didn't have freedom of movement and the blacks in the countryside couldn't use the land. The best agricultural land was taken by whites. Intellectually, the Trotskyites won those debates. But in terms of numbers—you could fit all the Trotskyites into this room—the non-Trotskyite Left-wing won because we had the **African National Congress** Black leftists with us. **Jack Simons** [7] was the leading Marxist ideologist in Cape Town. He always made a class analysis, but he also made an analysis showing how race affected class. So in that sense it wasn't a classical Marxist situation like in **European countries**, or **Czarist Russia**, or **India**, or **China**. But when it came to **Algeria** or **South Africa**, it was thought a consideration of nationality or color or whatever you want to call it. It doesn't mean that a Marxist analysis wasn't correct. We always knew that giving people the vote was just a fig leaf. You can give political democracy to everybody but as long as you don't change the economic situation you're left where you started."

FROM "MASS" TO "ME"

In a 1993 essay [8], **Todd Gitlin**, one of the elder intellectual voices of the NL, characterized the ideological gap between the OL and NL as a politics based on "commonality" (a means to social liberation based on what is shared, not different), versus a politics based on identity (a means to social liberation through self-liberation based on one's identity; e.g., race, gender, sexuality). The legacy of the 1960s, he said, was that "Difference came to be felt more acutely than commonality." In 1956, the editors of *Dissent* wrote that in Left politics "responsible determination of one's personal life may perhaps be linked with responsible codetermination in public life." [9] In this statement, we see an expanding of the mass organizational logic more typical of the OL, to include a politics based on the ethical organization of the self, prefiguring the NL's articulation that "the personal is political." [10]

What follows is part of a conversation I had on this theme with MARILYN AND CHARLES NISSIM-SABAT:

CNS: "The personal is political" was a tremendous discovery of the '60s. But what they didn't understand was that the structural is also the political, the economic is also the political. The political is everything.

ET: Was that the argument that the OL was trying to make to the young radicals of the 60s?

CNS: The OL said nothing about those issues.

MNS: The OL were the most impersonal people with the most impersonal views you could ever know. The OL were anti-psychology, anti-psychoanalysis. They were totally against any consideration of the psychosocial developmental aspects of human beings. Totally. They hated it. They were not introspective. They were not self-reflective. There was the whole dedication to the movement. It was easier for them because they never questioned themselves. They didn't know how. They were the negation of "the personal is political." Civil Rights, **Feminism** and the NL movements were a corrective to that.

ET: Do you think the pendulum swung back too far, so to speak? Did "the personal is political" create a politics around identity and difference that lacked the structural analysis?

MNS: In my view it represented the conquest of capitalism. **Marcuse** said the so-called "sexual revolution" was repressive desublimation. [11]

CNS: The problem is that capitalism pollutes everything. When you say "the personal is political," in most people's minds, including the NL, it became like consumerism. I can go into a store, or life, and get whatever I want. I want more sex, I get more sex. I want a different kind of art, I get it.

ET: Did the fact that "the personal is political" could be commodified, strip it of its radical potential?

CNS: No. It's still there.

ET: So forms of self-liberation can express forms of social liberation?

CNS: Yes.

MNS: I totally disagree. Marcuse's point was that the sexual revolution never occurred. There was no deepening or humanization of our sexual inter-relatedness. It was just window-dressing. The NL's notion of sexual liberation was the freedom to have sex with anybody.

INCONCLUSION

The issues these comments address, which are by no means exhaustive nor definitive, are still hotly debated on the Left today. Because the questions I asked were fairly general, there was a lot of "off-topic" conversation—most were more interested in discussing the election or the present economic crisis than anything that happened 50 years ago. Of course, it's all related. My hope is that their comments, rather than giving any conclusive answers about the transition from Old to New Left, will offer a thread for anyone interested in finding their way through the overwhelmingly complex labyrinth of combustible dreams, ideological twists and factional acronyms that litter the history of Left politics in this country. Whether the OL or NL accomplished their goals doesn't really matter. Today's Left inherits it all. Because of this, I think it's worth interrogating the various forms of politics—the means—we've inherited and salvaging those ideas that might still be useful in the struggle to achieve universal human emancipation. How we define emancipation may differ, but I'm pretty sure it is still the goal of the Left. ◊

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7. Jack Simons, a leading member of the South African Communist Party, was a lecturer in African Law and Administration at the University of Cape Town from 1937 to 1964. He was banned from teaching in 1964 and went into exile.

8. Todd Gitlin, "The Left, Lost in the Politics of Identity," *Harper's* Magazine, September 1993, adapted from "From Universality to Difference: Notes on the Fragmentation of the Idea of the Left," *Contention: debates in society, culture, and science*, 2:2 (Winter 1993).

9. *Dissent 3* (Spring 1956), 156-163.

10. Though disputed, the origin of the phrase "the personal is political" is usually attributed to Carol Hanisch and second-wave feminism of the late 1960s.

11. "Repressive desublimation" was a concept developed by Herbert Marcuse that fuses Marxian and Freudian categories in which social control can operate not only by direct control, but also by the manipulation of desire.

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BC To their community and their environment, yeah. Well, in those days it was just, communities were much more colorful and interesting, you know, there were painted storefronts on every street, so it was a much more colorful environment.

MC [In] this intergenerational dialogue, part of what I'm supposed to share—as opposed to simply having all of the questions—is to then tell you a bit about what's being said now about the Black Arts Movement. Earlier I already gave you a glimpse of that, this idea that sometimes people are suggesting that the Black Arts Movement is not experimental. When we think about the visual art, that claim becomes really troubling, hard to fully substantiate.... Some of these images are really forcing us to think about what we mean when we use a term like experimental art. But it's not just a matter of wanting to think about the experimental moves in visual culture, but also to understand how Black Arts literature becomes much more—if not experimental—much more open than we may think.

So often we have some of the most famous Black Arts poems making it so that we don't appreciate some of the nuances of the other literature. I want to see what you think about when you listen to a play that I'm sure you might remember: It's **Ed Bullins** and it's a very very short play, the only type of play that I can quickly, fully present: because there are only two lines in this play. And it's entitled *The Theme is Blackness*, and it has a subtitle: *A One-Act Play to be given before predominantly white audiences*. And what happens in this play? A speaker appears, and the speaker says, "The theme of our drama tonight will be blackness. Within blackness one may discover all the self-illuminating universes in creation. And now Blackness." Then the lights go out for 20 minutes and when the lights come up, and this is the end of this play: the speaker says, "will Blackness please step up and take a curtain call." Lights out. Blackness. That's the entire play.

BC When was that written?

MC This was 1966. And so I wondered, you know as we think about everything we see in your art, and everything we might begin to think about as we remember a play such as *The Theme is Blackness*, it seems the Black Arts Movement is so much more complicated than we may have acknowledged as we think about this questioning of blackness. The theme is blackness but we're never told what blackness is. It seems that the very point of the play is to stage that inability to know, or even that refusal to perform blackness, refusal to present the performance or what might become the spectacle of it. But I wanted to share that with you and see what you think. Because of course, it's so easy, as we, people like myself studying the Movement, it's a little too easy for us to arrive at a particular read of this. But I want to see what you think when you remember that language, how you think it connects or doesn't connect to what you lived during this period?

BC Well, the *Wall* was, like I said, there was nothing experimental about the *Wall*. The *Wall* was reality. I mean, it was harsh reality on the **South Side** of Chicago. That's what we were dealing with then. And of course around the corner you know, on **35th St**.... The way it impacted on those people, in that community, on that block. I mean they were they were dealing with the police, the gangs, the different factions, I mean it was just tearing the community apart. And it seemed like the *Wall* was something that these people who lived in the community had to hang onto for that short space of time.

MC And in terms of performance, could you tell us about the performances at the *Wall*?

BC It was **Val Gray**, yeah.

MC Performances and poetry readings?

BC Yeah, Val Gray, the poets. They would have celebrations there occasionally, and all the poets and writers would come and perform. It was like an outdoor community center.

◊

For the full version of the conversation, including audience participation, please see AREA issue #7 *online at* http://www.areachicago.org.

JB Monorail

Explore the connection between James Brown, roller skating in the '80s and west-side politics.

BY THEASTER GATES

There are moments when I think that my life on the **Westside** of Chicago had no real relationship to the history of political struggle. I had not yet been born, the trophies of that era that hung around my house in the form of handmade protest signs, banners and buttons, not to mention Afro wigs, fake eyelashes and pleather had all become trunk filler or so dusty that they read as insignificant memorials to my eight sisters' high school days. But there were moments in my youth when the cultural residue of '68 makes itself very clear. **James Brown** for me was an extremely important part of how I understand and, in some ways, get to anachronistically connect to that moment when my sisters say Black folk had reasons to live and they weren't just about making money, but uplift and cultural pride.

It's the summer of 1987. Hot and the block is busy with a block club party. I'm fourteen years old and already a junior skate guard at the local rink. **Hot Wheels Roller Rink** on the Westside of Chicago has a line from **Harding Street**, damn near to **Pulaski**. It's the Saturday afternoon Jam that attracts some of the best skaters in the city. I have my "**Precisions**," high top roller skates with tall leather-backs, pink wheels and loose axles so that you can **Rubberleg** without looking too stiff on the floor. Rubberlegging was a specialty of mine, a move that you bust out at the end of a hot song in the corner of the rink where people tended to converge—coming to an abrupt stop using the sides of your wheels, not a toe stopper and simply gliding back and fourth in one place as if you were doing the moonwalk without moving forward. I was 14 and Hot Wheels was like church; you came to the rink to prove your skills, to see your people, to be restored, transfixed and reactivated. **DJ Whiteboy** (a very light skinned African American) was minister most Saturday afternoons and his method of healing was with the **JB's**. Now JB's are not just James Brown cuts. They are cuts that seemed designed in a conference between the **Black Skaters Association of America**, the **King of Funk** and the **Gods and Goddesses of Soul**. Of the most important cut from this moment was **JB's Monorail**.

It's clear that James Brown was thinking of a futuristic mode of transportation on the surface as one of the few stanzas from the song suggests, "If you don't know what a monorail is...check out **Seattle**." But that never registered as relevant with regard to my experience of the song. **The Monorail**, written in the mid 70s, at a time when James was moving from a very clear **Black Pride** agenda and extreme popularity, into a less clearly defined moment when his JBs were had not found their center. The mid 70's were already a throwback to the intensity and cultural vivacity of the late 60's. For many, it was the moment to rest from the fierce battles fought only a few years ago. In my family, it's hard to talk about struggle openly. We talk about work and pride, not the nastiness that was so present in Chicago in '68.

The monorail in many ways was a metaphoric anthem that united all the skaters in a ceremonial act and in what feels like a homage to an even earlier time; the dusty of dusties. The timing and the activities at play conspired together to bring about an unbelievable moment of reflection. The set would go something like this: The first hour of the afternoon would be filled with contemporary music; **El Debarge**, **Prince**, **Kool and the Gang** and **Curtis Blow** were all appropriate ushers that assisted in getting the juices flowing on the floor, acting as audio backdrops to the Westside dating rituals

Mark and Michael

***Mark Shipley**, 27, and **Michael Thompson**, 60, met in Chicago in 2003, and both participate in the **Chicago Honey Co-op**. Begun by Michael Thompson and others, the co-op raises honey bees and other food plants and crops on the west side of Chicago. After hearing about the* AREA *issue theme, Michael and Mark decided to interview each other as an exploration of friendship across generations. The following conversation was recorded at **Lula Café** on September 29, 2008 over the **Monday Farm dinner**.*

MARK SHIPLEY (MS) Growing up in rural **Kansas** in the 1950s in an area being overtaken by the suburban **American Dream**, how is it that you didn't fall for that suburban mania and malaise?

MICHAEL (MT) It had to do with the fact that I knew that I loved men, and I knew that I was both separate and gifted in that way. I trusted following my desires. I was shaped by a combination of taking pleasure in food, and in the desire to be happy. My first memory as a child was of gardening, and of falling to the ground as a **Boeing B52** bomber flew very low overhead. We lived near Boeing. How do people your age think about desire?

MS Talking about desire, I always think about a small radical school that I attended in **Urbana, IL** called **School for Designing a Society**.[1] We used to call it **SDAS**, and people used to mix this up with SDS, which is one of the ways I began to learn about that movement. In SDAS we made a list of our desires, and our task was to design a way to nest all of our desires in our lives or in the projects that we were involved in—it was a whole school based on desires, in a sense. Through that school I met the **Radical Faeries**, **Patch Adams**, **Bernardine Dohrn**, and others. It was my introduction and launch into the counterculture. Wasn't the 60s largely about desire?

MT Yes, it was about resisting what society expected of you, focusing on the destructive war in **Vietnam**.

MS Why did you come to Chicago in 1968, and how does that relate to your life now?

MT There was going to be a big demonstration around the **DNC**. If you were a teenager at that time, Chicago was the place to be. I was 19.

MS Were you against the war?

MT Yes. When I was 18 I took a bus to the **Pentagon** from **St. Louis** that the **League of Women Voters** had organized. I had five dollars in my pocket. **Abbie Hoffman** and **David Dellinger** were there. It was a protest against the war, and they were going to try to levitate the Pentagon (laughs).

MS Seriously?

MT I'm not kidding. That's the reason I went. The idea was so absurd and funny. What does activism mean to you?

MS It is related to desire. The word makes me uncomfortable because it implies that some people aren't activists. We are all actively creating our lives together, creating our direction at all times.

MT Another reason I moved to Chicago was because of the music, which was another deep desire of mine.

MS What music?

MT **Muddy Waters**, **Mahalia Jackson**, **Howlin' Wolf** and many others.

MS All Black musicians?

MT Yes. They were great artists of the time.

MS For years I didn't understand your interest in Jazz and Blues. I declined all your invitations to the **Velvet Lounge**. Suddenly one day I realized that what Jazz and Blues is to you, hip hop and breakdance is to me.

MT And House... There's no shortage. An itemized list would be fine with me, from **Haiti** to **New Orleans**.

MS Did you move to Chicago also partly for its culture, and to avoid the repressive rural culture of your upbringing?

MT Yes. I had it [rural culture], I studied it since I was a small child, and I didn't need it. Moving here, I realized that I could bring it here. This was a radical thought at the time, just so we're clear. It was unspoken, I said it to myself and nobody else. The words urban agriculture were never muttered.

MS Were there people who understood it but didn't have language for it?

MT No. Well, there was one I can think of. Her name is **Susan Nelson**. I'm sure there were many others. There was a community garden that grew vegetables, and there were guerrilla gardens.

MS Was that a term at the time?

MT Yes, as I remember.

MS Was there only one community garden that grew food?

MT There were others. When you and I met, it was at a (gulp) permaculture meeting. We both had the same goal, two generations apart, which was to grow all our food in the city. That's why I wanted to speak to you.

MS When did it become a movement? Would you say it is one?

MT Yes, it's a movement. At least ever since I read about **Luther Burbank** and **Rodale** as a child.

MS I mean urban.

MT So do I. I know Luther Burbank was urban. It's a fine line.

MS Did you hear the word **veganism** in the 60s?

MT Yes, it was used back then, I'm pretty sure. Why do you ask?

MS For me it started out about ethics, perhaps stemming from my **Catholic** upbringing. Animal torture horrified me, and that is how I began to think about food.

MT I was also aware of the torture.

MS You were aware of factory farming in the 70s?

MT It was ramping up then, we slowly noticed it. In the early 70s we were most interested in unprocessed meals and healthy food.

MS Is there more information about it now?

MT Yes, and there is also a lot more of it happening, more torture and harm.

(*At this moment Lula brings out a quadruple honey desert made of our honey. Some gawking.*)

MS We haven't talked about sex yet. That has a lot to do with why you moved here, right?

MT Yes. Growing up in Southern Kansas was dangerous for a gay man. I assumed I would be killed. I'm not exaggerating. On

and people having an opportunity to practice their moves and impress the onlookers. Into the second hour you would have the "dusties" kick in. In this moment, you might notice a generational and cultural shift on the floor as old-schoolers would come out to groove. Besides being older, they had a kind of grace on the skate floor as if there were rules of engagement from a school long gone. If they were skating "couples," there was a particular way to ask a lady to join you, a way to hold her hand and waist while dancing/skating and the moves seemed understood even between strangers. This is when the **Maurice White and the Ojays** would begin to cast their spell, transporting everyone back to a time when Black meant having an endowment of soul that seems rare when compared to what the Westside had become in the 80s. It was all very clear on the rink floor that to have lived during the time when the Ojays were first starting to jam, there were disciplines at play in the city for black people that solidified and maintained a vital cultural front that was important. But even the Ojays, **Earth Wind and Fire** and the **Isley Brothers** were acting as ushers. In the third hour, Whiteboy would tell everyone, "if you do not know how to do the Monorail, please get off the floor." This moment would bring another set of skaters to the floor. The most rehearsed, usually a bit older than the second round, with **Dashikis**, thick goatees, beautiful Afros and the most amazing skates ever; these were the cultural emissaries of Hot Wheels who moved from rink to rink throughout the week, blessing people with their presence, style and skating ability. The song would begin with James Saying, "JB Monorail" as if it were a call to order. All one 150 to 200 participants on this frenzied skate floor would stop what they were doing and form a perfect circle around the perimeter of the floor| the horns would begin with two layers, one layer of trumpets underneath acting as the melodic structure for the saxophones and trumpets above that were more rhythmic and the court-like ritual would begin.

For an outsider, the monorail would look like modern day line dancing except everyone was wearing skates. Your skates would bounce up and down, left, right, left, right, left, right, left foot cross, right foot slide to the right, left, right, left, right. This simple combination of steps would move everyone through a spiritual procession, making the rink a sacred circle and allowing us all a moment of cultural reflection. As a fourteen-year-old, I was clear that this moment on the skate floor was not to be taken lightly. James Brown seemed most appropriated to be our spiritual guide as he had the battles won with songs like "Black and I'm Proud," under his belt. As the monorail progressed, interesting anomalies would pop out, like a person would leave the circle and improvise a solo in the middle of the skate floor or a trio of skate guards would reveal a new routine that they undoubtedly worked on for several weeks in the corners of the skating rink. From time to time, Whiteboy himself, who was one of the most accomplished skaters, would come down from his DJ booth that sat just above the skating rink in the manner of a royal balcony, and do series of graceful leaps that would land him in a direction opposite the one he started. It was the mix of horn breaks and unified motion, smiles and nods from rival gang members who respected each other and the moment enough to continue to skate; it was James, living through three generations of skaters who all understood him a little differently, but his power impacted us all the same. JB stabilized things over and over again partly because his history was no different from our own, but his victory was so aspiring. JB's monorail continues to feed me as does the complexity, variery and history of Soul music. James moved through the **Jim Crow South**, **Civil Rights** and the **Black Panther Party**, making significant cultural additions at every point while maintaining a complex relationship with the power constructs he sang in defiance of. I understand today that the JB's monorail was a symbolic act of cultural resistance that needed no outside observers. It made everything okay on the Westside for at least 15 minutes. Even now that moment, every Saturday, continues to reverberate as the most soulful moment of the week. ◊

the other side, I wanted to meet the culture of a diverse city.

MS You knew it was safer?

MT I hate that word. I wasn't looking for safety. I wanted to achieve, have fun, live a long time. Why did you decide to leave the city?

MS It was partly my ideas—partly ideological—and largely visceral. It was and still is hard for me to handle the abuse of land and people represented and perpetrated in and by cities. After working on farms and hitchhiking and hopping freight trains around the country, I learned that I thrived in wilder places, in more natural, complex environments.

MT Why did you move back?

MS This is my home, I grew up here. I have a history and a past here. I don't have another home, and I realized that there is not a single place in the city that I know of where people, together, are living in a good way with land, having a healthy relationship with it. So I wanted to make that place. Like you, I wanted to bring into the city the intimacy with land that largely exists outside of the city.

MT Did you find that?

MS I'm in that process right now. Back to sex–I'm wondering how sex was different for each of us in these different times. I always thought a major difference in eras was that I grew up with the fear that if I fucked the wrong guy without sexual precaution I could die. You didn't have that fear?

MT There're a lot of other **STDs** besides **HIV/AIDS**. There are a lot of ways to have sex–fucking is only one. They're all fun.

MS What was **ACT-UP** (**AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power**) about, what did it mean to you?

MT ACT-UP was two things. I wanted to honor my brother, Daniel, who died of AIDS. Another reason was because it was so sexy. Everyone knew it was sexy and if they didn't admit it they're fools. Everybody involved was sexy and smart. Until then, HIV/AIDS was perceived as a gay man's disease, everyone thought it only afflicted gay men. But we already knew otherwise, that it affected straight and gay, men and women, and that it was spreading globally. ACT-UP was a worldwide movement that made it known that this was a serious global epidemic, not a gay disease. There were other reasons I participated, but those are big ones.

MS As long as I've known you, you haven't really identified with movements...

MT Except food movements.

MS Yes. Are there any other movements you've identified with?

MT **The Yippies**. I didn't call myself one but I identified with them. Certainly the **Anti-Contra** movement. It was very important and I worked on it. The organic food movement predates all of these. **Prison reform**. I'm kind of bored listing these. What movements are you involved in?

MS I identify strongly with the **Luddite** movement against industrialization. The food movement of course. Land movements such as the landless peasants' movement in **South America** and beyond. I'm pretty intrigued by the relatively recent **anti-civilization movement** and **anarcho-primitivism** or **green anarchism**, though don't know if I would call myself part of that movement. And of course the environmental movement, if you can call it one movement. I consider myself allied with many social movements, but I see relation to land and land reform as fundamental to all of these. I feel that things like anarchism and desire are inclusive of everything I've mentioned.

MS Can you speak to your relationship with young people?

MT Young people in the last decades can be credited with so much experimentation in music – the **AACM** and free jazz founders for example. Young people are experimental. I'm interested in experimental approaches, experimental arts.

MS Why?

MT Because it's unpredictable. Gardening and sex are very much that way. I'd like to ask you some questions. What are your first memories?

MS I remember breakdancing in daycare at five years old at **Edgewater Hospital** while my parents worked there. I remember shitting my pants and the daycare workers letting everyone watch while they cleaned me up. It was humiliating. I think those were my earliest memories.

MT Has music influenced you?

MS Yes, hugely. For fear of sounding cliched, music is power. It's like breathing, sex, and food—totally essential.

MT Why does this interview seem like a good idea to you?

MS I'm fascinated with older people. I have mostly hung out with older people most of my life. I feel like I learn more from them. I like the idea because it's interesting to me the intersection of being engaged in the same work but being from different eras with different perspectives and backgrounds. But it is the same sensuality, the same work...Why is this interview interesting to you?

MT For many of the same reasons. Especially that when we met, that you wanted to grow your own food, which is so important and so sexy. And the issue of having intergenerational influences seems to be part of a solution to many problems. I guess for me it's an educational thing to have a younger person to work with. I learn from you, you learn from me: it's an exceptional and valuable thing. One thing I like about youth is the strength. This is a hard line of work... We haven't talked about beauty, have we? What is life without beauty? Our gardens are about beauty.

MS Can you think of any other salient differences between our generations, any differences in quality, approach, or perception?

MT It irritates me when people draw boundaries around generations. I'm not interested in that at all. I do want to pass on what I've learned. This whole generalization about era is off-putting.

MS One thing I admire about you is your openness and enjoyment in sharing, and the fact that you don't judge or condescend to younger people or people less experienced. That's very important for young people.

MT I just heard an interview a few days ago with **Johnny Cash**.[2] He said something like "I've learned more in the past decade from 19 year olds than I've ever learned from anyone in my own generation." To be able to have young people teaching me about the world in my time, that's a great gift.

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1. *http://www.designingasociety.org/*

2. "Get Rhythm: A Tribute to Johnny Cash" ("Dylan" segment), broadcast September 2008 on *American Routes*, WBEZ.

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Hey Obamacrats!

Obama is the President of the USA. This means some good things (congrats to all of you who worked to make it happen) and it means some potentially challenging (even bad) things. As residents of Obama's hometown of Chicago, we now have some unique responsibilities. One reason for this is that typically a President-elect draws from his experiences and connections in order to plan his cabinet, advisers and policy decisions (the entire presidential transition team is made up of influential Chicagoans).

For nearly four years AREA Chicago has been publishing newspapers and a website to document and network local social, cultural and political work and movements. Our last issue (*AREA #6: City As Lab*) specifically took on the task of writing local policy histories, with a strong focus on housing, education and labor. By reading this issue of our publication, you will be introduced to key concepts and players who will have influence on President Obama's tenure in office. Obama is especially close to some of the key figures in Chicago's poorly managed and destructive "Plan for Transformation" of public housing, and of the "Renaissance 2010" plan to charter-ize Chicago Public Schools. It is even quite likely that we will see some of these policies, which have been implemented experimentally here in Chicago, adapted for use on the national and global scale. It is our responsibility to become familiar with this context in a deeper way and share it with others, so that we can strategically respond to attempts to implement these policies on a grander scale.

To see these texts visit *http://areachicago.org/p/issues/6/*

To see other backissues of AREA Chicago and learn more about the cultural and political landscape here, visit our archives at *http://areachicago.org/p/issues/*

In your hands you hold the seventh issue of AREA Chicago, which deals with many topics of great relevance to today. It is about the legacies of the late '60s and its influence today. This closely relates to the phenomenon of Obama, his channeling of JFK, RFK and MLK; the interrogation of his ties to the New Left; and the fact that it took the support of Daley #1 to produce the conditions for what happened in 1968 and we still have a Daley #2 in office who had a huge hand in getting Obama where he is today.

Daniel Tucker for AREA Chicago

To Whom It May Concern:

10/09/08

I write in support of AREA, an initiative centered around the production and distribution of a bi-annual journal. AREA brings into productive mixture visual artists, educators, policy workers, community and political activists. Contact takes place at AREA sponsored events (seminars, panel discussions, and social gatherings) as well as in the pages of the publication. Through its manifestations as a journal and organizational vehicle, AREA has emerged as a self-constructed and actively cultivated node in a fertile network of people and groups engaged in progressive, fearless, and practical efforts to change the world for the better. By bringing together artists, writers, activists, and designers in different combination, and making use of an ever-changing cast of editorial advisers, AREA is also a model in experimental group formation which stands out even in today's age of collaborative cultural work. By creatively making use of a variety of funding sources, but keeping a commitment to producing the journal as a free publication, AREA offers itself as a model for sustainble publishing under the challenging conditions of the present. For all these roles, qualities, and working processes, I know of no other project like AREA.

In a very short time, AREA has become a place for serious policy discussions and independent criticism of city governance, a medium through which activists and organizations from throughout Chicago learn about each other, an indispensable grassroots teaching tool, a model of advocacy journalism, and a key element in the media landscape of the Chicago art scene. The focus on and service to Chicago is, maybe surprisingly, not in any way an indicator of provincialism. On the contrary, when I travel I always find people appreciative for the view into Chicago's socially-engaged art world provided by AREA, and have taken to using issues of AREA as a way of engaging in exchanges with people doing parallel work in other parts of the country and the world. It is precisely because of its place-specificity that AREA makes a significant contribution to the global exchange of information.

I feel fortunate to have contributed texts to the journal, and privileged to have enjoyed and learned from AREA events. We should all look forward to the continued evolution and growth of AREA by supporting the initiative with gifts of money, labor, and our creative inspiration. It is a good investment.

Sincerely,

Dan S. Wang

To Chicagoans Everywhere:

10/13/08

AREA is a gift to every lover of the city. It is a promise kept to everyday heroes so that they will not be soon forgotten and that their stories will not be erased by bulldozers or wrecking cranes. AREA is a sweet something whispered into the ears of urban daydreamers, demanding that they rise to realize their dreams before things like 'vision' and 'hope' have been outlawed. The city is where we are born, where we go to be forgotten, it is where we move to find work and where we stay to build family. AREA helps urban dwellers to become alive, invites us to be remembered, it is where we go to find truth and where we stay to build friendship. Yes, AREA is a gift to every lover of the city.

My name is Ryan and I have been in love with Chicago for 7 years now. Though sometimes we argue and we often have our differences, Chicago knows that I am here to stay. Throughout my years with Chicago, AREA has been a true friend and great ally. In difficult moments AREA has helped me to understand Chicago better, to see where it is coming from and all that it has been through. In moments of great happiness AREA has helped me to celebrate, to share the joy that Chicago brings me and to deepen my connections with others who call the Windy City home. In times of boredom AREA has helped me to rekindle my passion for the city, to look at her streets with fresh eyes and a renewed heart.

I know of no other project, organization, publication, think tank, act tank, or community that is more committed to understanding Chicago's elusive ways than AREA. This is a commitment that does not depend on staff or annual budgets to express itself, and that turns every dollar it touches into a better informed, more meaningful public. This is a commitment that is not bound to any single issue, worldview, or geography. And so, with Chicago as my witness, it is with a great sense of appreciation and honor that I declare my support for AREA. Without it, I honestly do not know where Chicago or I would be today.

With Love,

Ryan Hollon

Support AREA Chicago through A Donation

Do you ever wonder who does the important and challenging work to confront the status quo in this city? We wonder that too, and that's why we started AREA Chicago, to document the Art/Research/Education/
Activism happening here.

We are planning for 2009 already and will be releasing our spring issue on the topic of "money" and the fall issue dealing with the "peripheries of Chicago." We depend on contributions from individual supporters like you to do all of this. From office supplies, to youth mapping workshops to printing the publications, your support makes this work possible.

Please give a tax-deductible donation to AREA today!

Checks can be made to our fiscal sponsor "Experimental Station" and mailed to AREA Chicago at

PO Box 476971
Chicago IL 60647

To donate online visit *http://www.areachicago.org/donate/*

You will be credited in future publications as a supporter of AREA Chicago.

Dont Take Our Word for It,

5 Questions

ABOUT SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART IN CHICAGO

This website will feature Interviews with:

Mike Bancroft (Co-op Image), **Wafaa Bilal**, **Sara Black** (Material Exchange), **Brett Bloom** (Temporary Services), **Aquil Charlton** (Crib Collective), **Salome Chasnoff** (Beyondmedia), **Marianne Fairbanks** (Mess Hall), **Edra Soto Fernandez**, **Nicole Garneau**, **Theaster Gates**, **Amanda Gutierrez**, **Craig Harshaw** (Insight Arts), **David Isaacson** (Theater Oobleck), **Jennifer Karmin** (Anti Gravity Surprise), **Nance Klehm**, **Demetrio Maguigad**, **Edmar & Rachel Marszewski** (Lumpen), **Mark Messing** (Mucca Pazza), **Anne Elizabeth Moore**, **Sonjanita Moore** (Kuumba Lynx), **Laurie Palmer**, **Amy Partridge** (CAFF Collective), **Mary Patten** (Feel Tank Chicago), **Coya Paz** (Teatro Luna), **Dan Peterman** (Experimental Station), **Jon Pounds** (Chicago Public Art Group), **Aay Preston-Myint** (Chances Dances), **Toufic El Rassi**, **Laurie Jo Reynolds**, **Elvia Rodriguez-Ochoa** (Polvo), **Deborah Stratman**, **Shannon Stratton** (threewalls), **Brad Thompson**, **travis** (American Veterans for Equal Rights), **Dan S. Wang**, **Rebecca Zorach** (Feel Tank Chicago), **and more**.

Online *http://5questions.areachicago.org*

ANNOUNCING

Report Back

A new weblog by AREA dedicated to documenting events and people's impressions of them throughout Chicago.

http://reportback.areachicago.org

www.areachicago.org

AREA #7 distribution sites

For a map of our distribution sites, check out *www.areachicago.com/about/distribution*. Thanks to David Marques for making the map.

NORTH/WEST

Mercury Cafe 1505 W Chicago
Atomix 1957 W Chicago
Young Chicago Authors 1180 N Milwaukee
Quimbys 1854 W North
Batey Urbano 2620 W Division
Boulevard Bikes 2535 N Kedzie
Mexico Solidarity Network 3460 W Lawrence 200/201
InCUBATE 2129 N. Rockwell

NORTH/EAST

Powell's Books 2850 N Lincoln
Intelligentsia Coffee 3123 N Broadway
American Indian Center of Chicago 1630 W Wilson
Heartland Cafe 7000 N Glenwood
Mess Hall 7027 N Glenwood
Women and Children First 5233 N Clark
Metropolis Cafe 1039 W Granville Ave

WEST

Malcom X College 1900 W Van Buren
UE Hall 37 S. Ashland
WACA 3600 W Ogden
Working Bikes 927 S. Western

SOUTH/WEST

Jane Addams Hull-House Museum 800 S Halsted
UIC Gallery 400 400 S Peoria
No Coast 1500 W 17TH, #1
Casa Aztlan 1831 S Racine
College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs 412 S. Peoria
Lichen Lending Library 1921 S Blue Island
Café Mestizo 1646 W 18th
Mexican Fine Arts Center 1852 W 19th
Little Village Environmental Justice Organization 2856 S Millard
Crib Collective 4252 W Cermark
Southwest Youth Collaborative 6400 S Kedzie

CENTRAL

The Gene Siskel Film Center 164 N State
School of the Art Institute 280 S Columbus, 2nd Floor
Priarie Avenue Bookshop 418 S Wabash
Columbia College 623 S Wabash

SOUTH/EAST

Co-Prosperity Sphere 3219-21 S Morgan
Southside Community Arts Center 3831 S Michigan
Experimental Station/Backstory Cafe 6100 S Blackstone
Little Black Pearl 1060 E 47th
Hyde Park Art Center 5020 S Cornell
Powell's Books 1501 E 57th
Soul Vegetarian East 205 E 75th
Neighborhood Assistance Center, CSU 9501 S King

ANNUAL EVENTS

Teachers for Social Justice Curriculum Fair, November
Version Fest, April
Social Justice Student Expo, June
Printers Ball, August

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Everybody's Got Money Issues

Issue #8 of AREA Chicago

Submission Deadline 2/1/2009
To be released 5/1/2009

Send proposals to *areachicago@gmail.com*

Twenty years ago we were told that there was no other option besides capitalism, and that the socialism of the 20th century was a failure. Today we witness economic justice struggles around every corner—from labor rights organizing, to protests against unaccountable free-trade conferences, everyday price increases from entertainment ticket surcharges to groceries—the unprecedented inequality of wealth is deforming our lives and the general crisis, illustrated by the recent Wall Street bailout, is plain to see. Still, it's hard to talk about money and how it impacts our lives and work. There are struggles for fair wages and benefits at the same time as an increasing number of people are relegated to the flexible freelance/temp/day-labor sector where nothing is consistent or reliable. Money obscures our hard work as it turns activism and culture into a struggle for grants; those with access can dedicate their energy to publicity and gaining more access while others are ground to disintegration. And what about taxes and welfare—the political mechanisms that can supposedly re-distribute wealth? Money breeds money. We want a different way of life but sometimes our alternatives seem to exist only in a mythic universe. We're constantly comparing apples and oranges: material comforts and intangible emotions, the necessities of living and our wildest dreams, abstractions like the ideas that fuel our creative, intellectual, and activist work. This confuses our sense of what matters. Just as the housing market is speculative, everyone is always looking for a better option in every aspect of life—looking for a deal, looking to buy low and sell high.

In the Money Issue of AREA, we hope to reveal examples of Chicagoans tacking the question of money, capital, and work in challenging or creative ways. Ideas for articles might include a profile of an organization tackling fair or locally-oriented economic concerns, an interview with an immigrant from a Soviet-aligned country about the impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall on their community in Chicago, a manifesto from a cultural organization about how money affects their art, a report back from school funding protests, documentation from Chicagoan's protests in the 1930s to nationalize the banks, or a group discussion with Chicago activists about funding their work in creative ways. Please don't feel limited to these suggestions—they are purely meant to get your head spinning with ideas. Once you settle on one, email AREA with a proposal by February 1st 2009 at *areachicago@gmail.com*

Your proposal should be no longer than 200 words. Include ideas of "keywords" that you think might explain your work and the topics it connects to. Feel free to send links or attachments that show related work.

AREA Chicago

ART/RESEARCH/EDUCATION/ACTIVISM

#7

68 The Inheritance of Politics

The Politics of Inheritance

A LOCAL READER ON THE LEGACY OF 1968 IN CHICAGO