Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis or dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known, including display on the world wide web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis or dissertation. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis or dissertation. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.

Signature:

_____ _____

Worth K. Hayes Date

In Our Own Hands: Black Private Education in Chicago, 1940-1986

By

Worth Kamili Hayes
Doctor of Philosophy

History

_____

Dr. Leroy Davis, Jr.
Advisor

_____

Dr. Mary Odem
Committee Member

_____

Dr. Emilie Vanessa Siddle Walker
Committee Member

Accepted:

_____

Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

In Our Own Hands: Black Private Education in Chicago, 1940-1986

By

Worth Kamili Hayes

B.A., Xavier University, 2004
M.A., Emory University, 2008

Advisor: Leroy Davis, Jr.

An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in History
2010

Abstract

In Our Own Hands: Black Private Education in Chicago, 1940-1986
By Worth K. Hayes

This dissertation looks at the development of black private education in Chicago from 1940 to 1986. By black private education, this study refers to schools that not only served a majority black student population but were also created, operated, and staffed by blacks. The dissertation focuses even more specifically on black private schools that taught kindergarten to 8th grade. This topic area remains neglected despite the steady growth of African-American enrollment in private schools throughout the 20th century. A history of black private schools illuminates the appeal of educational alternatives to African-Americans. This work also provides scholars with a unique window to African-American educational interests not seen in most studies of public education. This dissertation identifies the distinctive educational philosophies, curriculum, and pedagogy blacks developed in their own institutions within the context of the history of African Americans nationally and regionally.

In Our Own Hands: Black Private Education in Chicago, 1940-1986

By

Worth Kamili Hayes
B.A., Xavier University of Louisiana, 2004
M.A., Emory University, 2008

Advisor: Leroy Davis, Jr., Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in History
2010

"The historian's craft is illuminating. In the process of what we do, we often learn that our work includes an element of autobiography, revealing perspectives and experiences that help us sustain interest in our subjects over a long period. Within that autobiographical context there are often answers to questions we never knew we had, questions hidden deep in our subconscious minds."[1]

Leroy Davis Jr.

Acknowledgments

Members of the academic community often speak of the contributions that others made to their dissertations, books, etc. in terms of "debts." On the other hand, I remember people in St. Louis' black community, where I was born and raised, refer to debts in a different way. Members of my neighborhood often said, "As long as I owe you, you'll never be broke." As a child I thought that this was a clever way for people to rationalize their refusal to pay back money or some other service. As I grew older I realized that all individuals did not use this phrase to scheme others. This aphorism subtly acknowledges another value I learned in this community. If someone provides you with help (monetary and otherwise), you are obligated to return that favor. The "debtor" has issued the benefactor a promissory note that can be redeemed in good faith.

During the development of this dissertation I have tried to merge the wisdom and values of these two worlds, that of my upbringing and the academy, without being "torn asunder." I have incurred many debts from various communities in the process. I sincerely appreciate all of the support, advice, critiques, prayers, and good thoughts these many people have provided me over the years. Even those who are not mentioned by name in the following pages are special to me. Please know that the absence of your name is not due to anything wanting in your contributions, but rather a testament that I still have a far way to go. I pray for

[1] Leroy Davis, *A Clashing of the Soul: John Hope and the Dilemma of African American Leadership and Black Higher Education in the Early Twentieth Century* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), ix.

your continued assistance in this matter. But for those named and unnamed, I offer you the following promissory note for your magnanimous service. You will never be broke.

I thank the Creator for hearing me, knowing me, being with me, and working with me. I say asante sana ("thank you very much" in Kiswahili) to the ancestors, known and unknown, on whose shoulders I stand. If you had not been, I would not be. I am grateful for the contributions of both Albert Masons, Sara Warren, Violet Mason, granddaddy Willie Franks, Big Mama Mary McKinney, grandmama Iris Franks, aunt Lily, aunt Daisy, the Mason men, uncle Joseph Moore, aunt Bertha, Grandbo Percy Hayes, grandma Cassie Hayes, uncle Jimmy Franks, aunt Marzetta Franks, uncle Matchel Hayes, Baba Muntu Kenwyn Redding, Baba Reverend Anthony Earl Wright, auntie Mildred Hayes, and cousin Karlotta Hayes. Thank you for making good on your word.

I also salute the communities of educators, parents, patrons, and students that are featured in this dissertation who took matters into their own hands. Thank you for leading lives worthy of historical recognition. I, and countless others, owe a debt of gratitude to Doris Allen Anderson, Charlotte Stratton, June Howe Currin, Sister Claude Hudlin, O.S.P., Sister Laurentia Shortt, O.S.P., Bobby Wright, and many other teachers, administrators, and supporters of black private education.

I am also grateful to the first storyteller and scholar, LaRita Wright and Worth Hayes respectively, I ever knew. My mother and father were my first educators who taught me the wondrous places education and hard work can take you. They have also taught me amazing lessons about sacrifice and selfless love that I am still learning.

I also thank all of the members of the Hayes and Franks families. My sisters, Charisse Hayes and Quoran Brown-El have always avidly supported their little brother regardless of what

endeavor I chose. They dutifully enforced the Hayes house rules which included no television or outside play until I completed my homework. This and other habits served me well during the dissertation process. I am also deeply appreciative of all of the well wishes and prayers that my many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews have sent my way.

I am also blessed to belong to a large extended family. Members of the jamaa ("family" in Kiswahili) have helped me maintain perspective and have reminded me that I am much more than an academic. I am especially thankful for the guidance provided by elders such as Mama Frances, Baba Myron, Mama Njoki, Mama Geri, and Baba Michael Franklin. I am also deeply appreciative of Alderman Terry Kennedy and Mama Veronica who have become my lifelong teachers. Baba Sanyika and Mama Makini Anwisye, two model black private school educators, also provided helpful support in the development of this project.

I have relied on the encouragement of many friends during the writing of this dissertation. I thank Eliian Turner and Rapheal Green for reminding me of the importance of my work. They never made me feel like an alien even though I often found myself on alien terrain. I am also indebted to Raymon Shange (and his family) who travels this same terrain. This brother has been my ally in the academy since our undergraduate days at Xavier. He has helped me keep my cool over the years and reassured me that I'm not crazy; "the process" is.

Chicago and many of its people have also become members of my extended family. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Cole family, especially cousins Denise and Kenten. The Coles served as my surrogate parents in Chicago for three consecutive summers. They opened their home to me and treated me more like a son than a cousin. I specifically appreciate cousin Kenten who helped me relieve the stress accumulated by long days of research by allowing me to beat him in chess night after night.

The Coles also introduced me to the Childs family. I am especially grateful to my cousin Lydia Childs who put me in contact with the New Concept Development Center (NCDC) community before she passed into ancestry. I would have no project without her. I am also deeply appreciative of James Childs who gave me critical insights on the history of New Concept Development Center and Edward Wilmot Blyden Center for Creative Development.

Archivists in Chicago were also tremendous in their support of my project. I thank the entire staff of the Vivian Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History in the Carter G. Woodson Library. I am especially grateful for their helpful conversations on Howalton and Chicago history that I had with Beverly Cook, Robert Miller, and Michael Flug. I also thank the staff of the Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center in Chicago. The expertise of Jack Treanor and Julie Satzik on the history of Catholicism in Chicago paid dividends in my understanding of Holy Name of Mary. I also thank Sue Delves for allowing me to gain access to the Ridge Historical Society's collection on blacks in Morgan Park. I unexpectedly found significant documents on Holy Name of Mary there right before I completed my research in Chicago.

I have also been blessed to come in contact with the Walton family. I salute Mama Soyini for having the foresight and discipline to save such a large collection of the Institute of Positive Education and NCDC records which were used for a substantial portion of this dissertation. Mama Soyini was also gracious enough to allow me into her home to access the material, take time out of her busy schedule, and refuse to get annoyed by my multiple phone calls. I also thank Mama Soyini for staying to talk with me (at the risk of being late for a block club meeting) to share her experiences with IPE and NCDC. I also appreciate the staff of Barbara A. Sizemore Academy for permitting me to use their facilities for research, copying, and my

many other requests. I also say asante sana to Mesi Walton for believing in my project. As the head of the NCDC alumni chapter, she introduced me to a number of former students who were interviewed in the study. She also willingly shared her experiences as a student at the school.

Many other members of the NCDC community aided in the development of this dissertation. I thank Baba Taifa Anthony Daniels for permitting me to use the school records of New Concept School. Baba Taifa and the New Concept School staff also graciously allowed me to use the school's facilities to conduct research over several summers. I also thank the following persons for sharing their experiences with NCDC: Mama Safisha Madhubuti (Carol Lee), Mama Zakiya Williams, Rika Lawrence, Kenya Nalls, and Juba Williams. Mama Zakiya (who I initially didn't expect to interview) was especially helpful. She introduced me to members of the Howalton community and Mama Adalisha Safi. Mama Adalisha generously shared her experiences and documentation on the Black Women's Committee and Ruth B. Lott Black Experience. The inclusion of this history provided an unexpected, yet critically important addition to the NCDC chapter.

I have also accumulated many debts in various cities on the East Coast. Baba Anthony and Mama Muthoni opened their Washington D.C. home to me on several occasions so that I could conduct research in Baltimore. I also thank Lance Simmons for allowing me to stay at his home to complete research in Philadelphia (when I thought I would focus on Catholic schools administered by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament).

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the many people I met at the Oblate Sisters of Providence motherhouse in Baltimore. Sharon Knecht, a model archivist and historian, was most helpful during my many visits to the city. I am especially grateful for her willingness to structure her schedule in a way that allowed me to spend as much time in the archives as

possible. I learned important information on the history of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and Catholicism in general during my many conversations with her. Mrs. Knecht also never failed to hesitate to respond to my many phone calls and e-mails after I left Baltimore. I thank the former teachers at Holy Name of Mary who kindly recounted their experiences at the school. Special gratitude is due to Sisters M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., M. Virginie Fish, O.S.P., M. Katherine Brent, O.S.P., M. Reginald Gerdes, O.S.P., and M. Trineta Baeza, O.S.P. I am also grateful for the opportunity to meet Diane Batts Morrow, Sister May Alice Chineworth, O.S.P., Sister M. Lorraine George, O.S.P., Sister M. Constance Fenwick, O.S.P., and the many kind and cheerful sisters I came into contact with while in Baltimore.

In a dissertation focusing on educators, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the many excellent teachers I have been fortunate to learn from. I thank Mrs. Jeanetta Holland, a black private school educator, for helping me develop a love for reading at an early age. While writing this dissertation, I often thought about her and the many master teachers I encountered in my hometown of St. Louis such as Mrs. Lowe, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Cochran, Mrs. Willis, and Mrs. Williams.

Many educators at Xavier University at Louisiana encouraged me to study history professionally. I am indebted to members of Xavier's history department such as Sister Barbara Hughes, C.S.J., Jonathan Rotondo-McCord, Gary Donaldson, Wendy Gaudin, and Dianne Encalade. Several other faculty members at Xavier helped nurture my academic development. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to work with Loren Blanchard, Ronald Dorris, Dereck Rovaris, and DeReef Jamison.

I was fortunate to meet my dissertation advisor, Leroy Davis, Jr., while enrolled at Xavier. "Uncle Leroy" (as I playfully describe him to others) served as my mentor during the

Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship program. My decision to attend Emory for graduate study was largely based on my positive experiences with him during the program. I saw him as a deeply caring professor. His concern for my well-being was demonstrated by his honest and meticulous critiques of my work. He has masterfully continued this tradition during my tenure at Emory and especially during the writing of this dissertation. I am sincerely honored to have had the opportunity to work with him.

Other Emory professors and staff have been extremely helpful during my graduate career in general and the development of my dissertation in particular. Vanessa Siddle Walker was kind enough to join my dissertation committee and share her brilliant insights on African-American education. I also thank my other committee member, Mary Odem, who asked piercing questions that made me rethink critical aspects of my dissertation. I am grateful for the mentorship of several Emory historians such as James Roark, Susan Socolow, David Eltis, and Jeffrey Lesser. I have also been privileged to receive the guidance and support of Lawrence Jackson, Nagueyalti Warren, Rudolph Byrd, Brett Gadsden, Kharen Fulton, and Arneta Allen.

I must acknowledge the great camaraderie that I enjoyed among my many colleagues at Emory. First and foremost, I would like to thank my ace, Aminah Perkins. She took time out of her busy graduate studies to read every word of the dissertation before I submitted it for committee review. She has also informally served as a research assistant, archivist, photographer, and confidant for this project. I am deeply indebted to her. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to befriend Brittney Cooper who has been a friend, big sister, and mentor to me. I am also thankful for the support and ability to exchange ideas with the likes of Guirdex Masse, Vincent Willis, Brenda Tindal, Michelle Purdy, Alicia Monroe, Kim Green, Chante Baker, and Lerone Martin.

Several grants also aided in the completion of this dissertation. I thank the Social Science Research Council for a timely dissertation completion grant. Professional development awards from Emory University also helped fund my many trips to Chicago.

Errors may be found in the following pages despite all of the help I received. The least I can do is accept full responsibility for them. Consider this my first down payment on the many debts I owe.

Table of Contents

Introduction

"The people of Mississippi ought to come to Chicago to learn how to hate."[1] In his campaign to integrate Chicago in 1966, movement leader, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. confirmed a reality that black Chicagoans knew all too well. His protests in Chicago made clear to the nation that segregation was not a southern phenomenon but rather a problem that plagued the entire country. Those who recall King's marches into Chicago's white working class neighborhoods may remember his campaign as a battle to stop the practice of institutionalized residential segregation. However, it is often forgotten that King also came to Chicago to desegregate the city's public school system.[2] Black Chicagoans specifically and African-Americans generally considered educational equality a major priority. Surely, like King, many African-Americans believed that a quality education would accompany improvement in America's public schools. To achieve this quality education in the 20th century, African-Americans have struggled for integration and developed many other strategies according to scholars of black public education.[3] However, the educational agenda of African-Americans in

---

[1] Lillian Williams and William Braden, "A Bitter Showdown in Chicago- In 1966, He Collided With Daley" *Chicago Sun-Times,* 19 January 1986, 4.

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

[3] The literature on black public education in the 20th century, including black activism, is voluminous. Some of the major studies on the subject and various strategies used to achieve a quality education include James D. Anderson *The Education of Blacks in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African-American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); V.P. Franklin, *The Education of Black Philadelphia: The Social and Educational History of a Minority Community, 1900-1950* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979); Michael Homel, *Down From Equality: Black Chicagoans and the Public Schools: 1920-1941* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Davison M. Douglas, *Jim Crow Moves North: The Battle Over Northern School Segregation, 1865-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* (New York: Knopf, 1976); Mark V. Tushnet, *The NAACP's Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education, 1925-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Dionne Danns, *Something*

the 20th century is more complicated. We can begin to come to grips with this complexity when we broaden the educational agenda of African-Americans to include the history of black private schools.

This dissertation looks at the development of black private education in Chicago from 1940 to 1986. By black private education, this study refers to schools that not only served a majority black student population but were also created, operated, and staffed by blacks. The dissertation focuses even more specifically on black private schools that taught kindergarten to 8th grade.[4] This topic area remains neglected despite the steady growth of African-American enrollment in private schools throughout the 20th century.[5] A history of black private schools illuminates the appeal of educational alternatives to African-Americans. This work also provides scholars with a unique window to African-American educational interests not seen in most studies of public education. This dissertation identifies the distinctive educational philosophies, curriculum, and pedagogy blacks developed in their own institutions within the context of the history of African Americans nationally and regionally.

My research also adds to what is known about the different types of private schools that African-Americans attended in the 20th century. Scholars have concluded that black students enroll in three categories of private schools: independent elite, sectarian, and independent alternative. Independent elite schools generally have significant academic and social prestige

---

Better for Our Children: Black Organizing in Chicago Public Schools, 1963-1971 (New York: Routledge, 2003) and Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars: New York City, 1805-1973: A History of the Public Schools as Battlefield of Social Change* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 241-378.

[4] This dissertation does not include high school education because most black private schools served elementary and middle school age students. This was partially due to the prohibitive costs of providing a high school education and/or the belief that students would be better served if they started their educational career with a solid foundation. Higher education is beyond the scope of this project.

[5] Jacqueline Jordan Irvine and Michèle Foster, eds. *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1996); Diana T. Slaughter and Deborah J. Johnson, eds. *Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988).

but do not have an ostensible religious or political mission. Sectarian schools are affiliated with a religious institution. Independent alternative schools tend to be informed by left-of-center ideologies and may emphasize a particular educational philosophy or the cultural heritage of their students.[6] My research indicates that the private schools that African-Americans established in Chicago generally resemble this broader pattern. The different types of black private schools in this study are nonsectarian, religious, and black nationalist. Like independent elite schools, nonsectarian schools have no explicit religious or political ideology. On the other hand, the curriculum of black religious schools is grounded within a particular theological framework. Black nationalist schools expect their students to learn academic skills and develop a "race first" ideology.[7]

This dissertation uses three schools to serve as representative case studies of black private education. Howalton Day School represents the nonsectarian category. The school was

---

[6] Diana T. Slaughter and Deborah J. Johnson, eds. "Introduction and Overview," in *Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988); Barbara L. Schneider and Diana T. Slaughter, "Educational Choice for Blacks in Urban Private Elementary Schools," in *Comparing Public and Private Schools*, eds. Thomas James and Henry Levin (London: Falmer Press, 1988).

[7] Though there are many types of black nationalism, such as the religious nationalism of the Nation of Islam, I use the following definition of John H. Bracey Jr., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick: ". . .a body of social thought, attitudes, and actions ranging from the simplest expressions of ethnocentrism and racial solidarity to the comprehensive and sophisticated ideologies of. . .Pan-Africanism." in *Black Nationalism in America* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970). For more studies on black nationalism see Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism: 1850-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Roderick D. Bush, *We Are Not What We Seem: Black Nationalism and Class Struggle in the American Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Scot Brown, *Fighting for Us: Maulana Karenga, the US Organization, and Black Cultural Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2003); .Jeffrey O. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African-American Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). For a history of the Nation of Islam see Essien Udosen Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism: A Search for Identity in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961); Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Jeffrey O. Ogbar, *Black Power.*

It should also be noted that some black private schools combined aspects of these broader categories. As we will see shortly in this introduction, the Nation of Islam's Sister Clara Muhammad Schools included both religious and black nationalists characteristics.

not affiliated with any religious or political organization. Three African-American women founded Howalton in 1946 and it remained open until 1986. Many of the school's students belonged to Chicago's black middle class. Interestingly, most of the parents who sent their children to Howalton were teachers in Chicago's public school system.[8] Howalton also benefitted from the support of several prominent black Chicagoans.

Holy Name of Mary School represents the religious category. It was established in Chicago's Morgan Park area in 1941 and closed in 2002. Holy Name of Mary was Chicago's first Catholic school that was created specifically for black students and operated by black religious educators.[9] The Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first permanent black Catholic women's religious society in the United States, administered and taught at the school. Most Catholic schools in Chicago that accepted black students were initially established for white students. These schools often served African-Americans only when the neighborhood of the school experienced racial turnover. Also, most other Catholic schools in the city were run by white religious societies.[10]

New Concept Development Center (NCDC) is representative of a school in the black nationalist category. It was created in 1972 by the black cultural nationalist organization, the Institute of Positive Education (IPE). NCDC ceased to exist as a private school and transitioned into a charter school in 1998. NCDC advocated racial pride, self-reliance, Pan-Africanism, and a commitment to the liberation of all people of African descent. It was also part of a larger movement of black nationalist schools in the country. Prior to becoming a charter school, it

---

[8]Donald A. Erickson, *Crisis in Illinois Nonpublic Schools: Final Research Report to the Elementary and Secondary Nonpublic Schools Study Commission, State of Illinois* (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1971).

[9] I use the term "educator" to refer to teachers and administrators.

[10] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority: Catholics in Chicago, 1833-1965* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 205-224.

belonged to the Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI), which is a national organization of black nationalist schools that grew out of the Black Power Movement in the United States. CIBI coordinates curriculum, teacher training, and support efforts between its member schools.[11]

Along with identifying black private schools' educational philosophies, this study interrogates their curriculum and pedagogical practices. It shows that all schools employed a hybrid of progressive (also known as student-centered) and traditional (also known as teacher-centered) methods. However, Howalton and NCDC emphasized progressive education while Holy Name of Mary's educational program focused on traditional modes of instruction. This dissertation does not place a hierarchy on either method yet seeks to identify the curricular choices made by black educators and the institutional frameworks that led to these decisions. By doing so, the work attempts to place African-Americans in conversation with broader studies of curriculum and pedagogical history in the United States.[12]

"In Our Own Hands" also demonstrates that black private education was a form of activism. As will be shown, African-Americans faced widespread segregation and racial discrimination in Chicago's public schools throughout the 20th century. Members of Chicago's black community protested this discrimination by establishing their own schools. These schools provided African-Americans with educational opportunities that Chicago's public school system denied them. Although in varying degrees, black private schools also promoted racial pride and

---

[11] *Fundisha!Teach!,* Spring/Summer 1991, in CIBI Folder, from the private collection of Soyini Rochelle Walton. *Fundisha!Teach!* is a newsletter published by the Council of Independent Black Instituions.

[12] For work on curriculum and pedagogical history in the United States see Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and change in American Classrooms, 1880-1990* , 2nd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993); Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Arthur Zilversmit*, Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

intended for students to use the skills and values they learned for racial progress. In addition, despite their private status, educators and patrons at the schools interacted with the public educational sector in various ways in support of all African-American children.

The study also accounts for black private schools' many successes and challenges. This is measured by the schools' level of community support, academic achievement, and financial viability, in addition to other factors. All of the schools enjoyed wide ranging community support. Evidence shows that Howalton and NCDC students achieved high levels of academic success. The scholastic record of Holy Name of Mary students is more ambiguous. All black private schools, however, were plagued by financial challenges.

Scope and Setting

This project focuses on the city of Chicago for a number of reasons. Chicago was one of the major African-American population centers in the 20th century. The lure of jobs, the effective advertising of the *Chicago Defender*, the placement of accessible railroad lines, and the promise of improved racial relations encouraged hundreds of thousands of southern African-American migrants to enter the city. Second, the city is also known for its history of racism and violence. Scholars and government commissions echoed King's sarcastic description of racism in Chicago by labeling the "windy city" as one of the most segregated cities in the nation.[13] Since large numbers of African-Americans began moving to Chicago in the era of the First World War (often called the First Great Migration) the city has been plagued by numerous race riots,

[13] The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights considered Chicago the most segregated large city in the United States in *Webb v. Board of Education of Chicago,* U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, 61 C 1569, "Affidavit in answer to Affidavit of Paul B. Zuber," 15 December 1961, 15. Also, in 1979 political scientist Gary Orfield's review of racial mixture in the city's public schools led him to conclude that "Chicago's schools are the most segregated of any major city." See Nathaniel Sheppard Jr., "Effort to Integrate Chicago Schools Has Had Little Effect, Study Finds," *New York Times*, March 6, 1979, A14.

bombings, and less spectacular violent incidents in order to deny full equality to black Chicagoans. The staunch segregation in Chicago makes it an appropriate city to analyze autonomous black institutions.[14]

The institutional deficiencies of Chicago's public schools encouraged parents of all races to consider educational alternatives. During the 20th century, Illinois has consistently ranked among states that appropriated the fewest dollars for public education. Machine politics and corruption in Chicago also deprived the city's children of much needed resources and leadership. Chicago Public School superintendents and school board administrators have often been appointed as a result of their affiliation with the city's political machine rather than their educational expertise. Local politicians have also allowed many of the city's largest businesses to pay absurdly low taxes which inevitably reduced school revenue.[15]

Black Chicagoans established a rich tradition of private education in response to the problems in the city's public schools. Though not featured in this study, Chicago is home to one of the oldest branches of the Nation of Islam's Sister Clara Muhammad school system. The Nation of Islam (N.O.I.) is a black religious nationalist organization. It practices a form of Islam that promotes black autonomy and enterprise, racial pride, and separation from white culture. The N.O.I. established several schools in U.S. urban areas in order to teach its religious, political, and social ideology to the children of its members. The racially discriminatory school system of Chicago and other American urban areas also fueled the organization's belief that it would have to create its own schools. The Nation of Islam developed one of the largest associations of black

---

[14]Allan Spear, *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); James Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). Also see William Tuttle who chronicles the factors that led to the Chicago race riot in 1919 in *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

[15] Mary Herrick, *The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1971).

private education in the United States. By 1975, the organization operated 41 schools. The Chicago branch of Muhammad University is one of the N.O.I.'s leading schools in large part because the city has been the organization's headquarters since the early 1930s.[16]

Another prominent black private school, the Marva Collins Prepatory School, was established in Chicago in 1975. Named after its founder, the nonsectarian school did not have an explicit political or religious ideology like the Sister Clara Muhammad institutions. However, like the N.O.I., Marva Collins created her school in response to the problems faced by African-Americans in Chicago's public schools. She gained national attention as a result of her successful work with at-risk children and her inclusion of "classical" literature in the school's curriculum. This success led to Ronald Reagan's consideration of Collins for the post of Secretary of Education, which she declined. She later received the prestigious National Humanities Medal from George W. Bush in 2004. Collins' achievements have also been showcased on Good Morning America, Fox News, 60 Minutes, and a made-for-television movie based on her life and work.[17]

Although the dissertation discusses black education in Chicago prior to 1940, its central chapters focus on the time period of 1940 to 1986. This time span is important for several reasons. The year 1940 marks the beginning of the second Great Migration in which African-American migrants put greater strains on the overcrowded school systems in northern cities

[16] The best treatment of the Sister Clara Muhammad school system is Hakim M. Rashid and Zakyyah Muhammad, "The Sister Clara Muhammad Schools: Pioneers in the Development of Islamic Education in America" *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no.2 (1992): 178-185.

[17] Marva Collins has written several books that illuminate her educational philosophy and the history of her school. See Marva Collins and Civia Tamarkin, *Marva Collins' Way* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982); Marva Collins, "*Ordinary" Children, Extraordinary Teachers* (Norfolk, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Co., 1992); Marva Collins, *Values: Lighting the Candle of Excellence: A Practical Guide for the Family* (Los Angeles, CA: Dove Books, 1996).

such as Chicago.[18] Perhaps not coincidentally the 1940s also marked the decade when two of the major black private schools in the city were established. By 1986, a number of private schools experienced hardships as a result of dramatic changes within the city such as suburbanization and economic restructuring.[19] In addition to these factors, the history of black private schools was shaped by economic developments such as World War II and postwar affluence which increased the number of families who could afford a private school education. Black private education in Chicago was also impacted by the onset of the civil rights and Black Power eras of the United States Black Freedom Movement. These movements influenced black private school educators to place a greater emphasis on the black experience in their educational programs. The success of these movements also increased the competition black private schools faced as more public and private educational institutions opened their doors to African-Americans. Finally, demographic changes, such as economic dislocations in the center-city and increased mobility of Chicago's African-American middle class, occurred in this period and affected black private schools. Therefore, this forty-six year period allows the study to consider the impact of major post World War II developments on the history of black private education.

Historiographical Significance

Several scholars from a variety of disciplines have attempted to capture the experience of black Chicagoans in the 20th century. Some of the most notable histories of African-Americans in the city have been written by Allan Spear, James Grossman, and Arnold Hirsch.

---

[18] John Rury, "Race, Space, and the Politics of Chicago's Public Schools", 129-131 and Mary Herrick, *The Chicago Schools,* 304.

[19] George Fornero, "The Expansion and Decline of Enrollment and Facilities of Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1955-1980: A Historical Study" (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1990).

Spear's *Black Chicago* details the early 20th century social, political, and economic factors that created Chicago's African-American enclaves.[20] James Grossman's *Land of* Hope illuminates the experiences of black migrants during the first Great Migration. His book describes the factors that led to the migration and the experiences of the newcomers in Chicago.[21] Arnold Hirsch's *Making the Second Ghetto* is possibly the most notable historical work that explores race in post-World War II Chicago. Hirsch describes how governmental policy, Chicago businesses, and neighborhood associations created a segregated housing market in the city.[22]

Several histories have also focused on black and interracial activism in Chicago. Christopher Reed and Arvrah Strickland have written organizational histories of local activist organizations. Reed's work chronicles how the development of Chicago's African-American middle class led to the growth of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Strickland traces the history of the Chicago chapter of the National Urban League.[23] Alan B. Anderson and George Pickering have written the definitive history of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago. They show that the city's political machine, school board, and several white neighborhood associations maintained segregated housing and schools despite the efforts of local activists and national figures such as the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.[24]

---

[20] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago*.

[21] James Grossman, *Land of Hope*. Also see William Tuttle who chronicles the factors that led to the Chicago race riot in 1919 in *Race Riot*.

[22] Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[23] Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership, 1910-1966* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Arvarh E. Strickland, *History of the Chicago Urban League* (Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press, 1967).

[24] Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*.

Some of the best scholarship on the experiences of black Chicagoans comes out of sociological studies. St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton's *Black Metropolis* is the most comprehensive study of black Chicago in the first half of the 20th century. The authors detail this community's class structure, institutions, and social life among other topics.[25] Sociologist William Julius Wilson, whose work focuses on Chicago, illuminates how post World War II government policy, economic restructuring, and demographic change created a large black underclass in the city.[26]

Political scientists have also made major contributions to the scholarship on African-Americans in 20th century Chicago. Harold Gosnell's classic study, *Negro Politicians,* documents how black Chicagoans struggled to attain political power in the city during the Depression era.[27] James Q. Wilson's *Negro Politics* probes the subordination of black elected officials in Chicago's post World War II Democratic machine and how these leaders responded to the demands of Chicago's increasingly diverse black community. [28] William Grimshaw extends the work of these political scientists to the late 20th century to include the collapse of Chicago's political machine and the 1983 election of Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor.[29]

Though these scholarly studies provide breadth and an interdisciplinary depth to the study of black Chicago, scant attention is paid to the community's educational objectives. Only

---

[25] St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, Revised and Enlarged Edition (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

[26] William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (New York: Knopf, 1996); William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, The Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

[27] Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians: The Rise of Negro Politics in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935).

[28] James Q. Wilson, *Negro Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1960). Local Chicago politics was dominated by the Republican Party at the beginning of the 20th century. By the mid-1930s, the Democratic Party controlled local politics.

[29] William Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Anderson, Pickering, Reed, and Strickland who focus on black protest groups meaningfully discuss black Chicagoans' struggles to improve the city's public school system.[30] Nonetheless, as these authors indicate, the consistent presence of school issues among black protest demands suggests that ending educational discrimination was a major concern among African-Americans.

Important historical works have filled this lacunae by reconstructing the development of black public education in 20th century Chicago. Michael Homel's *Down From Equality* chronicles the development of black education in early 20th century Chicago. Homel shows that the massive migration of African-Americans in the 1910s and 1920s led to the city's staunchly segregated public school system. He argues that black educational activists responded by fighting for the integration of the city's public school system in the 1910s and 1920s. However, by 1930, most African-Americans recognized the difficulty of attaining integration and consequently deemphasized this objective. Educational activists began to focus on improvements in Chicago's predominantly black public schools.[31] It is key that Homel identifies a diverse group of organizations representing an equally diverse constituency of black Chicagoans that participated in educational activism. The local chapter of the NAACP, the Chicago Urban League, the Chicago Council of the National Negro Congress, the Chicago Council

[30] See notes 23 and 24 for information on these sources.

[31] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality*. Other works that do not exclusively focus on African-Americans, but provide important insights to black public education include Kathryn Neckerman, *Schools Betrayed: Roots of Failure in Inner-City Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Paul E. Peterson, *School Politics Chicago Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); Paul Kleppner, *Chicago Divided: The Making of a Black Mayor* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1985); John F. Lyons, *Teachers and Reform: Chicago Public Education, 1929-1970* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009); Mary Herrick, *The Chicago Schools.* Also see John Rury, "Race, Space, and the Politics of Chicago's Public Schools."

of Negro Organizations, and the Chicago and Northern District Association of Colored Women all participated in educational activism in the early 20th century.[32]

Dionne Danns' history of black Chicagoans' educational activism further demonstrates the importance of education. Danns argues that during the 1950s and early 1960s, black educational activists again sought to integrate Chicago public schools. However, by the mid-1960s to early 1970s, several organizations switched their priorities to deemphasize integration and began to demand major changes in predominantly black public schools. These new demands included black control of the school system, more African-American teachers, and a curriculum that focused on the experiences of people of African descent. This change was sparked by the failed efforts of previous activists to integrate the school system and the emergence of Black Power in the city which eschewed integration and advocated black self-determination.[33] Danns also identifies a large and diverse group of educational activists such as the Congress of Racial Equality, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Southern

[32] For a description of these organizations' educational activism see Michael Homel, 134-185. The NAACP and Urban League are well known organizations. See Christopher Reed and Avrah Strickland's work for histories of these organization's local chapters. The other organizations are less well known. The Chicago Council of the National Negro Congress was the local chapter of the National Negro Congress. The National Negro Congress, formed in 1936 was a black activist group with ties to the Communist party and labor activists. The Chicago Council of Negro Organizations was formed in 1935 as a coalition group of conservative black protests groups. It was formed in part to offset the growth of the Chicago Council of the National Negro Congress. The Chicago and Northern District Association of Colored Women was part of a larger Black women's club movement in the United States. These club organizations usually consisted of middle class African-American women whose work focused on racial uplift by providing charitable services to black women and children. See Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

[33] Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children* For works on the Black Power Movement see Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006) ; Peniel E. Joseph ed. *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Charles E. Jones ed. *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998); Yohuru Williams, *Black Politics/White Power: Civil Rights, Black Power, and the Black Panthers in New Haven* (New York: Brandywine Press, 2000); Jeffrey Ogbar, *Black Power*.

Christian Leadership Conference, and the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations along with several protest organizations consisting of teachers, parents, and students.[34]

While the works of Homel and Danns clearly show black Chicagoans' commitment to securing a quality education, their exclusive focus on public education does not represent this community's total efforts. These scholars do not account for the many Chicagoans who did not limit their educational options to the public school system. Extant educational histories of Chicago also fail to consider the broad range of African-American educational activism in the city. They obscure the experiences of those black Chicagoans who believed that the creation of their own schools was the most effective response to educational discrimination.

A dissertation on black private education fills these voids in many ways. It gives a more comprehensive picture of African-American education in Chicago by expanding what is known about this community's educational options. This dissertation also sheds new light on African-Americans' educational activism by interrogating Homel and Danns' emphasis on integration strategies. It shows that many African-Americans in Chicago opposed the segregation that was imposed on them by local officials and recalcitrant white communities while championing black private schools.[35]

---

[34] Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children.* The Congress of Racial Equality, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference were major national Civil Rights organizations. See August Meier and Elliot M. Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942*-1978 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1987). The Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO) was the preeminent Civil Rights organization of Chicago. It was an interracial coalition of progressive organizations. For a history of the CCCO see Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*.

[35] Many educational historians have argued that African-Americans did not always equate integration with quality schooling. Many black parents feared that their children would be targets of harassment in white schools. Black teachers and administrators had legitimate fears that they would lose their jobs if schools were integrated. Also, many segregated black schools provided a quality education

Historians of African-American education in Chicago are not unique in their neglect of black private schools (k-12). Currently, there are few historical studies on this topic. Two of the best studies of African-Americans' involvement in private schools are two multi-disciplinary edited volumes: Jacqueline Jordan Irvine and Michèle Foster's *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools* and Diana T. Slaughter and Deborah J. Johnson's *Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools*.[36] *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools* is a collection of essays and personal reflections. It illuminates Catholic schools' success in educating blacks, provides a historical overview of these schools, and offers personal memoirs of scholars who attended Catholic schools as children. The nineteen essays in *Visible Now* address a wide variety of topics pertaining to blacks in private schools such as parental involvement, scholastic achievement, and African-American struggles for access to these institutions.

These studies leave space for more work on blacks in private schools despite their important contributions to the subject. First, few of the chapters in the edited volumes look at schools that were operated by blacks. Therefore, the studies tell us very little about the specific curriculum, pedagogy, policies, etc. that blacks implemented in their own schools. *Visible Now* features a chapter on the CIBI, which offers a brief outline of black nationalist private schools' history, policies, and educational purposes.[37] However, given its focus, the chapter does not

---

despite their lack of resources. See Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*; David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Pres, 1994); Mwalimu J. Shujaa, ed. *Beyond Desegregation*; Davison M. Douglas, *Jim Crow Moves North.*

[36] Jacqueline Jordan Irvine and Michèle Foster, eds. *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools*; Diana T. Slaughter and Deborah J. Johnson, eds. *Visible Now*. Also see James G. Cibulka, Thomas J. O'Brien, and Donald Zewe, *Inner-City Private Elementary Schools* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1982) and James .S. Coleman, and Thomas Hoffer, *Public and Private Schools* (New York: Basic Books, 1987) which provide useful data on student achievement, family background, and school policies in Catholic schools.

[37] Kofi Lomotey and Craig C. Brookins, "Independent Black Institutions: A Cultural Perspective," in *Visible Now.*

situate black nationalist educational institutions within a larger historical analysis that accounts for the development of other types of black private schools. Second, many of the studies provide educational data on African-Americans who attended private schools in the 1970s and 1980s. This approach obscures African-American's enrollment in private schools prior to this period. It also fails to include the long-range historical developments that affected black participation in private schools. V.P. Franklin and Edward B. McDonald provide the most historically rigorous accounts of black private education in these volumes.[38] However, they only focus on Catholic education and do not analyze other types of private schools. In addition, given the space limitations of an edited volume, they cannot provide an exhaustive history of black private education.

The extant studies that document the history of private schools in Chicago also give an incomplete picture of African-American education because they are written from the vantage point of the city's archdiocese. Historian James Sanders has written the definitive history of Catholic education in Chicago. His work details the development of the city's Catholic school system from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1960s. When Sanders discusses African-American's participation in this school system, he shows that the Archdiocese of Chicago established school segregation in the 1910s and began to promote integration by the 1950s. The city's Catholic leadership is more central to his history than the demands placed on this

[38] V.P. Franklin, "First Came the School: Catholic Evangelization Among African-Americans in the United States, 1827 to the Present," in *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools* and V.P. Franklin and Edward B. McDonald, "Blacks in Urban Catholic Schools in the United States: A Historical Perspective," in *Visible Now*. It should be noted that Anne Meis Knupfer has briefly but insightfully written about Howalton in "'Isolated Learning is Doubtful Learning' Howalton School, the First Private, Nonsectarian African-American School, 1947-1960," *Education and Culture* (2005), 1-20 and *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006). Carol Lee has also written on NCDC in the chapter "Profile of an Independent Black Institution: African-Centered Education at Work," in *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African-American Tradition,* eds. Charles M. Payne and Carol Sills Strickland (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008).

leadership by black Chicagoans.[39] African-American education is even more marginal in Steven Avella's 20th century history of the Archdiocese of Chicago. When discussing race, Avella documents the struggle of members of the Archdiocese of Chicago, clergy and laity, to develop a unified policy on racial justice. Avella notes that neighborhood and school integration were the major concerns in this struggle. Like Sanders, Avella also centers the experience of the white members of the Archdiocese of Chicago and marginalizes African-Americans. [40] Fortunately, John T. McGreevy's study of Catholics in northern and midwestern urban areas considers how blacks of this faith negotiated their racial and religious identities during this critical period. However, McGreevy is primarily concerned with conflicts that arose between white liberals and white working-class conservatives over the Catholic Church's position and participation in movements for social justice. Again, the concerns of African-Americans are marginalized to the more central focus of white Catholics.[41]

My approach expands our understanding of black private education in Chicago by centering the perspective of black Chicagoans themselves. The dissertation interrogates the social, political, and economic factors that encouraged African-Americans to attend private schools. It focuses on the many types of private schools that blacks attended and does not limit itself to Catholic schools. This study also attempts to provide a transparent picture by specifically looking at the educational philosophies, curriculum, and pedagogy that blacks implemented in their own schools within the context of the historical African-American experience.

---

[39] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority*.

[40] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992)

[41] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter With Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

Though this dissertation is an educational history, it is informed by and contributes to new developments in urban history, African-American women's history, and scholarship on the post World War II Black freedom struggle. In addition to the work of Arnold Hirsch and William Julius Wilson a number of excellent urban histories have chronicled the complex ways in which race, class, economic restructuring, and governmental polices contributed to the post World War II "urban crisis" in America's inner cities. Thomas Sugrue's urban history argues that the postwar Detroit inner city has grown increasingly black and poor as a result of the loss of manufacturing jobs, the mass suburbanization of the metropolis' white population, and the development of a conservative movement that reduced the taxes spent on municipal services.[42] Similarly, Robert Self traces the impoverishment of Oakland's African-American community to post World War II white suburbanization, deindustrialization, and the city's diminished tax base.[43] This history of black private education in Chicago sheds even further light on the post World War II urban crisis. Specifically, the study illustrates the urban crisis' affect on black institutions such as private schools. The decline of Chicago's inner city led to the closings of Howalton in 1986 and Holy Name of Mary in 2002 and the decision to turn New Concept Development Center into a charter school in 1998.[44]

Also, this study of black private education reveals how postwar black residential mobility contributed to this urban decline. Many 20th century urban histories focus on how white

---

[42] Thomas Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)

[43] Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Also see Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)

[44] Although this dissertation supports the "urban decline" literature, I complicate it. Many of the urban histories end with gloomy depictions of black life in America's inner cities in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The existence of black private schools up to 1985 shows that African-Americans continued to build and maintain institutions in the midst of the urban crisis.

suburbanization contributed to the impoverishment of America's inner cities. Though an important factor, scholars such as William Julius Wilson, Mary Patillo-McCoy, and William Grimshaw have shown that the mobility of black middle class Chicagoans also contributed to the city's urban crisis.[45] Wilson and Grimshaw particularly argue that this demographic change not only made older African-American residential areas poorer but it also deprived lower class residents of much needed leadership. This study of black private education also considers how black middle class mobility affected older African-American residential areas in Chicago. It particularly illuminates how the removal of middle class families from Chicago's center city impacted black institutions.

As part of a gender and class analysis, my dissertation focuses on the role of African-American women in the development of black private schools in Chicago. Indeed, the history of black private education is a narrative that hinges upon race. However, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham points out that race can often be a metalanguage that obscures other salient themes and identities such as gender.[46] This dissertation argues that the establishment of black private education in Chicago was a racial response to postwar Chicago and a gendered one. The story of the city's black private schools cannot be told without the unique concerns and challenges of African-American women. Black women founded, headed, and played major roles in the operation of Holy Name of Mary, Howalton, and New Concept Development Center. Darlene Clark Hine has shown that Black women have historically played major roles in the establishment of self-help and philanthropic institutions. Also, Michèle Foster and Bettye

---

[45] William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears* and *The Truly Disadvantaged;* Mary Pattillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); William Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit*.

[46] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17, no. 2 (Winter, 1992): 251-274.

Collier-Thomas have uncovered the specific contributions of black women in the creation and operation of African-American schools. Thus, the centrality of women in Chicago's black private schools is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather a part of a larger national tradition of African-American female institution building.[47]

This study also contributes to the growing body of scholarship that illuminates the gendered politics of the Black Power Movement. Scholars such as E. Frances White, Tracye Matthews, Angela D. Leblanc, and Margo V. Perkins have shown that although many Black Power organizations practiced a progressive racial politics, their gendered politics was far too often reactionary.[48] White and Matthews, in particular focus on the writings and speeches of male black cultural nationalist leaders to make this point.[49] This dissertation contributes to the history of gender in black cultural nationalist organizations by focusing on the women who administered and taught at NCDC during the height of the Black Power Movement and issues a gendered analysis to gauge their interactions. The work specifically examines if these women experienced similar forms of gender discrimination as other female members of cultural

---

[47] Darlene Clark Hine, ed. "We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible," in *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History* (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1994); Michèle Foster, "Constancy, Connectedness, and Constraints in the Lives of African-American Teachers," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 5 (1991); 233-261; Bettye Collier-Thomas, "The Impact of Black Women in Education: A Historical Overview," *Journal of Education* 51 (Summer 1982): 175. For the role of gender in African-American education also see Adam Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own*; Wayne J. Urban, *Gender, Race, and the National Education Association: Professionalism and Its Limitations* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

[48] E. Frances White, "Africa on My Mind: Gender, Counter Discourse and African-American Nationalism," *Journal of Women's History,* 2 (Spring 1990); Tracye Matthews, "'No One Ever Asks What a Man's Place in the Revolution Is' Gender and the Politics of the Black Panther Party, 1966-1971," in *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered,*; Angela LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job: Black Panther Party Women, 1966-1982," in *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*; Margo V. Perkins, *Autobiography as Activism: Three Black Women of the Sixties* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000); Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1969-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

[49] White and Matthews focus on leaders such as Maulana Karenga and Molefi Asante. There were numerous black cultural nationalist leaders at the time that held a wide range of views on gender. Some were different than those featured in these scholars' works.

nationalist organizations. It also determines if female NCDC educators were constrained to work at the school because males in the school's parent organization, IPE (like many members of the larger society), believed that education was a gender appropriate field for them to work.

The dissertation also engages the new scholarship on the post World War II black freedom struggle. First, it responds to the work of historians such as Jeanne Theoharis, Komozi Woodard, and Martha Biondi who have challenged scholars to investigate postwar black activism outside of the South.[50] Second, the section on NCDC adds to the extant literature on the Black Power Movement by broadening our knowledge of black cultural nationalism. Historians Komozi Woodard, Scot Brown, and Kwasi Konadu's histories of Black Power cultural nationalist organizations in Newark, southern California, and Brooklyn only scratch the surface of what can be known about this genre of activism.[51] By examining NCDC, this study sheds light on Black Power politics in Chicago and expands scholarly understanding of the diversity of activist experiences during this period.

Finally, this study also intervenes in the burgeoning scholarship that reconsiders the periodization of the Civil Rights and Black Power eras of the Black Freedom Movement. Jacqueline Dowd Hall and Nikhil Pal Singh have challenged the classic chronology of the Civil

---

[50] Jeanne F. Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, eds., *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003)

[51] Komozi Woodard's work examines the life of Amiri Baraka and his role in the development of cultural nationalism in Newark and nationally through the establishment of the Committee for a Unified Newark and the Congress of African People in *A Nation Within a Nation*. Scot Brown explores the life of Maulana Karenga and the history of the California based black cultural nationalist group, The US Organization in *Fighting for Us*. Kwasi Konadu provides a history of the Brooklyn based black cultural nationalist organization, The East, the leadership of Jitu Weusi, and its black private school, Uhuru Sasa Shule (Freedom Now School in Kiswahili) in *A View from the East: Black Cultural Nationalism and Education in New York City*, 2nd ed. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009). Maisha T. Fisher also illuminates the history of the East's school, Uhuru Sasa Shule in *Black Literate Lives: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009). For the aesthetic work of cultural nationalists see James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement, The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

Rights Movement, generally 1954-1965, and extended it from the 1930s to the end of the Black Power era.[52] Among its many functions, this idea of the "long Civil Rights Movement" attempts to highlight African-Americans' protracted struggle for civil rights. However, Black Power Studies scholars such as Peniel Joseph, Sundiata Cha-Jua, and Clarence Lang challenge this idea of the long Civil Rights Movement.[53] This body of literature argues that though similarities exist between the civil rights and Black Power eras, the latter represents a major transformation of the black freedom struggle. Black Power activists ushered in an enhanced emphasis on black identity, class struggle, internationalism and armed self defense. This study attempts to contribute to this debate.[54] The institution building and the emphasis on self-reliance found in New Concept Development Center drew upon a longer legacy established by Holy Name of Mary and Howalton that extended back into the 1940s. However, major ideological differences

[52] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no.4 (March 2005), 1233-1263; Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for* Democracy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004). Robert Self also employs the idea of the long Civil Rights Movement in his discussion of the Black Panthers in *American Babylon,* 217-233.

[53] Peniel Joseph, ed. "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Sundiata Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The 'Long Movement' as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies," *Journal of African American History* 92, (Spring 2007).

[54] I recognize that armed black activists advocated black identity, internationalism, class struggle, and internationalism, and armed struggle prior to the Black Power Movement. I contend that the Black Power Movement placed an "enhanced" emphasis on these themes. For earlier examples of these themes see Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999) Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *A Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country*.

in the schools, particularly their stances on black and American nationalism, distinguish the specific characteristics of a Black Power institution such as NCDC.[55]

The dissertation begins with a chapter that historicizes African-American education in Chicago to 1940. The following three chapters will consist of case studies of Howalton, Holy Name of Mary, and NCDC. Along with a general history of all of the schools and their periods, the chapters identify the schools' educational philosophies, curriculum, and pedagogy; their relationship to their broader communities; their major achievements and challenges; and the significant social, educational, economic, and political developments in post- World War II Chicago and the nation that influenced their respective histories.

An epilogue will conclude the study. It will cover the turn of the 21st century and will focus on the closing of Holy Name of Mary in 2002 and NCDC's fateful decision to receive public funds by becoming a charter school in 1998. It is ironic that NCDC, which had the most militant philosophy regarding its independence, decided to become a charter school while Holy Name chose to close. These two events will be used to review the preceding chapters and evaluate the legacy of black private schools in Chicago.

[55] This dissertation refers to civil rights and Black Power eras in the longer Black Freedom Movement. However, similar to Joseph, Cha-Jua, and Lang, I contend that the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movements were specific struggles with distinct chronologies and modes of activism.

". . .the Negro needs neither segregated schools nor mixed schools. What he needs is education."[1]

W.E.B. Dubois

"What He Needs is Education": The Development of Black Education in Chicago to 1940

Chicago's African-American community experienced tremendous growth from the late 19th century to the end of the Great Depression. Migration accounted for much of this population expansion. Black migrants arrived in Chicago with expectations of high wages and better race relations than what they experienced in the South. To their chagrin, racial discrimination confined blacks in the city to racially segregated enclaves and denied them equal access to jobs.

The history of African-American education to 1940 in Chicago mirrored these larger social and political developments. Although black Chicagoans faced educational discrimination in the 19th century, segregation and inequality in predominantly black public schools became even more widespread after America's entry into World War I in 1917. African-Americans responded to these problems in Chicago's public schools by developing a dual protest agenda. It included a simultaneous struggle for integration and support of black private schools.

This seemingly contradictory phenomenon also played out in the private educational sector. The Archdiocese of Chicago, the city's largest provider of private schools barred African-Americans from the majority of its schools. Although African-Americans objected to the archdiocese's exclusionary policies, they did not abandon the private educational sector. They vigorously sought access to the Catholic schools that were open to them as well as supported

[1] W.E.B. DuBois, "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools," *The Journal of Negro Education* 4, no.3 (1935), 335.

black private schools. Viewing black Chicagoans' participation in both public and private educational sectors sheds greater light on their complex educational agenda.

Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, a French-speaking black man was the first non-Indian to permanently settle in Chicago in the late 18th century. Upon his arrival, du Sable found the land occupied by Potawatomis and other Indian groups. He sold the territory in 1796 and eventually moved to St. Charles, Missouri where he died.[2]

Despite laying claim to one of the city's first ancestors, Chicago's African American population remained relatively small by the turn of the 20th century. In 1840, African-Americans made up only 1.2% of Chicago's total population and by 1880, 6,480 blacks comprised 1.3% of the city's population. The number of African-Americans in Chicago grew larger prior to World War I. By 1910, 44,103 blacks lived in the city. Migration accounted for a large portion of this population expansion. The majority of migrants came from the upper South and border states such as Missouri and Kentucky. Fewer migrants came from lower South states such as Mississippi and Alabama.[3]

Chicago's black population dramatically expanded in the following decades as a result of further migration. Spurred by expectations of greater wages and better race relations, waves of southern blacks migrated to Chicago and several other urban centers as the United States prepared for entry into World War I. Chicago's African American population increased by

---

[2] St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, Torchbook ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 31-32; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton and Company, 1991), 26.

[3] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago*, 11-14, Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto,* 115-116.

almost 200,000 residents from 1910 to 1920. Although the Great Depression reduced the rate of black migration, Chicago's black community still grew to 277,731 people in 1940.[4]

Migrants arrived in the city during a flowering of African-American culture often referred to as the Chicago Black Renaissance. The renaissance, generally lasting from the 1930s to the 1940s, included seminal literary figures such as Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, and Margaret Walker. This cultural phenomenon was inspired by broader national events such as the Great Migration, the Great Depression, America's mobilization for World War II, and the growth of working class activism. International developments such as the Italian invasion of Ethiopia and the war's impact on people of color were also rallying points for the renaissance.[5] However, the opportunities and challenges blacks encountered in Chicago provided the most direct impetus for the cultural movement.

Acquiring decent housing was a major challenge that confronted black Chicagoans. Although many blacks, like several other ethnic groups in Chicago, preferred to live among one another, a variety of discriminatory practices were employed to maintain residential segregation. Restrictive housing covenants, blockbusting techniques and violence forced the majority of African-Americans to live on the city's South Side. There were also smaller concentrations of blacks on Chicago's West Side and near North Side. Residential segregation

---

[4] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 29. Micahel Homel's *Down From Equality* remains the standard text on African-American public education in Chicago during the first half of the 20th century. Therefore, Homel's work will be cited frequently in this chapter which provides a background on blacks' experiences in Chicago's schools up to 1940.

[5] For work on the Chicago Renaissance see Robert Bone, "Richard Wright and the Chicago Renaissance," *Callaloo* 9, no. 3 (Summer 1986), 446-468; Carla Cappetti, *Writing Chicago: Modernism, Ethnography, and the Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Bill V. Mullen, *Popular Fronts: Chicago and African-American Cultural Politics, 1935-1946* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

also created an artificial housing shortage which forced many blacks to pay more for housing that was often substandard.[6]

African-Americans also experienced immense job discrimination in Chicago. Blacks were disproportionately relegated to the city's service sector and the majority of blacks who worked in Chicago's industries were unskilled laborers.[7] Even the growth of Chicago's job market during World War I did not allow African-Americans to make major inroads into the city's industries. Despite the immense need for their labor, industries generally offered blacks the most undesirable jobs. For example, Chicago's meatpacking industry (which heavily relied on African-American labor) disproportionately employed blacks to work in its killing areas, cold storage rooms, and loading docks. They were usually barred from skilled carpentry or welding positions or even semi-skilled cutting jobs.[8]

Black Chicagoans also experienced racism in the city's public school system. In the 19th century, local and state authorities vacillated from policies of exclusion to acceptance in regards to African-Americans. In 1835, two years after Chicago's incorporation, the state of Illinois ruled that no funds would be allocated for black education. The Chicago city charter of 1837 made a similar ruling for the city. However local ordinances repealed these discriminatory measures in 1851 and even allowed black children to attend racially mixed schools. These provisions made

---

[6] A housing covenant was an agreement made by homeowners that prevented a particular group of people, usually blacks, from living in a residential community. Blockbusting was a practice conducted by realtors that led to the immediate turnover of white neighborhoods to African-Americans. Generally, a real estate agent would sell or rent property to a black family in an all-white neighborhood. The agent would then attempt to foment speculation that more African-American families would move into the area to the point that the neighborhood would become predominantly black. White residents would then move because they refused to live by blacks and/or they feared that their home values would decline. African-Americans who were anxious and financially capable to move were often required to pay exorbitant prices to move in to the abandoned area. See Thomas Lee Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto;* Allan Spear, *Black Chicago.*

[7] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago*, 29-40.

[8] James Grossman, *Land of Hope,* 188-189; William Tuttle, *Race Riot,* 108-156; St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 214-219.

Chicago unique in relation to the rest of Illinois and most midwestern states. During the antebellum era, most school districts in Illinois and states throughout the region excluded blacks. By 1860, of the 2,700 school age black children in Illinois, 600 attended school. Of this 600, most attended private schools.[9]

However by 1863, Illinois lawmakers successfully reinstituted school segregation. Chicago, which had a strong Irish faction in the local Democratic Party lobbied for a school segregation ordinance. Chicago lawmakers subsequently opened "The Colored School" which was specifically designated for blacks in the city. However many black parents opposed the new law by organizing a protest at the Chicago Board of Education and continuing to send their children to racially mixed schools. This recurrence of segregation was only temporary. By 1865 Republicans regained control of local and state legislative branches and repealed the segregation ordinance.[10]

By the early 20th century, Chicago's schools could be classified as racially mixed. Michael Homel has shown that in 1905 blacks comprised more than 30% of the student enrollment in only one public school in Chicago. The public school system of Chicago also allowed African-American teachers to work at predominantly white schools. In 1917, roughly 60% of African-American teachers taught at such schools.[11]

Although de jure segregation had been abolished, a movement emerged in the early 20th century to reinstitute school segregation. Increases in Chicago's black population partially account for the reemergence of this movement. In 1890, there were 14, 271 blacks in Chicago.

---

[9] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality*, 1-2; Davison M. Douglas, *Jim Crow Moves North*, 33-37; Mary Herrick, *The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History*, 400.

[10] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 3-4; Mary Herrick, 52-53.

[11] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,*6.

By 1910, the city's black population more than tripled to 44,103 inhabitants.[12] The population growth increased the number of students in racially mixed schools. Some white parents demanded transfers or relocated to avoid school and residential integration. The schools also became part of other racial conflicts. For instance, blacks' role as strikebreakers in a 1905 teamsters strike increased racial animosity throughout the city. This animosity spilled into Chicago's classrooms and resulted in interracial school fights and demands by white parents to remove their children from racially mixed schools. Some white Chicagoans argued that school segregation would resolve these conflicts.[13]

Many African-Americans in Chicago opposed these threats of school segregation. The Equal Opportunity League formed in 1903 to protest among other transgressions, "a seeming desire on the part of a certain class of citizens to separate the Afro-American pupils in the public schools from the whites."[14] However, the Equal Opportunity League was short-lived and disbanded in 1905. The Illinois branch of the Niagara Movement replaced the Equal Opportunity League's protest activity. Established in 1905, the Chicago arm of the Niagara Movement also opposed school segregation. In 1906, the local branch helped to appoint an African-American to the Chicago Charter Commission to ensure that school segregation would not be legalized when the city's new charter was written. However like the Equal Opportunity

---

[12] Thomas Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto,* 116.

[13] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 7-14.

[14] The Equal Opportunity League, spanning from 1903 to 1905, was a protest organization composed of black Chicagoans who were ardent opponents of Booker T. Washington's emphasis on accommodation. The league included the African-American dentist and political activist Charles Bentley, attorney and politician Edward Wilson, as well as Ferdinand Barnett and Edward Morris. See Allan Spear, *Black Chicago,* 85. For work on Booker T. Washington see Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972) and *Booker T. Washington: The Wizard of Tuskegee, 1901-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). Robert J. Norrell provides a revisionist history of Washington's life in *Up From History: The Life of Booker T. Washington* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009).

League, the Illinois arm of the Niagara Movement was also ephemeral. The organization folded in 1908.[15]

African-Americans who opposed school segregation could also identify with the positions taken by the city's black newspapers such as the *Chicago Defender.* A 1912 *Defender* article represented the sentiments of many blacks when it noted that "It is hard to believe that in great, big, free, modern Chicago there are in the white race business men, Republican leaders, whose recent advocacy of 'Jim Crow Rule' in Chicago schools easily proves that they should have lived in [ancient] Rome…". The writer went on to argue that "…let negroes and white boys study and play together as children and they will grow to a better understanding and live more peaceably side by side…".[16] Similar to the *Defender,* Chicago based black journalist and activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett believed that segregated schools would result in an inferior education for black pupils.[17]

However not all members of Chicago's black community opposed segregation. In 1910 African-American proponents of racially separate schools initiated a petition drive to gain support for their cause. This movement among blacks continued sporadically throughout the decade. Black advocates for segregation often argued that it would provide more jobs for black educators. They might have also reasoned that segregated schools would insulate back children from the growing anti-black hostility in the city. Nonetheless, black opponents to these appeals

---

[15] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago,* 87. The Niagara Movement, headed by African-American leaders such as W.E.B. DuBois and William Monroe Trotter, was a turn of the century protest organization that opposed the accomodationism of Booker T. Washington.

[16] Mildred Miller, "No Jim Crow Schools in Chicago," *Chicago Defender,* 24 February 1912, p.1.

[17] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,*10 For positions on segregation taken by Chicago's black press, particularly the *Chicago Defender*, see Charlesetta M. Ellis, "Robert S. Abbot's Response to Education for African-Americans via the *Chicago Defender,* 1909-1940" (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University, 1994). For a reconsideration of the quality of segregated southern schools see Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential* and David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road*.

responded with disgust and accusations of disloyalty. The *Defender* characterized the segregation petition as a conspiracy among southern blacks to replicate the system of de jure segregation in the North. The newspaper issued the following warning to this group of blacks by stating "If such negroes of Georgia are satisfied with Jim Crow schools and theaters. . .let them keep it south."[18] Nonetheless, it is unclear that blacks from the South were more likely to support segregated education. It is likely that region had little influence on African-American approval or opposition to racially mixed schools.

Despite threats to reinstitute segregated education in Chicago, many African-Americans remained optimistic that their children would attend racially mixed schools prior to World War I. The *Defender* could even characterize Chicago as "the only city in America where the negro is treated as a man and where his children may associate with other races freely. . .".[19] The Great Migration and race relations after World War I would challenge black Chicagoans' confidence.

Black migrants who looked to the North for better schools soon found that Chicago had its own educational problems. Chicago's public schools experienced several instances of conflict and crisis during the interwar period. Among other issues, Chicagoans fought over curriculum choices, tracking, and the ability of teachers to organize. The public school system was also plagued by patronage and corruption. School officials were often appointed by their political affiliations rather than their expertise. It was also common for authorities to profit from illegally negotiated school land sales, construction projects, stolen school equipment, and embezzled school funds. In 1922, a former school board president and vice-president, the school board attorney, and approximately forty school employees were charged with embezzling more than

[18] "Jim Crow School in Chicago," *Chicago Defender,* 12 November 1910, p.1.
[19] Ibid.

one million dollars from the school system. [20] Chicago schools also suffered from a lack of funds. Illinois has traditionally ranked among the states that appropriate the fewest public funds for education. In the early 20th century, local property taxes accounted for approximately 90% of the Chicago's public school revenue. To make matters worse, much of the eligible local funds went uncollected. Local government officials consistently undervalued the property of many of the city's largest industries. Many other local companies were spared from paying any school taxes. The school system's economic woes came to a head during the Depression when local tax revenue declined dramatically. In 1933, the Chicago Board of Education cut 1400 teaching positions, reduced kindergarten classes, eliminated the junior high schools, and discontinued several extracurricular programs because of a lack of revenue.[21]

Along with these problems, African-Americans faced unique challenges in Chicago's public schools. One of these challenges was the increasing growth of school segregation in the 1920s. As was discussed earlier, the majority of black children attended racially mixed schools before World War I. In the year 1916, only one school had a black enrollment greater than 90%. By 1920, six schools fit this description. Five other schools had black enrollments between 50-89%. By 1930, there were 26 schools that had black enrollments greater than 90%. Approximately 82% of all African-American children in Chicago attended these extremely segregated schools. Less than 10% of black students attended such schools twenty years earlier. Moreover, African-American teachers saw their employment opportunities restricted as Chicago's public schools increasingly forced black teachers to teach only at predominantly black

---

[20] For problems in the Chicago Public School System during the first half of the 20th century see Mary J. Herrick, *The Chicago Schools;* David Hogan, *Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago, 1880-1930* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985); Ira Katznelson and Margaret Weir, *Schooling for All: Class, Race, and the Decline of the Democratic Ideal* (New York: Basic Books, 1985); Julia Wrigley, *Class Politics and Public Schools* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982).

[21] Ibid.

schools. In 1917, approximately 60% of black teachers taught at predominantly white schools. By 1930, 85.4% of black instructors taught at predominantly black schools.[22]

The trend of residential segregation in Chicago partially explains this phenomenon. As Chicago's Black Belt and other predominantly black enclaves in the city became more racially concentrated, school districts followed suit. Several white Chicagoans who resisted black residential integration recognized the connection between housing and schools. The Woodlawn Property Owners' Association, for example, was formed in the 1930s primarily to prevent black from moving east of Cottage Grove on Chicago's South Side. However the organization also organized campaigns to deny African-American children access to the predominantly white A.O. Sexton Elementary School and Hyde Park High School. Fred L. Helman, head of the property organization reasoned that the Woodlawn neighborhood would experience a mass exodus of whites if the black student population in these schools grew.[23]

Helman's insight sheds light on the importance of schools in Chicago's larger racial history. Several scholars who have examined the history of race relations in Chicago have focused on housing. However when Chicagoans imagined housing, they thought of more than their physical home, property values, and neighborhoods. They also thought about the local institutions such as schools that gave their neighborhood a particular value. Thus the quality and the racial composition of local schools were integral to larger conflicts over urban space.[24] Residential segregation, however, was not the sole cause of Chicago's segregated public schools. Like housing, school segregation resulted from several conscious decisions made by individuals.

---

[22] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 27-28.

[23] Ibid.*,* 48-52.

[24] Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*; Alan Spear, *Black Chicago.* Also see urban histories on other American cities such as Thomas Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Robert Self, *American Babylon*; Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*.

For instance, after World War I, Chicago's public schools increasingly capitulated to demands that predominantly white schools have white instructors. Racially based teaching assignments had little to do with housing because the public school system of Chicago did not assign teachers based on their residence.[25]

The public school system of Chicago also gerrymandered district boundaries in order to perpetuate segregation in areas that bordered black neighborhoods. For much of the interwar period, few blacks lived east of Cottage Grove Avenue. School authorities used this same boundary to draw district lines. For example, by 1926, Oakland Elementary School accepted students who lived on both sides of Cottage Grove. Therefore, blacks made up 26% of the school's student population. However in 1926, the district line was moved to Cottage Grove. Consequently, most of the white students who lived east of Cottage Grove attended Shakespeare High School which was also east of Cottage Grove. Oakland, which was located west of Cottage Grove became a predominantly black school where blacks made up 98% of the school population by 1936.[26]

The Chicago Board of Education also granted transfers to white students who refused to attend racially mixed schools. Black Chicagoans recognized that many of these transfers stemmed from white parents' desire to remove their children from racially mixed schools. A *Chicago Defender* article noted that "it is well known that the reallocation of the school population to certain specified districts was done for the obvious purpose of restricting Negro children to certain schools in the South Side area."[27]

---

[25] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 32-33.
[26] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 36.
[27] "Polluted Stream," *Chicago Defender,* 10 January 1942, p.14; Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 40.

Branch schools were also used to avoid racial integration in Chicago's public schools. Branches were generally created to accommodate enrollment changes. When two nearby schools experienced reduced enrollment to the point that there was no need for both schools, the Chicago Board of Education would combine the schools into branches. Sometimes school authorities used this branch policy to segregate schools in racially mixed areas. In 1917, Fuller and Felsenthal elementary schools were combined as branch schools. The two schools were located in a racially mixed South Side neighborhood. However, as a result of the merger Fuller became 90% black and Felsenthal became 80% white.[28]

Some Chicago schools even segregated students within the same facilities. In some cases, students preferred to eat and socialize with members of their own race. In other instances, however, school authorities enforced segregation by separating students within classes, extracurricular activities, and other social events such as proms. Many of these techniques would be used by recalcitrant southern school districts that avoided the enforcement of integration after the *Brown* decision in 1954.[29]

Several African-Americans might not have objected to segregated schools if they were equal. Educational historian Michael Homel categorized Chicago's public schools into black, high status, low status, and immigrant categories to compare the school buildings, public support, and instances of overcrowding in predominantly African-American schools. Black schools had enrollments that were 90% or more African-American. High status schools were located in neighborhoods that had the highest levels of educational achievement and property values.[30]

---

[28] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 42.

[29] For histories of how southern school boards evaded the *Brown* decision see Raymond Wolters, *The Burden of Brown*; George R. Metcalf, *From Little Rock to Boston*.

[30] For property values, Homel measured used Louis Wirth and Margaret's Furez' formulation of the "median equivalent rental" which is the "median of the actual rental of homes. . .together with 1 per

Low-status schools were located in areas that had the lowest levels of educational achievement and property values. Homel only used neighborhoods that had black populations of less than 10% for the low and high status categories. Immigrant schools were located in areas that had the highest proportions of individuals born outside of the United States.[31]

Homel's study found that on average, predominantly black schools tended to be older and in greater need of repair than white schools. However, when he divided predominantly white districts according to class status and nationality, he concluded that the age and building quality of black schools fared comparably with low status and immigrant schools.[32]

Homel also concluded that African-American students disproportionately faced overcrowding. In 1920, predominantly black schools had the lowest pupil to teacher ratios. By 1940, however, they had the highest ratio of just under 36 pupils per teacher. This was particularly galling in light of the fact that all of Homel's categories except for black schools saw reductions in their class size during the interwar period.[33]

High pupil to teacher ratios were only part of a larger problem of overcrowding in black schools. In the early 1920s, the entire city of Chicago experienced school overcrowding. By 1924, 27% of all Chicago grade school students either attended schools with modified schedules, portable facilities, or other arrangements to accommodate excessively high enrollments. However school overcrowding in predominantly white schools became less of a problem by the eve of the Great Depression. A building campaign in predominantly white residential areas and

---

cent of the value of homes owned, which was considered the approximate monthly rental." Louis Wirth and Margaret Furez, eds. , *Local Community Fact Book of Chicago* (Chicago: Chicago Recreation Commission, 1938); Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 60.

[31] Some neighborhoods belonged to both the immigrant and low status categories. Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 59-60.

[32] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 62-63.

[33] Ibid.*,* 63-64.

declining enrollments in predominantly white schools accounts for this change. However as white overcrowding decreased, it became a growing problem in predominantly black schools. For example in 1925 only two South Side schools used rented facilities to accommodate blacks' increased enrollment. By 1931, this number had increased to four. In that same year of the 168 unoccupied rooms in Chicago's public schools, only four were in predominantly black areas. [34]

Chicago's public schools also instituted double shift schedules to alleviate overcrowding. In this arrangement, half of the students in an overcrowded school attended in the morning while the other half attended in the evening. Students enrolled in double shift schools received one to two less hours in the classroom than students who had a regular schedule. Parents whose children attended such schools also had to provide supervision for students who would have normally been in school during the morning and afternoon. Although in 1930 blacks made up only 5.4% of Chicago's total school age children, a year later at least 20% of all double shift schools were predominantly African-American. As will be shown, overcrowding and double shift schedules became a major grievance among black activists who protested racial discrimination in schools.[35]

Black schools also received less financial support than white schools throughout the interwar period. In 1920, black schools ranked last among Homel's categories in school funding. There was little improvement by 1940 as blacks still received the fewest dollars per pupil. The level of experience of faculty members in predominantly black schools partially accounts for the differences in pupil expenditures. Teachers in black schools tended to earn less which means that they averaged fewer years of experience than teachers in predominantly white schools.[36]

---

[34] Ibid., 76-82.
[35] Ibid.,76-79.
[36] Ibid., 64-69.

In addition, black children faced problems within the classroom setting. Some white teachers either had difficulty or no interest in overcoming their notions of black inferiority. African-Americans often felt that this prejudice resulted in biased evaluations of black academic achievement, lower expectations from teachers, and a hostile classroom environment.[37] Unfortunately, there are no studies that determine the frequency of teacher discrimination in the classroom. However, as we will see, this would become a major concern of black educational activists after 1940.

African-Americans were also disturbed by the use of racially offensive material in Chicago's public schools. The historical contributions that people of African descent made to the United States and the world were absent in many public school texts. The few history textbooks that featured Africa often depicted the continent as backwards and devoid of culture. In addition, many of the American history textbooks misrepresented the history of African-Americans. For instance, sections on slavery were written from a southern apologists' perspective. Enslaved Africans were often characterized as Sambos and slave masters as benevolent patriarchs.[38]

Although there are few district-wide studies that evaluate academic achievement by race, there is evidence that indicates that many black students fared poorly in Chicago's public schools. A 1926 study of Chicago's junior high schools showed that students at predominantly black Phillips school ranked last in the district in arithmetic and sentence structure tests. By the time Phillips graduates reached the ninth grade, they scored on average two and one half years behind other Chicago students. In the 1930s, freshmen at predominantly black Du Sable High

---

[37] Ibid., 108-110.

[38] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 111-114. For a history of American history texts see Frances Fitzgerald, *America Revised* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1979).

School scored one and one half year behind the citywide average on a standardized language test. African-American children also showed higher rates of retention than other children throughout the city.[39]

However, it is difficult to determine the degree to which racism influenced African-American children's educational success. Each student's prior educational preparation, access to resources outside of school, and individual abilities also need to be accounted for when assessing academic achievement. Furthermore, standardized test scores and retention rates can obscure the many examples of schools and teachers that provided a positive learning environment that allowed black children to excel. Nonetheless perceptions of black underachievement, coupled with discrimination in Chicago's public schools, help illuminate the grievances of blacks who fought to make the educational system more responsive to the needs of the city's African-American community.

A variety of African-American organizations in Chicago struggled against the institutional deficiencies of the city's public school system. Although the Chicago Urban League (CUL) primarily focused on housing and employment, it mounted several educational campaigns on behalf of African-Americans. In 1934, the CUL protested segregation in Morgan Park High School. The CUL also voiced African-American displeasure with double shift schools, overcrowding, and inadequate school facilities at Board of Education and City Council meetings throughout the 1930s.[40]

---

[39] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 123-126.

[40] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 136-137. From its inception in 1917, the Chicago Urban League (CUL) became the primary organization that assisted black migrants who entered the city. Along with its protests of educational inequality, the organization coordinated the work of existing welfare organizations, conducted sociological research on Chicago's black community, and helped black Chicagoans find housing and employment. See Arvarh E. Strickland, *History of the Chicago Urban League.*

The Chicago National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) also opposed racial discrimination in Chicago's public schools. Unlike the organization's national leadership's focus on equalization strategies of segregated facilities in the 1930s, the Chicago arm struggled for both the improvement of segregated black schools and integration.[41] The local NAACP waged campaigns for the construction of DuSable High School and much needed renovations at Wendell Phillips High School. Both high schools were predominantly black. The Chicago NAACP also successfully defended black students threatened with removal from the racially mixed Parker High School in 1923. The Chicago NAACP also campaigned against segregated proms at Bowen High School, the exclusion of black students from the American Academy of Art, and the gerrymandering of school boundaries on Chicago's South Side.[42]

Other organizations with a diversity of interests also joined the fight for educational equality in Chicago. Formed in 1936, and although maintaining a more central focus on labor issues, the Chicago National Negro Congress (CNNC) included educational activism in its protest agenda. In 1939 the CNNC created "Better Schools for Negro Children" which was a research and publicity committee that exposed the educational problems African-Americans faced. The CNNC also voiced their opposition to double shift schools at the Chicago Board of Education. The Chicago Council of Negro Organizations (CCNO), which was formed to protest racial discrimination and to provide black Chicagoans with an alternative to the more labor-based CNNC, was also active on the educational front in the 1930s. The CCNO focused on

---

[41] For the national strategy see Mark Tushnet, *The NAACP's Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education* and Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice.*

[42] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 142; "Students to Test Jim Crow Ruling at Art Academy," *Chicago Defender*, 19 May 1934. Established in 1913, the Chicago branch mirrored the national NAACP model by focusing on legal and legislative matters by using the local courts to fight discrimination in housing, public accommodations, and schools. See Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership.*

overcrowding and the segregation of black teachers and students. Black women club organizations also protested racial discrimination in Chicago's public schools. The Chicago and Northern District Association of Colored Women (CNDA), a black women's club organization, demanded an end to double shifts in black schools at Chicago school board meetings. The CNDA also voiced their opposition to inadequate school supplies in African-American schools, the selective transfers white students received, and the lack of black history instruction in Chicago schools.[43]

Some instances of racial discrimination were so egregious that they attracted the attention of multiple black organizations. For example, the Chicago Urban League and NAACP partnered with each other to combat efforts to segregate elementary students in Morgan Park in 1926. Also, representatives from the CUL, CCNO, and CNDA allied with several South Side aldermen and PTA groups to denounce overcrowding in black schools at the 1940 school board budget hearings.[44]

Many black organizations also shared the belief that the appointment of an African-American to the Chicago Board of Education would make the school system more responsive to the city's African-American community. The CUL, CNDA, CCNO, and Chicago NAACP all developed campaigns to appoint an African-American to Chicago's school board. For instance, he CUL sent a lobbying delegation to Mayor Anton Cermak and convinced other white organizations in the city to endorse black school board candidates in the early 1930s. The CCNO pressured Mayor Edward Kelly in the late 1930s by spearheading a campaign that included a

---

[43] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 127-144. For additional information on the CNNO and CCNO see Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership*, 107-108. For further elaboration on the CNDA see Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism* (Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press, 2006), 74-75, 83, 93-115.

[44] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 152-156, 173-174.

telegram drive, petitions, lobbying efforts, and coalition building. Mayor Kelly eventually relented and appointed physician and businessman, Midian O. Bousfield to the Chicago Board of Education. However, African-Americans soon learned that Bousfield was just as unresponsive to their interests as white board members. He never became an advocate for issues that were of great concern to African-Americans nor did he challenge the racial discrimination of white board members. [45]

Chicago's African-American organizations experienced little success in protesting other educational problems during the interwar years. Many of the concerns of these groups such as overcrowding, segregation, and poor school conditions continued to disproportionately plague African-American students long after World War II. These organizations' lack of success in eliminating discrimination in Chicago's public schools stemmed from several reasons. Racism in schools was only one issue among many others that had to be resolved. Organizations such as the Urban League and the NAACP devoted more time and resources on housing and employment issues. Many of these organizations also placed limits on what they would do to end racial discrimination. The middle class orientation of many of Chicago's organizations discouraged them from launching direct action campaigns. Educational activists preferred less confrontational tactics such as lobbying Chicago's local government, creating petitions, and building coalitions with other social welfare groups in the city. Confrontational direct action techniques would be more prominent in the city after World War II.

Smaller, informal groups enjoyed greater success in accomplishing their goals. The Lilydale community's campaign for better school facilities is one such example. Lilydale was a predominantly black neighborhood located on Chicago's far South Side from 91st to 97th Street.

---

[45] Ibid., 158-164.

Lillydale's population was so small in the early 20th century that portable school facilities were used for the area's black students. However, by 1930, Lilydale's student population grew to the point that community activists demanded that school authorities provide a permanent school building. By 1936, the Lilydale PTA, Women's Civic Welfare Club, and the newly created Citizens Committee of Lilydale, among other community groups began conducting research on school conditions for black students and initiated a petition drive. However, school authorities still ignored their appeal for a new school facility. In September 1936 the Lilydale activists started a picketing campaign in front of school buildings and refused to send their children to the portable classrooms. The conflict was heightened when local youth unconnected to the PTA or the Citizens Committee set the portables on fire as a form of protest. Eventually school authorities relented and a new school was completed for African-American children in May of 1937.[46]

Several other community groups and institutions struggled to improve conditions in Chicago's predominantly black public schools. For example, in 1933 parents of the predominantly black Ross Elementary School successfully pressured local authorities to provide better facilities. In addition, the McCosh Elementary PTA organized a triumphant protest in 1939 to add more classrooms to the overcrowded school. Other campaigns focused on curricular changes in Chicago's public schools. For instance, in 1935 the *Chicago Defender* successfully lobbied the school board to remove racist passages from textbooks used in the public schools.[47]

Black Chicagoans' responses to educational inequality demonstrated a varied educational agenda that included both integration and the improvement of segregated African-

---

[46] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 166-169; Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism,* 77-78.

[47] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 164-176, *Chicago Defender,* 11 May 1935, p.1.

American schools. Some campaigns such as those conducted by activists in Morgan Park in 1926 and 1934 intended to prevent segregation. Other protests such as those waged by parents in the Lilydale community and at Ross Elementary School had little to do with integration. However, many activists did not see these two strategies as mutually exclusive. For instance, the Chicago NAACP joined the protest against segregation in Morgan Park while also lobbying for the construction of DuSable School which would be segregated. In like manner, the Chicago Urban League championed integration even though they struggled against problems in segregated black schools such as overcrowding, double shift schedules, and inadequate facilities. Black Chicagoans saw a need to struggle on multiple fronts in their quest for a quality education. This simultaneous pursuit for racially mixed schools and quality black schools would also play out in the private educational sector.

African-Americans in Chicago never exclusively relied on the public schools for instruction. A number of institutions in Chicago's black community educated African-Americans. The Wabash YMCA on Chicago's South Side, for instance, responded to the Great Migration by offering classes to help newcomers adjust to northern industrial life. The YMCA's lessons focused on workplace efficiency, industrial discipline, and discouraged union activity. By 1915, African-American women established a YWCA. It provided vocational classes and a library for black women in Chicago. Two of the largest black churches on Chicago's South Side, the Olivet Baptist Church and Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church administered a literary society and kindergarten respectively. Chicago's black segregated Provident Hospital, not only

served the needs of the infirmed, but also provided training to aspiring black doctors and nurses.[48]

African-American women charitable organizations also played a key role in providing alternative educational institutions for black Chicagoans. At the turn of the 20th century, twelve women's clubs formed the Colored Women's Conference of Chicago, which organized a kindergarten for black children. The Phyllis Wheatley Home for Girls, also established by black women, offered young African-American women lodging and domestic arts classes. Additionally, acclaimed activist and journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett created the Negro Fellowship League which offered temporary living accommodations and a reading room for black Chicagoans.[49]

Some black women such as Elizabeth McDonald and Amanda Smith focused their efforts on establishing schools for Chicago area black youth. Elizabeth McDonald's school began as the Louise Juvenile Home in 1907. The home was established to assist orphaned and dependent children in Chicago. McDonald, credited with being the first African-American female probation officer in the United States, was quite familiar with the need for a home because most white juvenile institutions in the city did not accept black children. In 1913, the home became the Louise Juvenile Industrial School for Colored Boys and as it name suggests it catered to African-American males in the juvenile court system. Until its closing in 1920, the school taught its pupils vocational skills such as shoemaking and window repair. Amanda Smith Industrial School for Girls also began as a home for dependent and delinquent children in 1899. It became a school for girls in 1913 until its closing as a result of a fire in 1917. Like the Louise Juvenile

---

[48] For work on these African-American institutions see Allan Spear, *Black Chicago*, 91-100, 174; James Grossman, *Land of Hope*, 141-142, 200-202.

[49] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago*, 102; James Grossman, *Land of Hope*, 141.

Industrial School, Amanda Smith also focused on industrial training. It seems unlikely that these two schools coupled industrial education with racial accommodation as advocated by southern black educator and race leader Booker T. Washington. Washington led an educational movement at the turn of the century that proposed that African-Americans should accept segregation and that schools should help them adopt skills for occupations that did not threaten the South's racially discriminatory labor system. Elizabeth McDonald did not share Washington's ideas about segregation. The Louise Juvenile Home first began as an integrated facility that served white and black children. Furthermore, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, an ardent opponent of Washington, lent her support to Amanda Smith's school.[50]

However, the Archdiocese of Chicago was the largest provider of private education for black Chicagoans (as well as all Chicagoans) in the 20th century. Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago experienced dramatic growth in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For example, in 1870 5,770 students were enrolled in the city's 14 Catholic elementary schools. By 1940, 145,116 students attended the 235 Catholic elementary schools in Chicago.[51]

The expansion of the archdiocese's school system was largely fueled by the growth of the city's immigrant population. By 1900, nearly 80% of Chicago's population was composed of first and second generation immigrants.[52] Younger Catholic immigrants often faced nativism and religious bigotry in Chicago's public schools. The Archdiocese of Chicago provided relief to immigrant families by establishing parishes for specific national groups. A Catholic parish is a

---

[50] Anne Meis Knupfer, *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 71-81. For industrial education see James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*; Henry Allen Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South*; William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954*.

[51] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority*, 4.

[52] Thomas Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto,* 7-8.

defined space that functions to serve the religious, educational, and social needs of the Catholic community that resides in it. Therefore, a parish usually has associated institutions such as a church and parochial school for its parishioners. In Chicago and other American urban areas, Catholics from a particular European ethnic group formed their own parish where they could practice Catholicism and other customs as they did in their homeland. Immigrants could conduct church services and hear confessions in their native languages, construct churches based on national architectural styles, and perform other rituals that were prominent in their mother countries. Many of these parishes also built schools. Parochial schools often insulated immigrant children from the insults of nativist public school teachers and integrated aspects of these groups' traditional culture in their curriculum.[53] Ironically, the Archdiocese of Chicago reproduced much of the prejudice directed toward immigrant Catholics.

Chicago's African-American Catholic community had very humble beginnings. In 1882, a small group of black Catholics were given permission to hold church services in the basement of the predominantly white St. Mary Church. [54] By 1889, Father Augustine Tolton became the minister of the African-American congregation. Father Tolton was the first black to be ordained as a priest in the United States of America. The congregation grew rapidly under Tolton's leadership. By 1892, 200 Catholics worshipped in the basement of St. Mary Church. However these accommodations soon grew too small and the congregation began a fundraising drive to establish their own church. Their efforts along with the help of a white philanthropist allowed

---

[53] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 40-55. For work on the national parish system in Chicago and other American urban areas see Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church* and John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries.*

[54] Joseph J. McCarthy, "History of Black Catholic Education in Chicago, 1871-1971" (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1973), 31; Mary Robert Dennis, S.B.S., "St. Elizabeth's Parish and the Negro" (M.A. Thesis, Loyola University of Chicago, 1940), 12.

them to open St. Monica Church on Chicago's South Side in 1893. The church was named after the mother of the African Saint Augustine. [55]

However St. Monica parishioners faced turbulent times soon after they opened their church. Father Tolton died in 1897 and the St. Monica congregation was placed under supervision of the predominantly white St. Elizabeth parish. Father Riordan, the white pastor of St. Elizabeth soon determined that providing services for his own church as well as Chicago's growing black Catholic community was too demanding of a job. St. Monica would need its own full-time pastor. The archdiocese assigned the Caucasian-American priest, Father John Morris to St. Monica in 1909.[56]

Father Tolton's death also temporarily delayed the creation of the archdiocese's first parochial school for African-Americans.[57] Before his death, Father Tolton had written Katherine Drexel, the founder of the white women's religious order, the Sisters of the Blessed of Sacrament (SBS), to send nuns to Chicago to staff a school for the St. Monica parish.[58] The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, established in 1891, have traditionally focused on educating African-Americans and Indians. Father Morris continued Tolton's work by securing a school building and persuading Katherine Drexel to send six SBS nuns in 1912. The school building was also used as the sisters' convent. The accommodations were cramped and almost too small for the first class of 100 students. However demand for the school remained high and prompted

---

[55] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 252, Joseph J. McCarthy, "History of Black Catholic Education in Chicago," 69.

[56] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 206.

[57] The white women's religious community, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, founded the first Catholic School for blacks in Chicago, the Illinois Technical School for Colored Girls (ITSCG) in 1911. Unlike St. Monica School and the majority of schools that would open to black Chicagoans in the 20th century, the ITSCG was not connected to a parish. It was a boarding school that drew much of its enrollment from dependent children. ITSCG eventually closed in 1953. See Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 71-85.

[58] Joseph J. McCarthy, "History of Black Catholic Education in Chicago," 70.

the St. Monica congregation to purchase a renovated armory for the school. The new facility accommodated 250 children by 1917.[59]

Like the school, St. Monica Church became increasingly overcrowded in the 1910s. By 1917, it was estimated that 2,000 parishioners attended its church services.[60] Although there was no policy regarding black Catholics' ability to attend other churches, the vast majority of African-Americans worshipped at St. Monica. During the 1910s and increasingly in the 1920s, Chicago's growing black population expanded into predominantly white Catholic neighborhoods. It seemed likely that African-Americans would begin to seek access to Catholic churches and schools in these areas. However many of Chicago's Catholic churches refused to provide services to blacks. In 1917 Chicago Archbishop George Mundelein attempted to avert future struggles by issuing a decree regarding African-American access to Catholic institutions. There were three major stipulations in Archbishop Mundelein's doctrine: 1) He asked that only African-Americans attend St. Monica Church. 2) African-Americans were allowed to visit other churches but they could not become members. Therefore, they could not receive marriage, baptismal, and educational services at other parishes. 3) Mundelein also recognized African-Americans in Chicago as a "missionary community" and assigned the Fathers of the Divine Word (S.V.D.) to proselytize them. The Fathers of the Divine Word is a male Catholic order that has traditionally worked with African-Americans. Father Joseph Eckert, a SVD priest (who was white) replaced Father Morris as the pastor of St. Monica.[61] With his decree, Mundelein

---

[59] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 206-207; Mary Robert Dennis, S.B.S., "St. Elizabeth's Parish and the Negro," 29.

[60] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 207.

[61] The entire statement is reproduced in Joseph J. McCarthy, "History of Black Catholic Education in Chicago," 145-153. Mundelein's doctrine was not completely surprising given the separation of ethnic groups under the archdiocese's national parish system. However, Mundelein's proclamation of 1917

effectively dispelled any ambiguity regarding the Archdiocese of Chicago's perspective on race relations. Segregation would be the rule throughout the rest of his tenure as head of the archdiocese.

African-Americans responses to segregation in the Archdiocese of Chicago school system further illustrate their complex position on integration. Some sectors of Chicago's black community vehemently opposed segregation in Chicago's Catholic schools. The *Chicago Defender* represented the sentiments of many African-Americans when it suggested that Father Morris "confer a lasting favor on his colored friends by abolishing [St. Monica] school or insisting upon whites and colored both attending…".[62] In another article the *Defender* compared Mundelein to infamous southern racists James Vardaman and Ben Tillman.[63] Also, eighty-one black Chicagoans responded to Mundelein's decree by issuing "An Address to the Archbishop of Chicago Protesting Against a Policy of Segregation in the Administration of the Affairs of St. Monica's Mission."[64] However all black Chicagoans did not support the attacks on the archdiocese. Some African-American parents were offended when the *Defender* labeled St. Monica a "Jim Crow School."[65] Furthermore, black Chicago's continued support of the archdiocese is most clearly shown by the growing presence of black children in Catholic schools.

Mundelein's doctrine became harder to enforce as Chicago experienced demographic changes. Large numbers of white residents moved out of areas undergoing racial transition which left many Catholic churches and schools underpopulated. For instance, St. Anselm School, which was mainly patronized by Irish-Americans, saw its enrollment drop from 400

---

differed from the national parish system in that European ethnic groups were not barred from attending and becoming members of each other's parish institutions unlike African-Americans were.

[62] "Jim Crow School," *Chicago Defender*, 29 March 1913, p.4.

[63] "Big Step Backward," *Chicago Defender* 17 November 1917, p. 8.

[64] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 208-209.

[65] Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts*, 90-91.

students in 1925 to only 100 by the end of the decade. The enrollment of Corpus Christi School, located on Chicago's South Side, dropped to 35 students in 1927 and thus was forced to close.[66] While predominantly white parishes declined, St. Monica's congregation grew too large for its facilities. By 1922, St. Monica's student population grew to 300 pupils. The demand for the school was so great that another 300 students had to be turned away for lack of room. Archbishop Mundelein eventually permitted St. Monica to take over the declining South Side St. Elizabeth parish which was comprised of a larger church and school. The new facilities better suited the growing African-American Catholic population which included 4,000 congregants and 800 students in 1924. A high school was also opened in the new parish area in 1925.[67]

Chicago's growing black Catholic community and the racial transition occurring in many of the city's neighborhoods forced Mundelein to revise his 1917 doctrine by opening more parishes to African-Americans. By 1933, the cardinal turned over the South Side parishes of St. Anselm and Corpus Christi to African-Americans. In this same year, blacks on Chicago's West Side were granted access to one of the schools in the Holy Family parish after much resistance by whites in the area. Blacks however were banned from attending Holy Family's main church and school until the 1950s. The transition of other parishes went much smoother. St. Malachy on the West Side and St. Dominic on the Near North Side were turned over to African-Americans in 1935 with little resistance.[68]

---

[66] Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago Published in Observance of Centenary of the Archdiocese, 1980* (Chicago: Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1980), 72-73.

[67] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 210-212.

[68] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 210-215. Harry Koenig, *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, 378. It should be noted that when a parish was turned over to African-Americans it included its institutions such as churches and schools. Like the institutions of the parish of St. Monica, these newer parishes were expected to be exclusively reserved for African-American Catholics. However, there is no indication that whites desired to attend these parish's church, school, and other services after they had been turned over to African-Americans.

The growing presence of African-Americans in Chicago's Catholic schools shows that black Chicagoans supported the archdiocese's school system despite their reservations with its segregationist policy. The appeal of parochial education was so great that many predominantly black Catholic schools could not accommodate all of their applicants. By 1937, St. Anselm School grew to 500 students while Corpus Christi's enrollment expanded to 700 pupils. St. Anselm's peak enrollment was only 400 students before it had been turned over to African-Americans. Corpus Christi's maximum enrollment was 465 students prior to its racial transfer. By 1939, the archdiocese opened six elementary schools and one high school for the exclusive use of African-Americans. However, black Chicagoans' demand for educational alternatives still exceeded the archdiocese's supply of schools. African-American s' struggle to gain access into Catholic schools would continue in the following decades.[69]

Catholic schools attracted a diverse range of black Chicagoans. There is a widely held belief that private schools are elitist and draw their support from high-income families. Surely, members of Chicago's black middle class patronized Catholic schools. The archdiocese was known to attract the children of black Chicago's "professional men and race leaders."[70] Furthermore, many middle class African-Americans preferred the solemn Catholic church services rather than the lively worship style of many working-class Protestant congregations. [71] However, there is evidence that Chicago's Catholic schools accepted blacks from various class backgrounds. A 1940 study of St. Elizabeth School reported that several of the students came from families who could not afford to provide their children with lunch money. In fact, many black parents endured great sacrifices to send their children to Catholic schools. However,

---

[69] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 214, Harry Koenig, *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago,* 74, 218.

[70] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 214-215.

[71] Allan Spear, *Black Chicago,* 95.

sometimes African-American parents' best efforts still were not enough. Nonetheless, most Catholic schools accepted students regardless of their ability to pay tuition.[72]

Black parents chose to send their children to parochial schools for a variety of reasons. Obviously, it gave black Catholics an educational institution that provided religious instruction. A study conducted by sociologists St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton also concluded that African-American parents sent their children to Catholic schools to avoid the problems found in public schools, particularly double shift schedules. Drake and Cayton also uncovered that many African-American parents believed that parochial schools offered more rigorous academic training and a stronger emphasis on discipline and character development. [73] A study conducted by a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament who worked at St. Elizabeth echoed Drake and Cayton's sentiments. She reported that "Teacher and pupil are very close to each other, in the school. . . The secular standard is as high as in the neighboring public schools, but the mothers want more-they want character training, and that cannot be had without a religious background.[74]

Although more is known about the Archdiocese of Chicago's school system (which is partially a result of it being the largest provider of private education), blacks patronized other religious private schools in Chicago. The Nation of Islam (NOI) established its own school which was also exclusively intended for black students. The University of Islam, the NOI's school, grew out of the organization's broader unorthodox Islamic ideology which had black nationalist

---

[72] Mary Robert Dennis, S.B.S., "St. Elizabeth's Parish and the Negro," 30-31; Estella Anderson Faulk, "A Study of Catholic Education for Negroes in the Archdiocese of Chicago" (M.A. thesis, DePaul University, 1948).

[73] St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 413-414.

[74] Mary Robert Dennis, S.B.S., "St. Elizabeth's Parish and the Negro," 30.

tendencies.[75] Its educators intended to inculcate the organization's values in students while providing a sanctuary from the culture of mainstream white America. The significance of education to the NOI is seen by its inclusion in the organization's list of demands that frequently appeared in its newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*. The demand stated, "We want equal education—but separate schools up to 16 for boys and 18 for girls. . . We want all black children educated, taught without hindrance."[76]

University of Islam #2, located on the South Side, was established in 1934 after the NOI's leader, Elijah Muhammad, moved the organization's headquarters to Chicago from Detroit. The school served only elementary students until 1954 when a high school was added. Due to a paucity of sources, much of what is known about the school comes from evidence that was produced after the scope of this chapter. However, it is likely that the Chicago University of Islam's educational program after 1940 mirrored what existed in the school prior to this date. The enrollment of the University of Islam in Chicago remained small in its beginning years. In 1941 only 20 students attended the school. The school's enrollment, however, grew as the Nation of Islam gained popularity in the 1950s and 1960s. By 1965, the University of Islam in Chicago enrolled 488 students. Although non-Muslim black children were allowed to enroll in the school's earlier years, by the mid 1960s only Muslim children attended. The school was staffed by non-Muslims as well as Muslim teachers. The teachers were required to be African-American, have a college degree, and support the teachings of the Nation of Islam.[77]

---

[75] Although the Nation of Islam called its schools "universities", the schools served students from grades kindergarten through eighth grade and high school in some cities such as Chicago. For work on the Nation of Islam see Essien Udosen Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism;* C. Eric Lincoln, *Black Muslims in America;* Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*; Jeffrey O. Ogbar, *Black Power.*

[76] C. Eric Lincoln, *Black Muslims in America,* xxviii.

[77] Ibrahim Mahmond Shalaby, "The Role of the School in Cultural Renewal and Identity Development in the Nation of Islam" (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 1967),248, 268.

Black Chicagoans' patronage of the University of Islam provides greater insight on what African-Americans wanted from an educational institution. Patrons expected the schools to develop more than the students' academic abilities. Parents hoped that the school would also provide their children with political and moral training. Granted, like public schools, students at the University of Islam learned basic subjects like English, science, arithmetic, and algebra. However, the Nation of Islam's black nationalist ideas informed the entire curriculum of the school. A former principal of the University of Islam explained the difference between public schools and the University of Islam by stating, "The public system causes us to come out hoping that someday, somewhere, our former slave-master might give us a better job if we qualify ourselves to serve him better. But in our system we learn to serve ourselves better. . ." The course offerings also reflected the school's larger goals. Art, music, and sports programs were not offered because school authorities felt that African-Americans needed to master basic subjects first. In addition, the school attempted to counter the stereotype that African-Americans were inherently good athletes and entertainers.[78]

The University of Islam also stressed middle class values. The school emphasized education, hard work, and cleanliness as a means of developing the black race. Officials mandated that students attend school throughout the year and only granted one month of vacation. Furthermore student's hair, fingernails and dress were all observed for neatness. Pupils who came to school dirty or unkempt were promptly sent home.

Conclusion

African-American education in Chicago was informed by broader historical developments. Segregation and inequality in Chicago's public schools reflected racial

[78] Ibid., 65-180 and 273.

discrimination in the city's housing and job markets. The dramatic expansion of Chicago's black population after World War I exacerbated these problems. Black children not only faced segregation but also disproportionately experienced overcrowding, inadequate school facilities, double shift schedules, among other challenges.

Black Chicagoans responded to these circumstances in a variety of ways. Some activists sought integration based on the belief that black children's racial isolation led to their inability to access quality education. Other activists (who probably recognized the difficulty of achieving integration) concentrated on improving segregated black schools. Ironically, African-Americans did not see these two strategies as contradictory. Black Chicagoans saw both strategies as key in expanding their children's educational opportunities.

However, black Chicagoans' educational agenda was not limited to the public sector. African-Americans established and attended private schools in the city. African-American support of private schools should be seen as another response to the inadequacies of Chicago's public schools. As had been in the public sector, blacks opposed white parochial schools' exclusionary policies while also supporting segregated schools. This dual agenda was clearly demonstrated in African-Americans' participation in schools administered by the Archdiocese of Chicago, the city's largest provider of private education. Although Archbishop George Mundelein's segregation decree of 1917 incited opposition from many black Chicagoans, several African-American families continued to demand access to the archdiocese's segregated private schools. Not only were Catholic schools seen as a refuge from the problems of public education, they were also seen by many as more academically rigorous and capable of providing moral instruction.

African-American support of schools established by blacks also demonstrates their dual agenda of advocating integration while supporting segregated educational institutions. Black Chicagoans did not object to black private schools as they did those created and administered by whites. The Louise Juvenile Industrial School for Colored Boys, Amanda Smith Industrial School for Girls, and University of Islam operated free from the censure of Chicago's black community. African-American support of black educational institutions would continue well beyond 1940.

"If we cannot open to youth a sense of possibility, we will have only ourselves to blame for their disillusionment; and with their disillusionment lies the danger- for we rely on our youth for all our hopes of a better future- and thus in a real and direct sense, for the very meaning of our lives."[1]

Doris Allen Anderson

"For the Very Meaning of Our Lives": Howalton Day School: 1946-1986

Racial discrimination in Chicago's public schools continued well beyond the early 20th century. As they had done in the past, blacks responded to these institutional deficiencies by developing a range of strategies to ensure that their children received a quality education. During the post World War II era, African-Americans mounted larger and more aggressive campaigns against the inequalities in Chicago's public schools. In addition, blacks increasingly sought educational alternatives outside of the public sector.

A segment of black Chicagoans who pursued non-public educational options did so by patronizing black private schools. The growth of such educational institutions was fueled not only by African-American disenchantment with public schools, but also several national and local historical developments affecting the city's black community. This chapter focuses on one such institution, Howalton Day School, and the social, economic, and political forces that caused its rise and decline.

1940-1954

America began the 1940s under the specter of World War II. Although Franklin Delano Roosevelt remained neutral until 1941, this position became increasingly difficult to maintain as the war intensified in the European and Asian theaters. Japan ended American isolationism when its air force bombed the United States Pearl Harbor naval base on December 7, 1941.

---

[1] Howalton Day School Brochure, 1977, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Chicago Public Library. Hereafter the Howalton School Archives collection will be referred to as HSA.

However, the impact of World War II was not limited to the battlefront. Most notably, it propelled the United States out of a near decade long economic depression.

The tension that emerged out of the war continued in the years following the global conflict. The divergent interests of the United States and the Soviet Union led both nations to enter a hostile rivalry often referred to as the Cold War. This clash divided many nations into two spheres dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. Both factions looked to spread their power while containing their enemies' influence throughout much of the latter half of the 20th century.

The United States' entry into World War II also significantly affected African-Americans. More blacks served in the war than in any other previous U.S. conflict. Nonetheless, most African-American servicemen were restricted to noncombat roles and fought in segregated units. Many blacks recognized the irony of their participation in a war to defeat Nazi Germany and its white supremacist ideology while they endured racism in the United States. Racial discrimination, however, was not limited to the war front. Many war industries banned African-American employees while several others only permitted blacks to work in the least desirable positions.

Some black activist organizations and institutions opposed these racial injustices. The NAACP and the *Pittsburgh Courier* popularized the "Double V" campaign which declared African-American support of the United States' war against fascism abroad and the end of racism on the home front. The March on Washington Movement (MOWM), which was established in 1941, also resisted racial discrimination. Led by A. Philip Randolph, who also headed the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the MOWM promised that it would protest American racism by staging a march of more than 100,000 activists in Washington D.C. The demonstration was called off

when President Roosevelt agreed to issue Executive Order 8802. The decree established the Fair Employment Practices Committee for the purpose of reviewing and preventing instances of discrimination in government employment and defense industry programs.[2]

Blacks in the United States also showed great interest in the postwar international political arena. This period witnessed a surge of independence movements which were supported by many African-American activists who often linked these anti-colonial struggles to their own pursuits for racial equality. African-American support for a global vision of justice was clearly seen by their interest in the humanitarian aims of the 1945 Charter of the United Nations and subsequent Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Race relations in the United States also became an international diplomatic concern as the Soviet Union pointed out the contradictions of America's democratic rhetoric and the unequal treatment of African-Americans.

However, the politics of the initial Cold War years also limited African-Americans' struggle for equality. Conservatives represented by Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee, harassed several African-American activists based on the assumption that they had ties to communism. Most notably, the United States revoked the passports of Paul Robeson and W.E.B. Du Bois which hampered their efforts in supporting

[2] For works that discuss antiracist activism during the 1940s see Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75 (December 1988): 786-811; Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Knopf, 1994).

anti-colonial struggles and denouncing American racism while abroad. The Cold War hysteria also forced organizations such as the NAACP to moderate their struggles for equality.[3]

These broader national developments also impacted Chicago's black community. As had been the case during World War I, the United States' war economy induced southern African-Americans to migrate to Chicago (and many other northern and western cities) in search of jobs and better race relations. In addition, many blacks were "pushed" from the South as the region's economy increasingly mechanized. Nonetheless, these migrants witnessed racial discrimination in Chicago much like the generation before them. A clear example of racism in Chicago was residential segregation. Housing shortages, prejudicial real estate practices, and violence were used to keep neighborhoods racially separate. In 1940, 49.7% of black Chicagoans lived in exclusively black census tracts while in 1950 this number rose to 53%.[4]

Black Chicagoans also faced racial discrimination in Chicago's public schools. Chicago's growing African-American population dramatically increased the number of black students in the school system. From 1929 to 1943, the African-American student population in black residential areas almost doubled from 21,564 to 40,572.[5] However, a lag in school construction and the refusal of local authorities to transfer black students into less crowded, racially mixed facilities resulted in overcrowded African-American public schools. By 1940, approximately 75%

---

[3] For the opportunities and challenges that the Cold War presented to African-Americans see Gerald Horne, *Black and Red, W.E.B. Dubois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1986); Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000). Several scholars have acknowledged African-American engagement in international Cold War developments. See Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind*; Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[4] Paul L. Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis,* 98, 99-108; Arnold Hirsch, *Making of the Second Ghetto.*

[5] Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line,* 56.

of all black students attended double shift schools.[6] The overcrowding of black students in Chicago even attracted national attention in 1945 when the National Education Association concluded that "overcrowding of classrooms is at its worst" in Chicago's predominantly black public schools.[7]

A wide range of activists organized to protest these conditions. The CNDA women's organization lobbied the Chicago Board of Education to ameliorate overcrowding in the early 1940s. Also, the Citizens Schools Committee (CSC), an interracial education advocacy organization comprised of educators and other concerned Chicagoans, implored the school board to end overcrowding and other deplorable conditions in black schools. The CSC and the Chicago Urban League also conducted tours of black schools in order to publicize their conditions. In addition, in 1941, a neighborhood association, the Wellstown Parents' Civic Organization of the Ida B. Wells Homes, protested double shifting. The association collected 3,000 signatures in an effort to have local black students in the overcrowded schools transferred to schools that had more room.[8]

Doris Allen Anderson, a public school teacher at Forrestville Elementary School on Chicago's South Side, also grew increasingly frustrated with the problems in Chicago's public schools.[9] Forrestville was overcrowded like many other black public schools in the city.

---

[6] Kathryn M. Neckerman, *Schools Betrayed*, 89.

[7] Taken from Harold Baron, "History of Chicago School Segregation to 1953," *Integrated Education* 1 (1963): 19. For a history of the National Education Association see Marjorie Murphy, *Blackboard Unions: The AFT and the NEA,* 1900-1980 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); Wayne J. Urban, *Gender, Race, and the National Education Association: Professionalism and its Limitations* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

[8] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 144, 173-175.

[9] Doris Allen eventually married and changed her last name to Anderson. All subsequent references to her will refer to the surname she adopted (and consistently used) after marriage.

Although the school had a capacity to enroll 2,740 students in 1939, 3,564 pupils attended.[10] Anderson expressed her dissatisfaction with these conditions by writing a letter to then Mayor Edward Kelly. Unfortunately, there is no record of Kelly's reply. However, it is likely that the mayor's response, which was written on a Christmas card, gave her no hope that he would seriously address problems in Chicago's black schools. Anderson would have to find alternative means to expand black students' educational opportunities.[11]

Anderson, along with two other black public school teachers, June Howe Currin and Charlotte Stratton, created a summer vacation school in 1946 in Chicago's Grand Boulevard neighborhood. The educators were particularly concerned that many black students in the lower elementary grades did not learn basic skills and therefore were unprepared to successfully matriculate throughout and beyond the high school grade levels. Therefore, the summer program taught pre-school, first, and second grade students spelling, reading, arithmetic, language arts, art and music. June Currin served as the school's registrar and taught art. Doris Anderson became the school's director and handled the school's publicity, recruitment of students, and other administrative matters. Charlotte Stratton, serving as principal, supervised most of the vacation school's day to day activities. [12]

From its beginning years, Howalton received support from Chicago's black middle class. The vacation school was held at the Michigan Boulevard Garden Homes (also known as Rosenwald Gardens), which was an apartment complex specifically built for middle class African-

---

[10] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 81.

[11] "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA. Doris Allen eventually married James Anderson and took on his last name. All subsequent references will refer to the surname she adopted after marriage.

[12] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Vacation School Brochure, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature, HSA.

Americans. Many of the children who attended the vacation school came from families who lived in the housing community. Two prominent middle class black Chicagoans also aided in the school's early development. Rosenwald Gardens manager Robert Taylor and Oneida Cockrell, who headed the complex's nursery school and kindergarten, allowed the school to use the facility. Taylor became the first black chairman of the Chicago Housing Authority. Cockrell, in addition to her duties at Rosenwald Gardens, worked as a teacher and consultant at the prestigious University of Chicago Laboratory School and was regularly featured in the *Chicago Defender* as an education commentator.[13]

The success of the vacation school can be surmised by the support it received from its patrons. The demand from parents was sufficient enough for the founders to establish another vacation school the following summer of 1947. Parents subsequently persuaded the founders to transition Howalton into a full day school consisting of only the first grade. With that modest start during the regular academic year, Currin, Anderson, and Stratton planned to add a grade each year up to the sixth. Howalton would eventually continue to add a level each year until the school included eight grades. A kindergarten was also established during the 1949-1950 school year. While continuing to work in Chicago's public schools, the founders maintained their respective positions at Howalton. They also recruited additional local educators, some of whom enrolled their children. The founders also established the name "Howalton" in 1947 by

[13] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 660-661; Thomas Philpott, *The Slum and the Ghetto,* 255-269; Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism*, 118-119. Cockrell's expertise in the field of education earned her an invitation from Harry Truman to attend the White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1950. See Marion B. Campfield, "Oneida Cockrell's Contributions to Child Education Outstanding," *Chicago Defender,* May 5 1951, 10.

combining each of their maiden names. "How" stood for June Howe; "Al" stood for Doris Allen; and "Ton" stood for Charlotte Stratton.[14]

The trust that the school's parents placed in the founders may have been based on their wide ranging experience as teachers and administrators. June Currin, born in Wisconsin, moved to Chicago and attended Chicago Teachers College and eventually received a master's degree from the Art Institute of Chicago. She worked as an art teacher at Forrestville and eventually moved to Englewood High School serving in the same capacity. She left both Englewood and Howalton in 1953 when she moved to California. Charlotte Stratton, who served as a Howalton board member and the school's first principal from its inception until the 1960-1961 school year was born in Maine. The founders may have decided to appoint Stratton principal because she had prior administrative experience and was nearing retirement at Douglas Elementary School.[15]

Doris Anderson was the driving force behind Howalton in its early years. It was her idea to start the vacation school. She also served as the head administrator of Howalton Day School until she resigned from her director position in 1972. Born to black educators in Dallas, Anderson eventually moved to Chicago with her sister Ethel who also taught in the Chicago school system and served as a teacher and administrator at Howalton. After moving to Chicago, Anderson attended Chicago Teachers College, took courses that were provided by the Chicago Board of Education, and received a master's degree in education at Northwestern University. She took additional graduate courses and attended workshops at the University of Chicago.

---

[14] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; The Three Founders, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA.

[15] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; The Three Founders, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA.

Anderson's tenure in the public school system of Chicago provided her with experience and made her keenly aware of the challenges black students faced. As mentioned earlier, she experienced dramatic overcrowding at Forestville. In a resume, she noted that she taught at a school (possibly Forestville) that was so overcrowded that its administrators instituted three separate shifts for students. Anderson also worked at a school on Chicago's West Side that was so unstable that "each September teachers returned to find a new principal." After founding Howalton, she moved to Daniel Hale Williams School where she worked as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal. She remained at Williams until her resignation from the public school system of Chicago.[16]

The founders were aided by the Howalton's board of directors, which functioned as the school's governing body. The board took care of administrative duties such as the selection of school personnel, the supervision of the educational program, and finance matters. Arthur Knight, who owned his own insurance company, Knight Insurance Agency, served as Howalton's first board of directors chairman from 1947 to 1966.[17] Howalton's initial board also included the school's founders, educators Oneida Cockrell and Allison Davis, social worker Mildred Shaw, and publisher John Sengstacke. Sengstacke and Davis, two of the board's most prominent members, also served as Howalton's publicity chairman and education advisor respectively. Sengstacke

---

[16] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; The Three Founders, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; Profile Sketch-Ethel Boswell Darden, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA. Doris B. Anderson, Resume, Box 1, Manuscripts-Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; Letter from Robert Lewis to Doris Anderson, October 30, 1957, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA.

[17] See Howlaton Day School Prospectus, (n.d.), Box 1, Drafts-Brochures (Promo), HSA. Arthur Knight also served as vice-president of the Unity Funeral Parlors, Inc., assistant to the vice president of North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company, and as a member of the executive committee and board of directors of Drexel National Bank. His other philanthropic work included his service as the first African-American president of the Illinois Area Council of YMCAs and a member of the board of directors of the YMCA of Chicago and the Washington Park YMCA. " Head of Howalton Board Boosts Grace Bumbry Benefit Concert," *Chicago Defender,* February 8, 1964, p. 6; " Arthur Knight's Wife Dies," *Daily Defender,* January 10, 1974, p. 3.

headed Chicago's leading black newspaper, *The Chicago Defender*. Allison Davis, a professor of education, was the first African-American hired as an instructor at the University of Chicago.[18] Davis's research critiqued the ability of standardized tests to assess the intelligence of students, particularly when these tests did not account for a student's race and class. It is plausible that in his role as educational advisor, Davis helped the school assess students' performance and develop an educational program that took into account the children's race and class.[19]

Howalton parents also played a critical role in the school's early development. The Howalton Parents Council functioned like a parent-teacher association in that it was comprised of both parents and teachers. Only parents, however, were officers of the Parents Council. The association coordinated various social and fundraising activities for the school. Every parent was expected to join and pay an annual membership fee. The Parents Council also functioned as a forum for both parents and teachers to discuss strategies for school improvement. Howalton educators also encouraged parents to reinforce the values they learned at school in their homes. The school held workshops and sent memos to parents which recommended that

[18] Howalton Day School Brochure, Box 1, Manuscripts- Historical Sketches on Howalton School (n.d.), HSA. Davis' research critiqued the ability of standardized tests to assess the intelligence of students, particularly when these tests did not account for a student's race and class. It is plausible that in his role as educational advisor, Davis helped the school assess students' performance and develop an educational program that took into account the children's race and class. For further elaboration on Davis' career see Michael R. Hillis, "Allison Davis and the Study of Race, Social Class, and Schooling," *The Journal of Negro Education* 64, no.1 (Winter 1995)

[19] Howalton Day School Brochure, Box 1, Manuscripts- Historical Sketches on Howalton School (n.d.), HSA; Howalton Day School Brochure, 1950-1951, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA; Michael R. Hillis, "Allison Davis and the Study of Race, Social Class, and Schooling," *The Journal of Negro Education* 64, no.1 (Winter 1995). For texts written by Allison Davis see Allison Davis, *Social-Class Influences Upon Learning* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948); Allison Davis, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941); Davis also collaborated on Kenneth Walter Eells, *Intelligence and Cultural Differences: A Study of Cultural Learning and Problem Solving* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

they show an interest in students' schoolwork, provide a quiet place to study, and take their children to the library and museums.[20]

Howalton also kept its supporters abreast of school events through newsletters and other literature. These periodicals came under a variety of names such as *Howalton News, Howalton Star,* and *Howalton Monthly News* and were published by its students, staff, and parents. The first available newsletter *Howalton News,* was organized by students in 1953. It included news articles and assignments. Staff and parent publications often announced school honors and upcoming events. Although there is no comprehensive inventory of Howalton periodicals, remaining documents range from the early 1950s to the early 1980s.[21]

Many parents sent their children to Howalton to avoid the many challenges, particularly overcrowding, that beset Chicago's public educational system. As mentioned earlier, several activist organizations saw overcrowding as one of the most serious problems in black public schools. On the other hand, Howalton maintained small class sizes. The school had 22 students and three teachers for its inaugural first grade class. Also, June Currin and Doris Anderson occasionally came to the school to help with instruction. By 1949, there were less than 15 students per teacher.[22] It should be noted that Howalton deliberately maintained small class sizes. In its fifth year, rising demand forced the school to implement a waiting list. This waiting

[20] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; To the Parent, Box 3, Correspondence- Howalton to Parents (1963-1974), HSA; From Howalton to Parents, (n.d.), Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA. Howalton also established a Father's Club in its early years. However, this association eventually disbanded.

[21] For Howalton newsletters see Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA; Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA.

[22] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Howalton Day School Newsletter, December 1949, Box 1, Drafts-Brochures/promo, HSA.

list would eventually grow to more than 200 children, which was larger than the school's entire enrollment.[23]

Along with small class sizes, progressive educational practices were a defining feature of the school's curriculum. In its 1949 school newsletter, Howalton stressed that it used "progressive methods of motivating learning." Also, the Howalton 1949-1950 brochure noted that "Howalton accepts the philosophy of progressive education."[24] Educational historian Larry Cuban describes progressive or student-centered instruction as a pedagogical style that allows for greater student autonomy. It is characterized by student input in curriculum decisions, individual and small group learning, the use of diverse instructional materials (i.e. activity centers, learning stations, etc.), interdisciplinary approaches, and that classroom furniture is organized in a manner that allows pupils to work among themselves. On the other hand, teachers play more of a dominant role in traditional or teacher centered education. Features of traditional pedagogy include minimal student input in curriculum choices, whole group instruction, and the use of textbooks as primary instructional guides.[25]

Early photographs of Howalton show an adoption of many of the above mentioned progressive techniques. A brochure issued during the 1950-1951 school year featured a photo that showed six students standing at a chalkboard performing their own individual math problems. The teacher in the photo was not the center of each child's attention. Instead she is shown helping one to three students at the chalkboard. Another photograph in the brochure

---

[23] "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *The University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Preliminary Version of the Howalton School Building Fund Brochure (September 1973), Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA. *The University Woman* was a periodical that was published by the Illinois branch of the American Association of University Women.

[24] Howalton Day School Newsletter, December 1949, Box 1, Drafts-Brochures/promo, HSA; Howalton Day School Brochure, 1949-1950, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature, HSA.

[25] Larry Cuban, *How Teaches Taught*, 5-7.

shows eight students, seven who were seated in a circular table and one who was seated to the side of the classroom. Like the students in the previous photograph, the pupils in this picture were not seated in a traditional row of desks and were not facing a chalkboard and a teacher. The students, however, are shown reading and writing by themselves.[26]

These photographs indicate several features of progressive education. They show instruction occurring in individual and small group settings. The instructors are not the center of the students' attention. In addition, the classroom furniture is not arranged in desks pointing to the teacher. Instead the school used circular and rectangle tables that allowed students to work among themselves.

Although Howalton's early literature showcased its pedagogical practices, it obscured the racial identity of the school's educators and patrons. Interestingly, Howalton educators rarely identified the school as a black educational institution in its early years. However, it can be argued that the school used a "hidden transcript" to describe its racialized purpose of providing black students with an educational alternative to the racist public school system of Chicago.[27] Howalton often used the word "community" as a synonym for African-Americans generally, and black Chicagoans in particular. For example, in a letter written in 1948, which solicited financial assistance, the school's administrators stated: "Our community has long needed a private institution which stresses the development of individual needs, capacities and abilities. Many children become frustrated and confused when placed in overcrowded classes

---

[26] Howalton Day School Brochure, 1950-1951, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA.

[27] For a discussion of hidden transcripts see James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

for their first years of school."[28] As mentioned earlier, predominantly black public schools in Chicago were consistently overcrowded. The same use of the word "community" is found in one of Howalton's earlier brochures which stated that Howalton emphasized "progressive education and [was] desirous that more children begin their formal education under individual guidance and instruction in small groups. A survey reveals a great need in the community for such a school."[29] Again, the statement is devoid of explicit racial language. However, the brochure referred to the overcrowding in Chicago's public schools which disproportionately affected the city's black students.

Howalton's use of the words "democracy" and "citizenship" can also be seen as hidden transcripts that masked the school's racialized mission. For example, Howalton's 1949-1950 brochure did not identify the race of the school's founders but referred to them as "civic minded public school teachers." Similarly, when discussing the sociopolitical goals of Howalton, the brochure said nothing about serving Chicago's black community. However, it noted that the school was responsible for teaching students the "necessary qualities for citizenship and leadership." The brochure went on to say that Howalton believed in both "progressive education" and that "a good school provides a frame work in which children may operate democratically."[30]

There are several possible influences on the school's emphasis on democracy and citizenship. The school was established during the beginning stages of the Cold War which often prompted African-Americans to illuminate their patriotism and demonstrate their loyalty to the

---

[28] Letter from Howalton to Robert Cole, December 17, 1948, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA.

[29] Howalton Day School Brochure, 1950-1951, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA.

[30] Howalton Day School Brochure, 1949-1950, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature, HSA.

United States.[31] Also, given the above quote in the brochure, it is probable that the school's emphasis on democracy and citizenship stemmed from their adoption of progressive education. Progressive educators such as John Dewey believed that schools should provide a democratic environment for children where diverse opinions were tolerated, which allowed for the full individual growth of all students. This school environment would serve as a model for the larger society. In addition, students were expected to reproduce the democratic principles they learned in school beyond the campus' boundaries.[32]

Howalton's emphasis on democracy and citizenship may have also drawn from the experiences and educational ideas of African-Americans. Vanessa Siddle Walker has shown how black educators appropriated the concepts of citizenship and democracy for their own means. Specifically, they critiqued African-Americans' second class citizenship and advocated that blacks receive all of the rights and privileges afforded to American citizens.[33] Civil Rights activist, Septima Clark also established Citizenship Schools in resistance to the racial oppression of the Jim Crow South. These schools promoted African-American civic engagement and developed leaders who challenged racial discrimination.[34] Noted African-American leader W.E.B. DuBois also believed that education was key in African-Americans' struggle for full equality. In the early 20th century, he argued that a "talented tenth," of the most educated African-Americans would

[31] For the impact of the Cold War on African-Americans see Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize;* Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights.*

[32] Arthur Zilversmit, *Changing Schools,* 8.

[33] Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Hello Professor: A Black Principal and Professional Leadership in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 99-103.

[34] For work on Septima Clark's Citizenship Schools see Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

lead the race's movement for progressive sociopolitical change.[35] Similar to these teachers and leaders, Howalton educators saw themselves as giving students academic training and an overall education that would prepare graduates to assume their rightful roles as full members of American society.

Nonetheless, it is not clear that the study of African-descendant peoples was a dominant theme in Howalton's early curriculum. There were no specific courses on the subject and it is not apparent that Howalton educators integrated black history and culture in other areas of study.[36] However, it is clear that the school provided students with opportunities to develop an appreciation for the experiences of blacks outside of the classroom. Students sang James Weldon Johnson's "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (often referred to as the African-American national anthem) at school programs. The song was featured as early as the closing program for the vacation school and in the school's first promotional exercise.[37] Howalton students also learned about the history and culture of Africa in 1949, when two Howalton supporters, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Banks made a presentation about their study and experiences on the continent in a program called "Children of Africa."[38] Students also completed service activities by regularly

---

[35] W.E.B. Dubois, "The Talented Tenth," in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today* (New York: J. Pott and Co., 1903); David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. DuBois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919* (New York: H. Holt, 1993).

[36] Howalton students and teachers may have used books by and about blacks held at the Parkway Community House (PCH), where the school relocated after it moved from Rosenwald Gardens. The Parkway Community House was a community center that provided African-Americans on Chicago's South Side with a nursery, youth educational and social programs, literacy classes, and dormitories for residents. For further information on the PCH see Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism,* 34-49.

[37] Program for the Vacation School, Box 2, Promotional Flyers- Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA; Annual Spring Program, 1953, Box 2, Promotional Flyers- Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA.

[38] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA. A lecture on Africa was also the focus of the school's second annual benefit tea in 1951. See Flyer for Second Annual Benefit Tea, Box 2, Promotional Flyers- Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA

donating supplies to local African-American institutions such as Chicago's black Provident Hospital.[39]

These various aspects of Howalton's educational program resulted in success in the school's early years. One example is the growth of Howalton's enrollment. By the end of the school's first year, the original enrollment of 13 students increased to 22. During the 1948-1949 school year the school accepted 30 students and the following year 40 pupils attended the school. As stated earlier, Howalton had to establish a waiting list in its fifth year to accommodate the rise in demand.[40]

Howalton students also achieved academic success. An internal history reported that in the school's early years Howalton students performed better on standardized tests than most public school pupils in Chicago and compared favorably with other prestigious private schools such as the University of Chicago Laboratory School.[41] Howalton graduates also performed well at other secondary schools and colleges. Four of the five students in Howalton's first sixth grade graduating class of 1953 went on to attend the University of Chicago Laboratory School for their junior high school education. Four of these five students would also go on to college such as Patricia Turner who attended Wellesley College and subsequently graduated from the

---

[39] Henry McGee, "Howalton Students Play Santa for Little Chums at Provident," *The Chicago Defender,* December 20, 1952 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA.

[40] "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Preliminary Version of the Howalton School Building Fund Brochure (September 1973), Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA.

[41] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA. The University of Chicago Laboratory School is a prestigious private school associated with the University of Chicago and founded by prominent educator John Dewey. See Ida B. DePencier, *The History of the Laboratory Schools: The University of Chicago, 1896*-1965 (Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1967).

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This cohort ultimately pursued careers in various fields such as education, public relations, city planning, and the military.[42]

There were also challenges in Howalton's early years. Its major problem was procuring an adequate building. The expansion of its student population forced the school to reside in three different locations during its first seven years. Howalton moved to the Parkway Community House (PCH) on Chicago's South Side in its second year and then to a nearby location called the Blackstone Building in 1953.[43] Nonetheless, neither of these sites allowed the school to accommodate its growing demand. Howalton's frustration was exacerbated by its inability to secure a building of its own. A letter written to the PCH noted that Howalton did "not feel that our present quarters as they stand would accommodate our probable increase in enrollment" yet "it seems necessary to raise more funds before assuming the responsibility of permanent housing."[44] Howalton continued to seek adequate housing in the decades that followed.

Despite their inability to secure a permanent building, Howalton educators and supporters could be proud of the success they achieved in their early years. The school began as a summer program and was received well enough to be converted into a full day school. The school also enjoyed the support of parents and notable community leaders. In addition, Howalton could also boast that its students enjoyed notable academic achievement.

---

[42] "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Doris Anderson to Board of Directors, June 10, 1969, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA; *Howalton News* 1, no. 2 (June 1953) in Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA.

[43] Doris Allen, Charlotte Stratton, and June Howe Currin to Parents, August 1, 1948, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA.; Faith Jefferson Jones to Mildred Shaw, December 13, 1949, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA; Faith Jefferson Jones to Mildred Shaw, December 13, 1949, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA.

[44] Unnamed member of Howalton Board of Directors to Faith J. Jones, Undated, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA.

1954-1968

America witnessed an unprecedented economic boom during the 1950s. Pent up demand from the wartime restriction on consumer goods and increased military spending as a result of the Cold War fueled this growth. The gross national product of the United States grew 250 percent between 1945 and 1960. The nation's per capita income also increased by 35 percent during this time period.[45] Some African-Americans also shared in this prosperity. Nationally, the percentage of black males employed in middle class occupations rose from 9.4% in 1940 to 24% in 1960. Furthermore, the percentage of black males employed in lower-class jobs decreased from 78.1% in 1940 to 50.7% in 1960.[46] Black Chicagoans also experienced economic growth at this time. The median income of black male workers in the city grew from $2,361 to $4,104 from 1950 to 1960. In addition, African-American median income in Chicago was greater than all other cities except for Detroit during this decade.[47]

Despite these economic gains, social and political equality remained elusive for many African-Americans. Even in the economic sphere, blacks did not equally share in the country's postwar affluence. In Chicago for instance, the gap in family income between whites and blacks

---

[45] Gary A. Donaldson, *Abundance and Anxiety: America, 1945-1960* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 123-124. Also see Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003); David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York: Villard Books, 1993).

[46] William Julius Wilson, *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974; 2nd. ed., 1980)127-129. Wilson uses E. Franklin Frazier's conception of middle class as individuals who are employed in white-collar jobs and craftsmen and foreman positions. See E. Franklin Frazier, *The Black Bourgeoisie* (New York: The Free Press, 1957). Wilson considers service workers, farm workers, and unskilled laborers as lower class occupations.

[47] Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 10-11. Several other scholars have also acknowledged the growth of Chicago's black middle class after World War II. See Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership,* 137-141; Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 28-29; William Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit,* 119; Mary Pattillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 16-30.

had actually grown after World War II.[48] Racial discrimination effectively denied many African-Americans access to decent schools, jobs, and houses. Blacks responded to these and other inequalities by launching the Civil Rights Movement.

Many of the earlier battles of the Civil Rights Movement focused on education. The NAACP spearheaded the judicial attack on the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* statute which allowed the South to maintain segregated schools. Initially, the NAACP tried cases that would force southern school districts to uphold *Plessy*'s "separate but equal" doctrine. The organization believed that the sheer cost of maintaining equal facilities for blacks and whites would force the South to abandon segregation. The NAACP also built a legal precedent for k-12 integration by attacking the discriminatory policies of post-baccalaureate programs. With the help of the NAACP, blacks won Supreme Court cases against the discriminatory policies of the University of Missouri, the University of Texas, and the University of Oklahoma. These cases ultimately led to the 1954 *Brown vs. Board* decision which overturned the *Plessy* decision and allowed for school desegregation.[49]

African-Americans soon moved the struggle for civil rights beyond the courtroom. One year after the *Brown* decision, blacks in Montgomery, Alabama launched a boycott that eventually desegregated the city's transit system and catapulted the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) into national prominence. Direct action techniques were also used by youth who initiated sit-ins at a segregated Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina in 1960. This sit-in movement spread across the South and resulted

---

[48] Philip M. Hauser and Evelyn M. Kitagawa, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1950* (Chicago: Chicago Community Inventory, University of Chicago, 1953), 7; Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1960* (Chicago: Chicago Community Inventory, University of Chicago, 1963), 269.

[49] Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice*; Mark V. Tushnet, *The NAACP's Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education.*

in the establishment of one of the Civil Rights Movement's leading organizations, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). A year later, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) gained national attention by leading an interracial group of "freedom riders" into the south to test interstate segregation practices. Momentum for the Civil Rights Movement was continued through the March on Washington and demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project in 1964, and a voting rights campaign in Selma in 1965. These various struggles led to the landmark legislative victories in the middle 1960s the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.[50]

These various struggles were aided by a growth of liberalism in the United States. Since Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, the United States federal government increasingly played a more active role in ameliorating the nation's social problems. Quite possibly, the apex of this movement occurred in the 1960s. Beginning with President John F. Kennedy's New Frontier program and evolving into Lyndon B. Johnson's more expansive Great Society measures, the federal government took unprecedented steps in addressing the demands of the country's most historically oppressed groups. However, this resurgent liberalism was not limited to governmental actions. Various grassroots movements centering on issues such as

[50]For work on the Civil Rights Movement see Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Modern Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: Free Press, 1984); John Dittmer, *Local People: the Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994) Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) August Meier and Elliot M. Rudwick, *CORE*; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle*. For work that challenges this classical chronology of the Civil Rights Movement see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,", Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy.*

student's rights, women's liberation, and opposition to the Vietnam War also gained momentum during the 1960s.[51]

Civil rights victories and the ascendancy of liberalism, however, did little to ameliorate the oppressive conditions of blacks in northern cities such as Chicago. The ability to vote and access public accommodations (rights that blacks in this North gained long before the Civil Rights Movement) did not safeguard them from racial discrimination.[52] Many blacks were forced into northern ghettoes as a result of their exclusion from the federal government's mortgage assistance programs, blockbusting techniques by realtors, and violence by white residents who feared residential integration.[53] Job discrimination also beset black Chicagoans. Despite the growing prosperity of some African-Americans, blacks were still more likely to experience unemployment than whites in the city. Furthermore, African-Americans that found jobs often earned less than whites with similar qualifications.[54]

This racial oppression also affected the city's public school students. A series of damning studies conducted by local branches of the NAACP and Urban league uncovered that Chicago's African-American public school students were most often found in segregated, overcrowded schools with teachers who were less experienced than those found in predominantly white public schools. For instance, the 1958 NAACP study showed that 91% of Chicago's elementary schools were de facto segregated. The NAACP also concluded that black

---

[51] For work on the 1960s see Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1987); David Burner, *Making Peace With the 60s* (Princetion: Princeton University Press, 1996); Van Gosse and Richard Moser, eds.,*The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); Maurice Isserman, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[52] See for instance, Thomas Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008)*;* Jeanne F. Theoharis and Komozi Woodard, eds., *Freedom North*; Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight.*

[53] Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 27, 40-67; Paul L. Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis*, 102-103.

[54] Paul L. Street, *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis,* 112.

schools were more likely to attend double shift schools.[55] Similarly, a 1962 Chicago Urban League report found that black schools received less money per student than white schools and were more likely to be staffed by less experienced teachers and substitute instructors.[56] Local scholars also documented the gross educational inequality in Chicago's schools. In 1964, University of Chicago professors Philip Hauser and Robert Havighurst published two separate accounts that documented extreme segregation and African-American underachievement in Chicago's public schools.[57]

Despite this discrimination, African-American educational activism in Chicago seemingly declined in the 1950s as it accelerated on the national scene with the *Brown* victory. This paradox may have resulted from the fact that segregation in Chicago's public schools had been abolished in the 19th century.[58] Therefore, the legal redress against de jure segregation that the NAACP sought in the *Brown* case would have little bearing on segregation and inequality in Chicago. Nonetheless, Chicago's (and other northern cities) designation as a de facto segregated school system did not mean that there was no governmental role in preventing integration. Local school officials (with the tacit approval of state and federal authorities) gerrymandered school boundaries to keep black and white children segregated, granted

[55] "De Facto Segregation in the Chicago Public Schools," *The Crisis*, 88-90. The NAACP report and most other studies considered a school de facto segregated if it had a student population that was 90% or more black or white.

[56] Taken from Mary J. Herrick, *The Chicago Schools,* 311.

[57] Philip M. Hauser et al., "Report to the Board of Education of the City of Chicago by the Advisory Panel on Integration of the Public Schools," March 31, 1964; Robert J. Havighurst, *The Public Schools of Chicago: A Survey for the Board of Education of the City of Chicago* (Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1964).

[58] Mary J. Herrick, *The Chicago Schools,* 52-53.

transfers to white students who lived in racially mixed areas, and approved the construction of schools in predominantly black or white neighborhoods in order to avoid racial mixture.[59]

The immense problems in Chicago's public schools and the growing prominence of the national Civil Rights Movement inspired local activists who increasingly launched attacks on educational discrimination in the 1960s. Several of these protests against segregation and inequality were led by school specific community groups. In the early 1960s demonstrations were led by concerned parents and community members of Burnside School, Kellogg School, and the Carnegie School. Broader based civil rights organizations such as local branches of the NAACP, CORE, SNCCC, and the Chicago Urban League (CUL) also mounted campaigns against school discrimination.[60]

Chicago's preeminent civil rights organization, the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations (CCCO) spearheaded the most widespread attack on Chicago's public schools. Formed in 1962, the CCCO was a coalition that included many local organizations such as the NAACP, CORE, SNCC, CUL, and various other community groups. Beginning in October 1963 the CCCO initiated a boycott of Chicago's public schools that included more than 200,000 student participants. The organization protested school segregation, poor conditions in African-American public schools, and the removal of Chicago Superintendent Benjamin Willis who consistently denied black demands. The CCCO continued to lead boycotts and marches against the Chicago Board of Education for the next two years. These demonstrations would involve hundreds of thousands of boycotting students and included more than 600 arrests of activists.[61]

---

[59] "De Facto Segregation in the Chicago Public Schools," *The Crisis,* February 1958, 88-92. Information on the Chicago Urban League study is taken from Mary J. Herrick, *The Chicago Schools,* 311.

[60] Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line,* 69-126

[61] Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children,* 25-55.

Despite their efforts, however, the CCCO was unable to gain any major concessions from local officials.

The stalemate in Chicago was in sharp contrast to the progress made in southern school desegregation. After *Brown,* several southern whites avoided desegregation by implementing freedom of choice plans, establishing segregated private schools, and relocating outside of desegregated school districts. However, by the mid 1960s, several key court decisions and the federal government's threat to withhold funds from segregated schools sped the pace of southern school desegregation.[62] Many Chicago activists yearned to share the progress experienced in the southern struggle.

An opportunity arose when the SCLC and their head, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Chicago in 1966 to join forces with the CCCO. The CCCO and SCLC formed the Chicago Freedom Movement (CFM) and in the summer of 1966 initiated a series of demonstrations in several of the city's white working class neighborhoods. The protests caused unfavorable press which forced Chicago Mayor Richard Daley to the negotiation table. To the dismay of many activists, however, the agreement made between the CFM and Daley was largely inconsequential to black Chicagoans. The CFM was unable to secure solid commitments that Chicago officials would work to eradicate segregation. Moreover, the CFM solely focused on the issue of segregated housing and thus other major issues such as education and employment were not addressed. The failure of the campaign persuaded King and the SCLC to leave Chicago the following year.

---

[62] See James Patterson, *Brown v. Board of Education: A Civil Rights Milestone and Its Troubled Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Peter Irons, *Jim Crow's Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision* (New York: Viking, 2002).

Not only did King's withdrawal signal the end of the Chicago Freedom Movement but also dealt a major blow to the prospects of extending earlier southern Civil Rights victories to the North.[63]

On one hand, it seems that the school's curriculum did not reflect national and local civil rights activities. There is no evidence that the school discussed the movement's early campaigns with students. In addition, Howalton in the early 1960s still did not include the study of black history and culture as a major component of its educational program. For instance, the theme for the school's closing program in 1954 focused on different cultures in America. Students performed songs and dances that represented the American West, the antebellum South, Native Americans, and even Mexicans. However the program did not include a presentation that celebrated African-American culture. Even during the apex of the civil rights era in 1964, the school's graduation program had an international theme that focused on the cultures of Denmark, Germany, and Russia, but did not include African diasporic culture. Howalton teachers also taught students about these cultures in classes leading up to the program. This was done so that students would not have to learn something entirely new for the assembly performances.[64]

On the other hand, Howalton did demonstrate a greater racial consciousness during the 1950s and 1960s. For example, one of the first times that Howalton explicitly acknowledged its racial composition occurred in 1964. An advertisement for a school benefit concert noted that Howalton intended "to give as much additional attention and extra materials as talented

---

[63] For work on the CFM see Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line* and James R. Ralph, *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

[64] Howalton Day School Presents This Is Your America, June 16, 1954, Box 2, Program Books-Howalton Day School (1951-1983), HSA; Graduation Exercises and Closing Program of Howalton Day School, June 18, 1964, Box 2, Program Books-Howalton Day School (1951-1983), HSA; Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Vacation School Brochure, Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature, HSA.

youngsters can accept, so they may develop their full potential for adult contributions to society. We need this particularly in the Negro community. . ."[65] Despite notable absences in school programs, assignments on people of African descent also became more common during this period. For example, the 1956 edition of the student newspaper, *The Howalton News* featured an article written by sixth grader Mildred Clark which noted several historical achievements by African Americans. She noted that "We the Negro Race have contributed much to American Civilization" and that blacks participated in the exploration of America and made significant contributions to music in the United States. She also listed early African achievements such as the production of iron ore and the domestication of animals. The newsletter also featured an article by Patricia Turner which discussed a school visit to the George Cleveland Hall Library to attend a lecture on South Africa. Turner even surprised a Hall branch librarian by her knowledge of South Africa.[66]

These articles indicate that Howalton students were provided with opportunities to learn black history and culture. Also, given Clark's article, the school may have promoted or at least permitted students to express a racial consciousness. The students' essays may have drawn from growing African-American interest and pride in the experiences of people of color as reflected in the appeal of the United Nations, their support of various anti-colonial struggles, and the influence of recently independent African countries. According to historian Penny Von Eschen, several African-Americans in the post World War II era "forcefully argued that their

[65] Grace Bumbry Benefit for Howalton Day School letter template from Howalton Joint Planning Committee. 1964, "Grace Bumbry Benefit Concert for Howalton Day School Flyer," Box 2, Promotional Flyers- Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA.

[66] *Howalton News* 4, no. 1 (June 1956) in Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA.

struggles against Jim Crow were inextricably bound to the struggles of African and Asian peoples for independence."[67]

Howalton teachers also made students aware of the latter events in the Civil Rights Movement. In 1965 Howalton organized a fundraising campaign for Unitarian minister James Reeb who was murdered as a result of his involvement in civil rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama. A school letter to parents noted that students "have seen television programs, read news articles, and heard discussions which have stimulated them to want to share in this great movement." Howalton students donated clothes and $100.00 to the Reeb family in his honor.[68] A similar project was organized by students in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in 1968. Students sent $110.00 to the King family. Coretta Scott King also acknowledged Howalton's generosity during a visit to Chicago.[69] The donations made to the Reeb and King families clearly indicate that Howalton provided students with opportunities to engage central issues that impacted African-Americans. Educators informed students of the latter struggles of the Civil Rights Movement even though black studies was not a part of the school's core curriculum. Surely, the youth of Howalton students (grades k-8) hampered their ability to directly take part in civil rights demonstrations. Nonetheless, the pupils' financial contributions demonstrate their awareness and support of the movement's objectives.

---

[67] Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire,* 2. For African-American engagement in international politics also see Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind,* 217-298.

[68] Letter from Irma Johnson, Principal, Regarding Solicitation for James Reeb Foundation (April 7, 1965), Box 2, Promotional Flyers- Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA. James Reeb was a white American Unitarian Universalist minister and member of SCLC from Boston. He was murdered in 1965 by segregationists while participating in demonstrations in Selma, Alabama which focused on black voting rights.

[69] Letter from Doris Anderson to Board of Directors, The Howalton School, January 21, 1969, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA.

The participation of Howalton supporters and educators in activist organizations may have influenced this interest in the Civil Rights Movement. Corinne T. Taylor, Howalton's director of public relations, was also active in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Howalton board member and long time supporter Mildred Shaw raised the substantial sum of $10,000 in support of the prominent civil rights organization, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Another board member, Helen C. Maybell, marched with Martifn Luther King in the 1960s and supported the NAACP. Founder Doris Anderson was a member of the Chicago Urban League while her sister and fellow Howalton administrator, Ethel Darden supported the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.[70] It should be noted that the SCLC, Urban League, SNCC, and NAACP were major proponents of school integration. Nonetheless, members of the Howalton community with ties to these organizations saw no contradiction in their support of a black private school.

During the 1960s, public school teachers and administrators represented the majority of Howalton supporters. As mentioned earlier, educators had always held key positions on Howalton's board of directors. Though exact numbers are unknown, public school teachers also sent their children to Howalton. However, by 1964 60% of Howalton parents were school teachers.[71] The support of educators (and other members of Chicago's black community)

---

[70] Doris B. Anderson, Resume, Box 1, Manuscripts-Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; Profile Sketch-Ethel Boswell Darden, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; "An Impossible Dream Comes True" *University Woman* No. 146, December 1968 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Obituary of Mildred Henson Shaw, Box 1, Manuscripts- Biographical Sketches on/Tributes to Founders, HSA; Obituary of Helen C. Maybell-Anglin, *Chicago Citizen,* September 16, 2009, 13.

[71] Esther Beasley, "Howalton Day School," (Unpublished paper presented at the University of Chicago, 1964) quoted in Donald A. Erickson, *Crisis in Illinois Nonpublic Schools*. For other references to the extensive representation of parents among Howalton teachers see Dorothea Kahn Jaffe, "Chicago School for Negro Tots Accents Arts, Citizenship," *Christian Science Monitor* in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Howlaton Day School Prospectus, (n.d.), Box 1, Drafts-Brochures (Promo), HSA.

spurred growth in Howalton's enrollment. During the 1949-1950 school year Howalton admitted 40 students. However by 1966 its student body quadrupled to 169 students.[72]

Howalton also received greater notoriety from various other sectors of Chicago's black community in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1950s, the Committee of Friends of Howalton formed to organize social and fundraising efforts. Unlike the Parents Council, the members of the Committee of Friends had no children at Howalton.[73] Howalton was also featured in several of Chicago's newspapers such as the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Courier.* Howalton even made national news when the Chicago based *Jet Magazine* featured articles on a Howalton benefit concert featuring African-American opera singer Grace Bumbry.[74] However, the *Chicago Defender*, the city's main black newspaper, featured Howalton most frequently. There were well over 100 articles on Howalton in the newspaper from 1954 to 1968.[75] John Sengstacke's membership to the school's board of directors surely helped Howalton gain this exposure. The positive coverage of the *Defender* is also significant because the newspaper often protested

[72] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Principal's Report: First Semester, 1965-1966, Howalton Day School, Box 1, Principal's Report-The Howalton School (1965-1966), HSA.

[73] Committee of Friends, Howalton Day School, October 28, 1956, Box 2, Program Books-Annual Subscriptions/Benefit Tea, HSA.

[74] "Grace Bumbry Will Sing Howalton School Benefit," *Chicago Tribune,* February 2, 1964, 3; Frederick P. Wall, "Howalton Day School Story of Faith, Determination…" *The Chicago Courier,* May 18, 1963, 20, in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA;"Grace Bumbry to Appear in Benefit Concert," *Jet,* January 30, 1964, 57; "Grace Bumbry to Perform Benefit in Chicago," *Jet,* February 6, 1964, 62. Grace Bumbry is an internationally renowned African-American opera singer who has received accolades in several countries and has performed at Ronal Reagan's presidential inauguration. See "Bumbry Sings at Mandela's Salute," *New York Amsterdam News,* June 16, 1990, 45; "Hostages, Inauguration Share Limelight," *Pittsburgh Courier* February 7, 1981, A10.

[75] For examples of the *Defender's* coverage of Howalton see Henry McGee, "Howalton Students Play Santa for Little Chums at Provident," *The Chicago Defender,* December 20, 1952 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; "Howalton Day School Begins 15th Year in Temporary Home," *Chicago Defender,* August 26, 1961, 6; "Howalton's Theatre Benefit Social, Financial Success," *Chicago Defender,* July 2, 1966, 20.

segregated public and private schools. Nonetheless, the newspaper unequivocally demonstrated support of Howalton, a black educational institution.

Howalton also maintained the support of Chicago's African-American middle class during the 1950s and 1960s. Some black professionals served on the school's board of directors. By 1965 June Currin, Charlotte Stratton, Allison Davis, John Sengstacke, and Mildred Shaw were no longer members of this body. Although there is no record of why Davis, Sengstacke, and Shaw left, Currin moved to California in 1953 and Stratton retired after the 1960-1961 school year. Irma Johnson, who was one of Howalton's first teachers, succeeded Stratton as principal. The other board members were replaced by attorneys Fleetwood McCoy and R. Esdras Turner and educators Arnita Parker, Inez D. Tate, and Joe Anna Mitchell.[76] Howalton also received the support of notable figures such as politician (and eventual Congressman) Ralph Metcalfe, educator Robert E. Lewis, and realtor Dempsey J. Travis. Robert E. Lewis was Chicago's first African-American male principal and eventually became a district superintendent in 1965. Travis headed the Sivart Mortgage Corporation and the United Mortgage Bankers of America, served as president of the Chicago NAACP from 1960-1962, and wrote several books on the history of African-Americans in Chicago.[77]

Several factors account for the extensive middle class support that Howalton received. The expansion of Chicago's wartime and postwar economy augmented the city's black middle

---

[76] "Howalton School Sets Anniversary," *Chicago Defender,* January 15, 1968, 18.

[77] Grace Bumbry Benefit Concert for Howalton Day School Flyer," Box 2, Promotional Flyers-Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA; Frederick P. Wall, "Howalton Day School Story of Faith, Determination…" *The Chicago Courier,* May 18, 1963, 20, in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership,* 197-198; Dempsey J. Travis, *An Autobiography of Black Chicago* (Chicago: Urban Research Institute, 1981); Dempsey J. Travis, *An Autobiography of Black Politics* (Chicago: Urban Research Institute, 1987).

class.[78] Nonetheless, racial discrimination, particularly in the real estate market, confined most African-Americans to ghetto areas regardless of their wealth. The exclusionary policies African-Americans faced in Chicago's public and private school systems also limited their educational options. Therefore, middle class African-Americans were restricted to educational options within the black community. Howalton was one such institution that was perceived as viable and accessible. Educators in particular knew about the difficulties of black public education. For that reason, they were well represented among Chicago's black middle class who pursued educational alternatives beyond the public sector.[79]

A principal's report submitted in the 1965-1966 school year is instructive in understanding the relationship between Howalton and black Chicagoans. The report included a survey of parents who listed why they sent their children to Howalton. Respondents listed "individual guidance" and "small classes" as the two most important reasons.[80] This suggests that Howalton parents believed the school helped to circumvent the most egregious problem in Chicago's black public schools: overcrowding. The parent responses may have also indicated an appreciation of Howalton's emphasis on progressive education. Individual and small group instruction as well as other hallmarks of progressive education continued at Howalton

---

[78] Adam Green, *Selling the Race,* 10-11; Christopher Reed, *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Professional Leadership,* 137-141; William Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit,* 119; Mary Pattillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 16-30.

[79] Although many of Howalton's students came from middle class families, the school did accept children from more humble origins. For instance, the school included students whose parents were on welfare and instituted scholarship programs. See Howalton Day School: A Private School, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA; Letter from Howalton to Robert Cole, December 17, 1948, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA ; Annual Tea Report Committee of Friends-Howalton Day School Y.M.C.A. Hotel October 26, 1958, Box 1, Financial Statements-Howalton School (1951-1975), HSA; Doris Anderson to Board of Directors, The Howalton School, January 21, 1969, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA.

[80] Principal's Report: First Semester, 1965-1966, Howalton Day School, Box 1, Principal's Report-The Howalton School (1965-1966), HSA.

throughout the 1960s. For instance, after becoming principal Irma Johnson instituted science learning corners and a student bank for younger students to learn arithmetic. Johnson's interest in progressive education was also shown when she invited a British educator to the school who was familiar with the new pedagogical trend often referred to as "open education."[81] Although founded in Britain, open education grew in popularity among United States educators who became increasingly interested in student-centered methods in the late 1960s to mid 1970s. Open education included many of the progressive features that Howalton employed in its early years such as small group instruction, relative student autonomy, and learning centers.[82]

The third most popular answer in the principal's report was "association with children of same cultural background."[83] It is likely that "cultural background" refers to the shared racial identity of the students. This may seem ironic given the advocacy of school integration by many African-Americans nationally and locally during this period.[84] However, African-Americans did not speak with one voice. Fiery black leader Malcolm X (El Hajj Malik Shabazz) and his many followers were highly critical of mainstream civil rights objectives such as school integration at this time. Other activists who adopted more radical positions such as SNCC (especially by the mid to late 1960s) also questioned the virtues of integration. Moreover, throughout the 1960s several southern black communities opposed racially discriminatory integration plans that did

---

[81] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Howalton School Archives, Box 1, Historical Sketches, HSA. The student bank is an example that Howalton teachers did not solely rely on textbooks for instruction.

[82] For work on open education and other progressive educational movements in the 1960s and 1970s see Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 228-266; Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught,* 149-204.

[83] Principal's Report: First Semester, 1965-1966, Howalton Day School, Box 1, Principal's Report-The Howalton School (1965-1966), HSA.

[84] Raymond Wolters, *The Burden of Brown: Thirty Years of School Desegregation* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984); George R. Metcalf, *From Little Rock to Boston: The History of School Desegregation* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983)

not take their interests into account.[85] Howalton parents were among these African-Americans who did not necessarily view racially mixed schools as the best means of educating black children.

The various curricular decisions made by Howalton resulted in continued academic success throughout this phase of the school's history. For instance, the October 1964 *Howalton Monthly News* periodical reported that Howalton alumnus Schaun Simmons received an award that allowed her to attend the highly selective Vassar College. The newsletter also reported that Louise Hall of the Howalton class of 1960 had graduated from the University of Chicago Laboratory School and enrolled in Smith College.[86] The academic achievements of Howalton students would gain even greater notoriety in the following decades.

Although Howalton continued its record of academic success while seeing its enrollment and community of supporters grow, it could not overcome the obstacle of acquiring a building of its own in the 1960s. The school held major fundraising drives which included a concert by African-American opera singer Grace Bumbry in 1964 and a benefit program featuring the recently elected black mayor of Gary, Indiana, Richard Hatcher in 1968.[87] However, the school could not secure a facility of its own. In 1961, the school began renting the educational building of St. Paul Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church. The new site was more spacious than

---

[85] For Malcolm X's opposition to school integration see Louis Lomax, *When the Word is Given: A Report on Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, and the Black Muslim World* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1963), 200. For the radical transformation of SNCC see Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle,* 189-286. Also see David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road,* for southern African-American opposition to racially discriminatory integration plans.

[86] *Howalton Monthly News* (1964) in Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA.

[87] "Grace Bumbry to Perform Benefit in Chicago," *Jet,* February 6, 1964, 62; "Hatcher Will speak at Howalton Celebration," *Daily Defender,* January 18, 1968, 27. Hatcher became the city of Gary's first African-American mayor in 1968. He was among a cohort of black mayors who won landmark mayoral races in the 1960s and 1970s. For work on Hatcher see Robert A. Catlin, *Racial Politics and Urban Planning: Gary, Indiana, 1980-1989* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1993); Alex Poinsett, *Black Power: Gary Style; The Making of Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company, 1970).

Howalton's previous facilities and it allowed for the growth of the school's student body. Nonetheless, the building lacked an indoor gymnasium, rooms for a science laboratory, and adequate office space for staff members. The 1961 *Chicago Defender* article that reported Howalton's relocation was ironically titled, "Howalton Day School Begins 15th Year in Temporary Home."[88] Unbeknownst to the newspaper author or members of the Howalton community, the school would remain at St. Paul for the next 22 years.

1968-1986

Several developments in the 1970s and early 1980s dramatically altered the history of Chicago, and consequently Howalton. Decades of white suburbanization and deindustrialization imperiled many American urban centers during this period. These two historical developments removed key sources of revenue from cites and often left behind their poorest residents. Chicago, like many of America's cities experienced decline as a result of suburbanization and deindustrialization. The city's white population decreased from 70% in 1960 to 40% in 1990. In addition, it is estimated that the number of private sector jobs in Chicago dropped 20% between the late 1960s and the early 1980s. Many of these job losses came from the manufacturing industries. From 1967 to 1987, Chicago lost 60% of its jobs in this sector.[89] The resurgence of conservatism at this time also marginalized inner city residents by abandoning the liberal Great Society programs when they were needed most.[90]

---

[88] "Howalton Day School Begins 15th Year in Temporary Home," *Chicago Defender,* August 26, 1961, 6.

[89] John L. Rury, "Race, Space, and the Politics of Chicago's Public Schools", 121-123; Thomas Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis;* William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged;* William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears.*

[90] For the growth of the conservative movement during this period see, Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics* (Baton Rouge; Louisiana State University Press,1995); Thomas Bynre and Mary D. Edsall, *Chain*

America's turn to the right also impacted school integration efforts. As part of his strategy to win southern votes, President Richard Nixon vigorously opposed the enforcement of *Brown.* His tactics proved successful when the Supreme Court judges he appointed became key figures in the *Milliken vs. Bradley* decision of 1974. The *Milliken* decision prevented Detroit (and as a result other metropolitan areas) from combining students in city and suburban school districts in desegregation. This ruling became increasingly significant for cities such as Chicago whose white population precipitously dropped as a result of suburbanization. The White House's attack on desegregation also included busing. Nixon made opposition to busing one of his major domestic priorities. Many of these policies would be supported by subsequent administrations and some whites in several American cities who vigorously opposed integration.[91]

African-American skepticism regarding the federal government's role in its freedom struggle coincided with these conservative efforts. By the late 1960s the Civil Rights Movement transitioned to the more radical Black Power Movement. During this change, nonviolent strategies and goals focusing on inclusion in the American polity grew out of favor with many African-Americans who grew frustrated with the pace and results of civil rights reforms. On the other hand, Black Power activists embraced racial pride, black self-determination, African culture, and an identification with people of color around the world (especially those engaged in anti-colonial struggles). New organizations such as the Black Panther Party, The US Organization, and the Congress of African People emerged while other groups such as CORE and

---

Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics (New York: Norton, 1992); William C. Berman, *America's Right turn: from Nixon to Clinton* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[91] Gary Orfield and Susan E. Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown vs. Board of Education* (New York: New Press, 1996), 9-22, 64-65; Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston Against Busing: Race Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); George R. Metcalf, *From Little Rock to Boston.*

SNCC distanced themselves from the mainstream Civil Rights Movement and adopted the tenets of Black Power.[92]

Black Power activism also spread to America's public schools by way of the community control movement. Proponents of this movement abandoned desegregation and instead sought the improvement of black school facilities, a greater role for blacks in the construction of school policy, and a curriculum that focused on people of African descent. These campaigns would spread across the country in several urban centers. One of the most famous examples of community control occurred in Brooklyn, New York in the late 1960s when a black governing board took control of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district and removed several Jewish teachers. This decision divided the city and sparked national debates over the most appropriate strategies and goals of black educational reform.[93]

Several other black educational activists who opposed integration also established their own schools during this period. The Black Power Movement's stress on autonomy and growing disillusionment with public education resulted in the spread of independent black schools (commonly known as independent black institutions or "Ibis") throughout the country. These independent black institutions often incorporated tenets of black nationalism in their academic programs. The growth of this movement was largely aided by the Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI), which functioned as a consortium of such schools. Founded in 1972, CIBI provided a forum which allowed its member institutions to share ideas, develop curriculum, and

---

[92] For work on the Black Power Movement see Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour*; Peniel E. Joseph ed. *The Black Power Movement*; Charles E. Jones ed. *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*; Yohuru Williams, *Black Politics/White Power*); Scot Brown, *Fighting for Us;* Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation*; August Meier and Elliot M. Rudwick, *CORE*; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle.*

[93] Daniel H. Perlstein, *Justice, Justice: School Politics and the Eclipse of Liberalism* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2004); Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars*; Jeffrey Mirel, *Rise and Fall of an Urban School System*, 298-370; Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children.*

construct a mutually supportive network.[94] Chicago became a major center for the independent black school movement. By 1981, the Chicago metropolitan area had the largest number of CIBI member institutions in the country.[95]

Historical developments in Chicago mirrored these various national trends. As mentioned earlier, white suburbanization hampered any citywide desegregation efforts. In 1950 whites comprised more than 62% of the total enrollment in Chicago's public schools. By 1983 that percentage had dwindled to 16.3%. Blacks, on the other hand, continued to comprise a greater portion of the total enrollment in Chicago's public schools during this time period. In 1950 African-Americans only accounted for 36.1% of the city's public school population. This percentage increased to 60.7% by 1983.[96]

Along with these demographic circumstances, white opposition frustrated desegregation efforts in Chicago. After Superintendent Benjamin Willis retired in 1966, his two successors James Redmond and Joseph Hannon, demonstrated a greater interest in racially mixed schools. Redmond and Hannon developed desegregation plans that involved busing, boundary changes, and student transfers. However, staunch opposition from white Chicagoans stifled the superintendents' proposals. In addition, the federal government, which had initially pressured Chicago to desegregate in the 1960s, had become more conservative by the 1980s and allowed the city to maintain a limited policy that produced few racially mixed schools. By 1988, 69% of African-Americans attended virtually all black public schools.[97]

---

[94] Lisa M. Stulberg, *Race, Schools, and Hope: African Americans and School Choice After Brown* (New York: Teachers College, 2008), 53-69.

[95] *Fundisha!-Teach!,* 5, no. 3 (1981) in CIBI Folder, from the private collection of Soyini Rochelle Walton.

[96] Paul Kleppner, *Chicago Divided*, 55.

[97] Paul E. Peterson, *School Politics*, 143-144; Kleppner, *Chicago Divided*, 54-63.

School desegregation, however, was only one of many problems in the public school system of Chicago. Racial minorities in the school system continued to experience academic problems during this period. For instance, only 38% of the 1980 incoming freshmen class of blacks and Hispanics in nonselective, segregated high schools graduated in 1984. Of those who did graduate, only 21% read at the national average.[98] In addition, the public school system's predominantly minority student population continued to perform poorly on standardized tests. In 1987 it was reported that the average score of public school students who took the American College Test (ACT) was lower than all other metropolitan school districts in Illinois.[99] Chicago's public schools also experienced major financial hardships and were on the brink of bankruptcy in the late 1970s and 1980s as a result of bureaucratic mismanagement. These poor conditions were given national recognition in 1987 when secretary of Education William Bennett declared "Chicago's public schools are the worst in the nation."[100] Given the magnitude of these problems, several African-Americans questioned if desegregation could resolve the many problems of Chicago's public schools.

Black Power adherents were among the cohort of black Chicagoans who questioned school desegregation. Chicago became a center of Black Power activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The movement in Chicago included a wide range of activists such as the artists group the Organization of Black American Culture (OBAC), revolutionary black nationalists such as the Illinois Black Panther Party, and black cultural nationalists such as the Institute of Positive

---

[98] William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 57-58.

[99] G. Alfred Hess, Jr., *School Restructuring, Chicago Style* (Newberry Park, CA: Corwin Press, 1990), 21-22.

[100] *Chicago Tribune*, November 7, 1987, 1; For details of bureaucratic mismanagement see G. Alfred Hess, *School Restructuring, Chicago Style,* 23-30.

Education. The Institute of Positive Education would go on to establish its own private school in 1972.[101]

Black Power activism also appeared in Chicago's public schools in the form of the community control movement. Although parents and teachers participated in this struggle for greater black autonomy in the public schools, high school students played the greatest role in this struggle. Some protests responded to specific conditions at individual schools. However, by 1968, more than 20,000 African-American students conducted a series of coordinated demonstrations involving several schools throughout the city. Students specifically demanded additional black administrators, more black history courses, and holidays in celebration of notable black historical figures.[102] For example, in October 1968, the *Chicago Defender* reported that 500 pupils from Austin High School staged a walkout and subsequent march on the Chicago Board of Education to demand more black teachers, administrators, and an expansion of the school's black studies program. Students in Chicago also clashed with administrators who opposed their activism. For instance, the same *Defender* article noted that the suspension of a high school student leader at Harrison High School sparked a walkout that included more than 500 pupils. The student activist, Sharon Matthews, was suspended for disobeying the principal's demands to end a demonstration at the school.[103]

---

[101]For work on the contributions of black Chicagoans to the national Black Arts Movement see James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement*, 179-246. Jon F. Rice provides one of the most comprehensive studies of the Illinois Black Panther Party in "Black Radicalism on Chicago's West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party," (Ph.D. diss, Northern Illinois University, 1998). Chapter five in this dissertation provides further information on the Institute of Positive Education and its private school, New Concept Development Center.

[102] See Dionne Danns, *Something Better For Our Children.*

[103] Donald Mosby, "Discontent Continues to Vex City Schools," *Chicago Defender,* October 9, 1968, 1.

As a result of these various historical developments, Howalton emphasized a greater racial consciousness than it had in the past. By the 1970s Howalton required its students to take an African Studies class that taught African history, song, and dance. Assignments that centered on the experiences of African-Americans were also featured more prominently in the school's literature. For instance, the entire 1976 edition of the student newsletter *Howalton Speaks* was devoted to black history. The newsletter featured poems and articles on major African-American historical figures such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Harriet Tubman.[104] Howalton also departed from its early history by ostensibly identifying itself as a "black" private school. For instance, to promote a Gospel benefit concert, the school advertised, "Join us as the oldest Black Nonsectarian, Private elementary school in Chicago highlights gospel, a Black music contribution to the world."[105]

The school's collaboration with educational activists in Chicago's public schools may have helped facilitate these curriculum changes. In the early to mid 1970s, librarian Charlemae Rollins and educators Madeline and Samuel Stratton served as advisors to Howalton. Rollins promoted positive depictions of African-American life and history by writing her own books, organizing storytelling sessions, lecture series, and art exhibits for youth throughout Chicago. Along with advising Howalton educators, Rollins assisted many public school students who attended her events. Several Chicago PTAs also worked with Rollins. Noted African-American educators, Madeline and Samuel Stratton, also traversed both public and private sectors by working with Howalton. The married couple worked as public school educators and staunchly

---

[104] Howalton Day School Brochure n.d. Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature, HSA; *Howalton Speaks,*1. no. 2, (April 1976), Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA.

[105] The Howalton School Presents a Benefit-Gospel Showcase (1983), Box 2, Promotional Flyers-Howalton School Events (1950-1983), HSA.

advocated the study of black history and culture. Chicago's public schools even adopted a curriculum they designed in the early 1940s.[106]

Other educational activists supported Howalton in various other ways during the 1970s and 1980s. Noted educator, Barbara Sizemore sent her son to Howalton and worked to help the school receive external funding. Sizemore most famously became the first black woman to head a major city school system when she became the superintendent of the Washington D.C. public schools in 1972. She was particularly interested in closing the achievement gap between black and white students as well as ensuring that black students received a culturally relevant education. Sizemore also supported student demonstrators during Chicago's community control movement.[107] Margaret Burroughs is another public school teacher who lent her support to Howalton. The instructor, however, is more popularly known for promoting African-American art and history by establishing Chicago's DuSable Museum. Burroughs, recognized as a supporter of Howalton during a 1983 founder's day celebration, also served as the program's honorary chairperson.[108]

---

[106] Howalton Board of Directors to Parent, July 10, 1973, Box 3, Correspondence, Fleetwood McCoy (1960-1974), HSA; Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism,* 60-62, 81-83.

[107] Howalton Day School Roster, 1966-1967, Box 3, Documentation on Alumni-Miscellaneous (1965-1967), HSA; Doris Anderson to Barbara Sizemore, May 11, 1970, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA. Sizemore referred Doris Anderson to Charles Smith of the Rockefeller Foundation. Anderson in turn kept Sizemore abreast of the success of the school. For example, she sent Sizemore a copy of the comprehensive report conducted by the Illinois Sate of Education. See Robert C. Grant, Director II of Department of Recognition and Supervision of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Illinois, to Doris Anderson, March 22, 1971, Box 1, State of Illinois Reports- Howalton Item School (1970s), HSA. For work on Barbara Sizemore see Yvonne Shinhoster Lamb, "Barbara Sizemore Dies," *Washington Post,* July 28, 2004, B06; Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children,* 85; Raymond Wolters, *The Burden of Brown,* 53-55.

[108] Unsigned and undated letter to Friend of Howalton, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA; Mildred Johnson to Friend of Youth, April 12, 1983, Box 3, Correspondence-Miscellaneous (1948-1972), HSA. Margaret Burroughs played a prominent role in the founding of Chicago's DuSable Museum in 1961. The museum focuses on the history and culture of people of African

Howalton instructors were key in the school's promotion of a black racial consciousness. Mildred Johnson, a teacher and principal at Howalton, was also a poet, playwright, and award-winning author of children's literature. Many of her artistic productions, some of which involved Howalton students, contained themes that were advocated by Black Power Movement participants. For example, her 1971 book, *Just a Few Lines. . .Poems to Teach Black Pride included* poems on the history and culture of the African diaspora. Howalton students drew several illustrations for the book.[109] Sunday Ikoh, a native Nigerian began teaching at Howalton in 1971 and was key in implementing the study of people of African descent. Ikoh taught the school's African Studies course which included the history and culture of African people, particularly the Ibo of Nigeria. Howalton students also performed several of the Ibo songs they learned from Ikoh at school programs.[110] In addition, a photograph of Ikoh showed him sitting at his desk with a copy of *Modern Poetry from Africa* which was edited by major African literary critics Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier. The picture also showed a copy of Ivan Van Sertima's *They Came Before Columbus*. *They Came Before Columbus* argues that Africans migrated and built settlements in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans. The photograph suggests that Ikoh taught Howalton students African literature as well as black transnationalism.[111]

---

descent. For work on Burroughs and the DuSable museum see, James Smethurst, *Black Arts Movement,* 196-198; Anne Meis Knupfer, *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism*, 67-71.

[109] Mildred D. Johnson, *Just a Few Lines…Poems to Teach Black Pride* (Chicago: Mildred D. Johnson Publications, 1971).

[110] Founder's Day Luncheon Program, April 30, 1983; Box 1, Drafts-Brochures/promo, HSA; untitled article in *Citizen Newspaper,* August 25, 1983, found in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA.

[111] Howalton School Classroom Activities, Box 6, Photographs, HSA; Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier, eds. *Modern Poetry from Africa* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1963). Moore and Beier are prominent scholars of African literature and art. Works by Moore include *Twelve African Writers* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1980); *Wole Soyinka* (New York: Africana Publishing Corporation, 1971). Works by Beier include *Quandamooka: The Art of Kath Walker* (Batshurst, N.S.W., Australia, Robert Brown and Associates, 1985); *Yoruba Beaded Crowns: Sacred Regalia of the Olokuku of Okuku* (London: Ethnographica, 1982). Ivan Van Sertima, *They Came Before Columbus: The African*

Nonetheless, other aspects of Howalton's curriculum, particularly its focus on progressive education, remained during the school's later years. Advocacy for student-centered methods continued to appear in its literature such as a 1973 brochure that noted that Howalton used "the modified 'open' classroom' technique" and that the school "focuses intensive attention on each child through the structured individual study programs" (emphasis in original).[112] External observers also recognized the use of progressive educational methods at the school. An evaluation of the school in 1971 by the Illinois State Office of Education revealed that Howalton teachers used learning centers, small group instruction, and various materials to supplement textbook instruction.[113]

However, Howalton educators did not exclusively use progressive educational techniques. It is likely that the school combined student-centered methods with traditional pedagogy. For instance an assistant principal's report released during the 1971-1972 school year noted that the school gave older students greater autonomy than younger pupils who "need consistent guidance and instruction."[114] An internal history of the school written in the early 1970s also suggested that upper level students were given greater autonomy and that "The younger grades are more structured along traditional lines."[115] These remarks suggest that

---

Presence in Ancient America (New York: Random House, 1976). Ivan Van Sertima has been hailed among black nationalists because his work emphasizes a glorious pre-colonial African history. For other examples of his work see Ivan Van Sertima, ed. *Egypt: Child of Africa* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994); *Great Black Leaders, Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick, NJ: Journal of African Civilizations, 1988).

[112] Preliminary Version of the Howalton School Building Fund Brochure (September 1973), Box 1, Brochures-Promotional Literature (n.d.), HSA. For information on open education see footnote 80.

[113] Letter from Robert C. Grant, Director II of Department of Recognition and Supervision of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Illinois, to Doris Anderson, March 22, 1971, Box 1, State of Illinois Reports- Howalton Item School (1970s), HSA. For work on these progressive educational techniques see footnote 24.

[114] Howalton Day School: Assistant Principal's Report, September 1971-June 1972, Box 1, Principal's Report-The Howalton School (1965-1966), HSA.

[115] Gladly Learn and Gladly Teach, Box 1, Historical Sketches on Howalton, HSA.

while the school privileged progressive education, it also employed traditional methods when necessary. Furthermore, although these statements were written during Howalton's latter years, this hybrid pedagogical approach may have also been used earlier in the school's history.

These curricular approaches resulted in continued academic success by Howalton students. In 1970 Chicago Superintendent James Redmond considered developing a transfer plan that would send students from an underachieving elementary school to Howalton. The *Chicago Daily News* reported that Redmond and the Chicago school board believed that underachieving students could benefit by associating with "possibly brighter children." The *Daily News* also noted that the Chicago Board of Education recognized that "a large percentage of Howalton graduates go on to Ivy League colleges."[116] Howalton students' academic success even made national news in 1977 when the *New York Times* reported that the school's first graders achieved the highest reading averages of all public and private first grade students in the greater Chicago area. The article also stated that Howalton first grade students "taking the standard Stanford reading tests using the traditional alphabet, scored at well beyond the third grade level."[117]

Howalton maintained the support of Chicago's black community in the early 1970s. The school's enrollment reached an all-time high of 217 students in 1972. Public school teachers and administrators continued to support Howalton by serving on its board of directors. Educators Inez Tate and Joe Anna Mitchell remained on the board and were joined by new members such as public school administrator Lucille Montgomery and Chicago school board president, Kenneth Smith. Other professional black middle class Chicagoans supported

---

[116] Hope Justus, "Redmond asks S. Side Experiment, *Chicago Daily News,* December 7, 1970, in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA;

[117] John M. Culkin, "40 Characters 40," *New York Times,* July 20, 1977, 14. Howalton also received national press in the article, "Linda Knows Trick from Joke," *Christian Science Monitor,* May 1, 1971, 11.

Howalton. In 1974 Ellis Reid, president of the Cook Country Bar Association, served as an advisor. Municipal court judge Eugene Pincham and multi-millionaire entrepreneur George E. Johnson served on the school's board of directors. Johnson's hair care business, Johnson Products, became the first black owned business to be listed on the American Stock Exchange.[118]

Despite its record of academic achievement and extensive community support, Howalton experienced problems in its later years that would lead to its closing in 1986. One of its major challenges was personnel changes. Arthur Knight, who provided leadership in Howalton's early years, resigned as Howalton's board of directors chairman after 19 years in 1966. No other Howalton chairman would match Knight's long tenure of service. The Howalton board of directors also failed to retain other long-term members. A 1983 list of the board revealed that Fleetwood McCoy, R. Esdras Turner, Arnita Parker, Inez D. Tate, Joe Anna Mitchell, and George E. Johnson were no longer members.[119] They were replaced by individuals with much less experience working with Howalton. The most impactful personnel change, however, occurred when Doris Anderson, the school's founder and director for 25 years, retired in 1972. In her resignation letter, Anderson cited personal reasons and her desire to be replaced by someone who could "effectively attract financial aid from large foundations, thus making possible the immediate need for expansion."[120]

Part of that expansion included attaining its own building, a problem that had existed for many years. The facility at St. Paul's CME Church still lacked a gymnasium, science

---

[118] From Julien D. Drayton to Parents, April 18, 1974, Box 3, Correspondence- Howalton School to Parents (1963-1974), HSA; "Black Beauty," *Time,* April 26, 1980, 45 ; "Johnson Named to Asthma Center," *Chicago Defender,* July 6, 1974, 17.

[119] Graduation Exercises and Closing Program of Howalton Day School, June 16, 1983, Box 2, Program Books-Howalton Day School (1951-1983), HSA.

[120] Doris B. Anderson to Atty. Fleetwood McCoy, Chairman Board of Directors, The Howalton Day School, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA.

laboratories, and enough space to accommodate Howalton's growing enrollment. After several fundraising efforts, expectations ran high for securing a building on 83rd and Damen on Chicago's South Side in 1973. In addition to providing space for a gymnasium and science laboratories, the proposed building would allow the school to expand its enrollment, open a head start, and establish a high school.[121] However, despite developing an intensive fundraising campaign, the school failed to collect the required amount of money to secure the facility. Howalton eventually moved for the last time to a building on Chicago's far South Side in 1983. Nonetheless, the school rented this site and did not fulfill its goal of owning its own building. [122]

Declining enrollment surely hampered the school's ability to secure a facility of its own. After peaking in 1972 with 217 students, Howalton's enrollment dropped to 186 in 1976. Howalton's student body declined precipitously in following years and included only 70 pupils in 1983. The decline in enrollment drastically reduced the school's income from tuition payments which accounted for more than 90% of its total revenue.[123]

Greater competition in the private and public sector may account for Howalton's declining enrollment. The Archdiocese of Chicago, for example, which was the nation's largest Catholic school system, witnessed its African-American student population grow from more

---

[121] Fleetwood McCoy to Doris Anderson, May 29, 1973, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA; Box 3, Correspondence- Howalton to Parents (1963-1974), HSA; Fleetwood McCoy to All Members of the Howalton Family, August 3, 1973.

[122] Graduation Exercises and Closing Program of Howalton Day School, June 14, 1973, Box 2, Program Books-Howalton Day School (1951-1983), HSA; Howalton Board of Directors to Parent, July 10, 1973, Box 3, Correspondence, Fleetwood McCoy (1960-1974), HSA.; Mildred McCurtiss to Doris Anderson, October 1973, Box 3, Correspondence- Howalton to Parents (1963-1974), HSA; Virginia Moore, Howalton Moves to New Location, undated and no title, found in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA.

[123] *Howalton Speaks,*1. no. 2, (April 1976), Box 1, Newsletters- The Howalton School, HSA.; Jimmie Treadwell, "Howalton—Building Character, Pride: A Look at Chicago's Oldest Black Private School," *Chicago Defender,* February 19, 1983, 13 in Box 2, Newspaper Clippings-Howalton School (1957-1990), HSA; Howalton Day School Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for Period July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971, Box 1, Financial Statements-Howalton School (1951-1975), HSA.

than 4,000 students in the mid 1940s to more than 29,000 in the early 1980s.[124] Although fewer in number than white migrants, African-Americans increasingly moved to Chicago's suburbs throughout Howalton's history. Metropolitan Chicago's black suburban residents grew from only 25,000 in 1940 to more than 230,000 in 1980.[125] There are no relocation records of Howalton students, but the example of long time Howalton supporter and board member, R. Eugene Pincham, is instructive. Pincham sent all three of his children to Howalton while he stayed on the 75th block of Chicago's South Side. Although his older son and daughter graduated from Howalton in 1965 and 1967 respectively, his youngest son left Howalton after the seventh grade in 1972 in order to transfer to Morgan Park Academy on the 110th block of Chicago's far South Side.[126] It is probable that other parents joined Pincham and sent their children to schools located on the city's periphery.

The neighborhood of Grand Boulevard, where Howalton was located for much of its history, also experienced several devastating changes in the school's latter years. The area fell victim to Chicago's major economic dislocations in the 1970s and 1980s as jobs and the city's most economically stable residents left the city. Chicago's poorest residents were often left behind. In 1970 eight of Chicago's 77 community areas were high poverty areas (areas with a poverty rate of at least 30%). By 1980 six of these communities moved from high poverty areas to extreme poverty areas (areas with a poverty rate of at least 40%). The Grand Boulevard community was among these neighborhoods that transitioned from a high poverty to extreme poverty area from 1970 to 1980. In addition, though these eight high poverty communities

---

[124] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 219; James G. Cibulka, "Catholic School Closings: Efficiency, Responsiveness, and Equality of Access for Blacks," in *Visible Now,* 146.

[125] Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 116, 212.

[126] Judge R. Eugene Pincham to Mrs. Doris Anderson, February 23, 1977, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA.

experienced a net loss of 151,000 African-Americans, the total number of poor families remained stable. This data suggests that economically stable blacks, such as families able to afford private education, left these poverty-stricken communities.[127]

Crime accompanied the rise of poverty in the Chicago inner-city. Howalton parent Susan Woodson recalled that the school had to hire security guards in its latter years. Woodson walked her son to school every day because she feared for his safety.[128] Woodson had good reason to be fearful of crime. The number of homicides in Chicago jumped from 195 in 1965 to 970 in 1974. The majority of these homicides occurred in poverty stricken predominantly black neighborhood areas.[129]

These multiple problems forced Howalton to close in 1986. Only 81 students enrolled in the school during this final year. Despite its tradition of academic achievement and community support, recent challenges such as enrollment decline, economic dislocation, and neighborhood change proved too much for Howalton to endure.

Conclusion

In its forty years the history of Howalton was connected to larger national and local historical developments. The postwar economic boom gave rise to a class of African-Americans able to afford a private school education in spite of racially exclusive policies in Chicago's public and private schools and in housing. Howalton became that viable educational alternative and served Chicago's black community with distinction for many years. Over time, the decline of America's urban centers, the increased mobility of Chicago's (as well as the nation's) black

[127] William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 46-50.
[128] Anne Meis Knupfer, "'Isolated Learning is Doubtful Learning,'" 13.
[129] William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 22-25.

middle class, and greater educational competition severely reduced Howalton's base of support and eventually contributed to declines in student enrollment.

William Julius Wilson has written extensively on the deterioration of Chicago's black neighborhoods in the 1970s and 1980s. His work documents the exodus of middle class blacks from Chicago's traditionally black neighborhoods, the rise of poverty and crime in these areas, and the deterioration of black community institutions. Howalton is a fitting example of what William Julius Wilson describes as "institutional disinvestment." Wilson argues that black businesses and social institutions became increasingly harder to maintain as black neighborhoods experienced "urban crises" in the 1970s and 1980s.[130] Historian Thomas Sugrue's case study of Detroit, however, argues that this "urban crisis" occurred much earlier. Sugrue traces the urban crisis immediately after World War II.[131] Wilson's argument, however, is more suited for Howalton. Howalton did experience financial problems such as its inability to purchase its own building before the 1970s. However the school did not experience major "institutional disinvestment" until that decade.

The postwar black freedom struggle in its national and local theaters also impacted Howalton. Although Howalton had a racialized mission since its establishment, the school rarely articulated that it functioned to provide black children with an alternative to Chicago's racially discriminatory public school system. Howalton educators also did not make the study of African-American history and culture a dominant component of the school's curriculum in its early years. However, by the latter stages of the Civil Rights Movement and especially after the

---

[130] William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 44; William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 56.

[131] Thomas Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*. Paul L. Street makes a similar argument for Chicago in *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis.*

onset of the Black Power Movement, Howalton developed a greater racial consciousness in how it identified itself as a black private school and in its curriculum.

The support Howalton received from Chicago's African-American community also complicates what is known about the objectives sought by black educational activists in the postwar era. Several scholars have argued that the primary thrust of educational activism, particularly in the urban North, centered on integration from the 1950s to the mid 1960s. The difficulty of achieving desegregation and the popularity of the Black Power Movement spurred community control efforts and a deemphasis on integration.[132] The example of Howalton, however, shows that African-American support of their own institutions did not result from their disappointment with the failures of the Civil Rights Movement. African-Americans saw the establishment of their own educational institutions as a resolution to educational racism before and during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. Moreover, African-Americans advocated integration and patronized a black private school at the same time. Howalton's educators and patrons saw no contradiction in their support of the black private school and involvement in civil rights organizations and activism.

The existence of progressive education at Howalton is also significant for researchers of curricular reform in the history of American education for several reasons. First, much of the literature that examines progressive curriculum often marginalizes African-American educators.[133] An examination of progressive education at Howalton (and other schools in this

---

[132] See Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children;* Daniel H. Perlstein, *Justice, Justice: School Politics and the Eclipse of Liberalism* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2004); Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars*; Jeffrey Mirel, *Rise and Fall of an Urban School System*, 298-370.

[133] In constructing a history of progressive education in the 20th century, Diane Ravitch mentions very little about African-Americans' participation in the various movements for progressive curricular reform. Although Larry Cuban acknowledges student-centered methods in predominantly African-American public schools, a lack of evidence prevents him from making a definitive statement on the

dissertation) gives scholars another, although admittedly small, data set of instructional practices in African-American schools. It also helps to challenge the idea that progressive curriculum is the sole province of schools with a predominantly white student body. Second, the history of Howalton and other black private schools offers scholars an opportunity to explore African-American educational thought often obscured in studies of black public schools. Decisions regarding Howalton's educational philosophy, curriculum choices, and pedagogical practices were exclusively made by African-Americans. The educators at Howalton did not have to work within a network of bureaucracy that included individuals outside of the African-American community. Therefore, black private schools provide researchers with an unfiltered view of African-American educational interests at work. Third, including African-Americans in a discussion of progressive education might also encourage a reperiodization of progressive reform in the United States. Scholars often note that as a result of a renewed enthusiasm for traditional instruction, the progressive education movement collapsed in the 1950s, only to be revived in the 1960s.[134] The example of Howalton suggests that educators employed progressive instructional methods in the 1950s and continued to do so when the movement reemerged in the 1960s.

Finally, the history of Howalton also demonstrates the need to include African-American involvement in private schools in broader discussions of African-American education. Not only does it complicate the above historiographical assumptions, it also provides a fuller portrayal of an African-American educational agenda. Howalton educators and supporters did not see the

---

prevalence of these practices in such schools. Arthur Zilversmit's history of progressive education in the United States also pays scant attention to the participation of African-Americans. He often argues that the poor conditions of predominantly black schools discouraged progressive instruction. See Diane Ravitch's history of progressive education in *The Troubled Crusade,* 43-80 and 228-266; Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught,* 103 and 112; Arthur Zilvesmit, *Changing Schools.*

[134] Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 43-80 and 228-266.

public and private educational sectors as mutually exclusive. They constantly traversed both spheres to improve conditions in Chicago's public schools while simultaneously supporting Howalton. However, Howalton was not an anomaly. As will be shown, other black Chicagoans used the private educational sector to take educational matters into their own hands.

"For a religious, teaching is more than a profession, it is an apostolate. Youth need spiritual guidance as well as instruction. We must radiate Christ, must practice all His virtues in order to influence young people to seek high ideals, and to practice the principles of Christian social living. With patience, kindness and sympathetic understanding, we try to help youth meet their many problems."[1]

Sister Laurentia Shortt, O.S.P.

"For a Religious, Teaching is More than a Profession, It Is an Apostolate":

Holy Name of Mary School: 1941-1986

Various communities in Chicago participated in the establishment of black private schools during and after World War II. Blacks in Chicago's far South Side neighborhood of Morgan Park also recognized the viability of such institutions and created Holy Name of Mary School, the city's first Catholic school that served black students and was administered by African-Americans. Consequently, the school was not only impacted by the historical developments that affected Howalton, but was also influenced by changes occurring in the Catholic communities of Chicago and the United States. This chapter reconstructs the history of Holy Name of Mary School and the various historical forces that shaped its development from 1940 to 1986.

1940-1954

As discussed in the previous chapter, America's entry into World War II had major implications for the domestic front. The war ended the Great Depression and caused

[1] "Professed Sister," in Congregation: Sisters-Deceased Shortt, Sr. M. Laurentia, Box 72, Folder 13, Archives of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, Baltimore, Maryland. Hereafter known as AOSP. The term "religious" refers to an individual who belongs to a religious community such as a nun, monk, or friar. The term, "women" specifies the gender of the community member. The terms woman religious, nun, and sister will be used interchangeably throughout this work. It should also be noted that many of the Oblate Sisters of Providence have the first name "Mary." This dissertation will not include this first name when identifying sisters because it is so common as well as the fact that they rarely used the name "Mary" to refer to one another. This dissertation will also generally use a sister's surname only the first time she is referred to in the chapter. Subsequent references will identify the sister's middle name only. This practice is also consistent with that of the Oblates who rarely used surnames to identify themselves.

unprecedented economic growth. Unresolved hostilities from World War II resulted in the Cold War in which the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a series of ideological, political, and military conflicts. The expansion of the United States' economy and the promise of improved race relations induced hundreds of thousands of American-Americans to migrate to western and northern urban centers such as Chicago. Nonetheless, many migrants soon discovered that these non-southern regions were also beset by racial discrimination. African-Americans responded by developing several activist strategies such as the "Double V" campaign and the March on Washington Movement as well as linking their resistance to various anti-colonial struggles.

A parallel movement for racial justice also occurred among American Catholics. During the first half of the 20th century, blacks were denied access to many Catholic schools, churches, organizations, and positions of leadership. Under the leadership of Thomas Wyatt Turner, African-Americans of this faith formed the Federation of Colored Catholics (FCC) in 1924 to struggle against this discrimination. Turner envisioned the FCC to be a black led group that also fostered racial solidarity among African-Americans. His views were opposed by liberals such as white Jesuit priests John LaFarge and William Markoe who opposed race specific organizations by any group. LaFarge and Markoe compared Turner's interests in black solidarity with the racially exclusive practices of many white Catholic organizations and institutions. The divergent views of both factions came to a head in the 1930s when Markoe and LaFarge (along with several black supporters) were able to remove Turner from the leadership of the FCC. Turner responded by forming a splinter group which maintained the name of the Federated Colored Catholics. Supporters of Markoe and LaFarge split from the FCC and established the National Catholic Interracial Federation(NCIF). However both organizations lack of organizational

stability resulted in the collapse of the NCIF in the late 1930s and the FCC in 1952. Consequently, the Catholic Interracial Council, which was formed in 1934 by LaFarge, supplanted the FCC as the leading Catholic antiracist organization in the United States.[2]

As had been the case with many other racial protest organizations, World War II and the Cold War provided Catholic antiracists with opportunities and challenges. Activists often compared the anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany with American Jim Crow practices and the exclusionary policies of Catholic institutions. In addition, during the Cold War there was a fear that segregation in the Catholic Church would encourage potential black converts and existing Catholics to spurn the religion for Communism. However, not all Catholics agreed with the aims of racial liberals. In fact, like many mainstream racial activists, Catholic antiracists often had to defend themselves against communist accusations. The work of racial liberals was also stifled by Catholic homeowners who feared racial turnover in their neighborhoods and Catholic institutions (i.e. churches, schools, etc.).[3]

This struggle over the racial politics of the Catholic Church also occurred in Chicago. The city had local branches of the FCC as well as the NCIF. By 1945, the Chicago FCC dissolved to join the Chicago Catholic Interracial Council (CCIC) which was established in the same year. The CCIC subsequently became the city's leading Catholic antiracist organization. It held interracial conferences and study sessions on racial issues, sponsored black children who desegregated Catholic schools, and advised the hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Chicago on race relations policy.[4]

---

[2] Marilyn Nickels, *Black Catholic Protest and the Federated Colored Catholics, 1917-1933: Three Perspectives on Racial Justice.* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988).

[3] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 55-110.

[4] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 289-297

However, the support for racial justice among other Chicago Catholics was more dubious. Samuel Stritch, who replaced George Mundelein's as the city's archbishop in 1940, maintained the cautious approach of his predecessor during his early years (see chapter two). However, in 1945 Stritch overturned Mundelein's segregation policy by proclaiming that all Catholic schools would be open to black students. African-Americans quickly responded to the decree by attending archdiocesan churches and schools. The number of black students in Chicago's Catholic schools grew from 4,602 in 1946 to 5,780 in 1950.[5] Nonetheless, many of these schools were segregated. In addition, African-Americans continued to be denied access to many of the city's Catholic neighborhoods and institutions. In fact, many of the most volatile protests against African-American integration came from predominantly Catholic areas. Riots sparked by threats of integration in the Airport Homes residential area in 1946, the Fernwood housing project in 1947, Englewood in 1949, and Trumbull Park in 1953 were all located in white predominantly Catholic neighborhoods.[6] In most cases Cardinal Stritich refused to impose integration on unwilling white Catholic communities and only intervened in the most egregious conflicts.[7]

Many of these national and local developments also occurred in Chicago's far South Side neighborhood of Morgan Park. The community of Morgan Park began as a predominantly middle-class Anglo-Saxon Protestant suburb on Chicago's far South Side until its annexation to the city in 1914. Although a small African-American community lived in the area since the postbellum era, successive waves of migration during the first half of the 20th century caused a major population expansion. By 1940, 6,195 blacks made up more than 39% of Morgan Park's

---

[5] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 215-217.
[6] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 265; Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto,* 40-99.
[7] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 254-288.

population. The area's black community would remain just under 40% throughout the 1950s.[8] Most African-Americans in Morgan Park lived to the east of Vincennes Avenue while the majority of whites lived to the west of this boundary. Up to 1960, virtually no blacks lived in the two far western census tracts of Morgan Park. Many of the African-American families who violated this unwritten rule were often harassed to the point that they were forced to move.[9]

African-Americans also experienced racial discrimination in Morgan Park's public schools. A major dispute occurred in 1926 when concerned blacks from Morgan Park, the Chicago NAACP, the Chicago Urban League, and the Wabash Avenue YMCA argued that school officials institutionalized segregation by establishing John D. Shoop Elementary School on the eastern border of Vincennes. Not only did the location of Shoop mandate that most black students attend a segregated school, many black students had to cross railroad tracks to attend the facility. Opponents further pointed out that the few white students who lived within the Shoop perimeter could easily receive a transfer to attend a nearby school which had few black pupils. Continued protests by concerned citizens and organizations resulted in an NAACP sponsored lawsuit against the Chicago Board of Education in 1927. However, a circuit judge ruled in favor of the school board on the grounds that its policies did not explicitly target black students.[10]

---

[8] Harold M. Mayer and Richard Wade, *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 160, 170, 264, 272; *The Black History of Morgan Park Baptist Church,* RHS; Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922), 137; Louis Wirth and Eleanor H. Bernert, eds. *Local Community Fact Book of Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949); The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990* (Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1995). 210.

[9] Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1960*, 165.

[10] Homel, however argued that that African-Americans in Morgan Park did not unequivocally support integration. He notes that the integration campaign resulted in limited support among African-Americans and instead the campaign was lead by other organizations such as the Chicago NAACP, the

Racial discrimination also occurred in Morgan Park's public high schools. Blacks, who made up a minority of Morgan Park High School's student population, often complained that they were excluded from participating in various extracurricular activities, unfairly received lower grades, and were forced to sit in segregated sections during the school's graduation exercises. White students and administrators, particularly Morgan Park High School principal William Schoch, also regularly used racial epithets against black pupils. One major racial conflict occurred in 1928 when black students from Morgan Park High School were transferred to the nearby predominantly white Fenger High School to take household arts courses. The decision to admit the Morgan Park students set off a series of boycotts by Fenger's white students that only subsided when the school's principal threatened disciplinary action. A similar incident occurred at Morgan Park High School in 1934. Local officials eased overcrowding at the high school by sending black and white students to two separate branches at nearby elementary schools. Responding to African-American protests, Mayor Edward Kelly interceded by overruling the transfer policy and allowing African-American freshmen to remain at Morgan Park High School. Kelly's veto aroused the anger of several local whites who initiated a week-long boycott of the high school that only ended when Superintendent William Bogan threatened to withhold the protestors' credits. Nonetheless, race relations remained tense at the school.[11]

Many of the Catholic institutions in and nearby Morgan Park also practiced racial discrimination. By the beginning of 1940, no African-American Catholic parish existed in Morgan Park. Despite the 1917 segregation decree issued by George Mundelein (as discussed in chapter

---

Chicago Urban League, and the Wabash Avenue YMCA. The disinterest of Morgan Park residents in the 1927 conflict led Homel to conclude that some black Chicagoans did not see integration as a panacea to their educational challenges. See *Down From Equality* 152-157. For further examples of racism in Morgan Park's elementary schools see Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago*, 137-138.

[11] Michael Homel, *Down From Equality,* 42-47.

two), St. Margaret of Scotland, which was located near Morgan Park's black community, allowed a small number of African-Americans to attend its church and school services in the early 20th century. However by the mid-1930s, the school barred African-American children.[12] Another nearby Catholic church, Sacred Heart, allowed blacks to attend its services. However many were surely offended by the church's practice of forcing African-American parishioners to sit in a "Jim Crow" section in the last two pews of the building. Other African-American Catholics in the area attended South Side parishes that were open to blacks such as St. Anselm and Corpus Christi. However these two parishes were distant from Morgan Park.[13]

Given these instances of racial discrimination, a cohort of black Catholic women organized to establish an African-American parish in Morgan Park. Many of these women belonged to the Morgan Park branch of the National Catholic Interracial Federation in the 1930s. As mentioned earlier, the organization was composed of individuals who advocated multi-racial activism as opposed to the FCC's focus on black leadership and racial solidarity. Possibly as a result of the NCIF's decline, the local branch changed its name to the Saint Martin de Porres Guild in 1938. The guild solicited local parishes and organized card parties, fish fries, bingo games, and raffles to raise money for the parish.[14]

Despite their relationship to the liberal NCIF, the guild recognized that their parish would be specifically established for African-Americans. According to Ethel Badger, a member

---

[12] Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, Collection Pertaining to the Historically Black Neighborhood of Morgan Park, Ridge Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois. Hereafter known as RHS; "Local Catholics Seen as Lending Support to Segregation Program," *Chicago Defender,* August 11, 1934, 10.

[13] "Local Catholics Seen as Lending Support to Segregation Program," *Chicago Defender,* August 11, 1934, 10; Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS; Holy Name of Mary Parish 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, 562.

[14] Saint Martin de Porres was a biracial Peruvian who worked on the behalf of Africans, Native Americans, and the poor in Lima. Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS.

of the St. Martin de Porres Guild, the organization believed that black "families of Morgan Park deserved to have their own Church to worship in."[15] However, the guild was not alone. Other black Catholics in the areas also preferred a church of their own. This position was challenged by the *Chicago Defender* which featured a 1934 article that criticized Morgan Park's black Catholics for "lending support to segregation." Instead of advocating a black segregated parish, the *Defender* opined that Catholics in the neighborhood should have demanded access to local white parishes.[16] Unfazed by the newspaper's criticism, the St. Martin de Porres Guild continued to work towards establishing a parish for African-Americans in the area.

Ironically, someone outside of the black community gave the St. Martin de Porres Guild the critical assistance it needed to establish a black parish in Morgan Park. While canvassing for financial contributions, one guild member had a fateful encounter with a Catholic minister, Father John F. Ryan. Ryan was so impressed with the women's story that he began attending guild meetings in the late 1930s. Ryan was among Chicago's white Catholic liberal priests. Although he initially planned to travel to the South to covert blacks to Catholicism, the rapid expansion of Chicago's African-American population convinced him to remain in the city. By 1946, he became president of the Midwestern Clergy Conference on Negro Welfare, an association that focused on African-American conversion. Ryan eventually conducted a census that revealed that 500 black Catholics lived in Morgan Park. Given the determination of the Porres Guild and the sizable number of Catholics in the area, Ryan petitioned the Archdiocese of

---

[15] Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS.

[16] "Local Catholics Seen as Lending Support to Segregation Program," *Chicago Defender,* August 11, 1934. The Holy Name of Mary parish's official history, written during its fifty year anniversary, recalled that prior to its establishment "Black Catholics preferred to worship with other Black Catholics" and blacks in Morgan Park were "desirous of having their own church." See Holy Name of Mary Parish 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP.

Chicago to allow him to head a parish for African-Americans in the neighborhood. Archbishop Stritch consented and declared that the parish would be named Holy Name of Mary.[17]

Ryan subsequently made plans to establish a school for the parish. Based on the suggestion of Father John Gillard, a Josephite priest and leading scholar on African-American Catholicism, Ryan secured the commitment of the Oblate Sisters of Providence (OSP or Oblates) to staff the school.[18] This agreement made Holy Name of Mary the first school in the Archdiocese of Chicago to be operated and staffed by blacks and opened specifically for African-American students. Other predominantly African-American schools had been staffed by white religious groups and most were turned over to blacks only when white students left these schools as a result of racial transition in the parish area.

The Oblate Sisters of Providence became the first permanent African-American order of nuns in 1829 when Elizabeth Lange, Marie Balas, Rosine Boegue, and Almeide Duchemin Maxis founded the community in Baltimore with the assistance of a white Catholic pastor, Father James Joubert of the Society of the Priests of Saint Sulpice. The OSP charter members were Francophone black women of Caribbean ancestry whose families migrated to the United States as a result of the Haitian Revolution. Mary Lange and Marie Balas settled in Baltimore and established a school. Over time, Father Joubert, who ministered to Baltimore's francophone black Catholics, asked Lange and Balas to help him establish a school for the children of the

---

[17] Holy Name of Mary Parish, 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP; "Catholic Pastor Heads Negro Welfare Group," *Chicago Defender,* November 9, 1946; Irene Steyskal, "5 Race Nuns Placed in a Parish Here," *Chicago Tribune,* October 19, 1941, SW1.

[18] Rev. John F. Ryan to Mother M. Consuella, O.S.P., June 16, 1941, Box 18, AOSP; Mother M. Teresa, O.S.P. to Reverend John F. Ryan, June 20, 1941, Box 18, AOSP. For work by John Gillard see *The Catholic Church and the American Negro: Being an Investigation of the Past and Present Activities of the Catholic Church in behalf of the 12,000,000 Negroes in the United States, with an Examination of the Difficulties Which affect the Work of the Colored Missions* (Baltimore: St. Joseph's Society Press, 1929) and *Colored Catholics in the United States: An Investigation of Catholic Activity in Behalf of the Negroes in the United States and a Survey of the Present condition of the Colored Missions* (Baltimore: The Josephite Press, 1941).

community. Joubert soon learned that the instructors as well as Boegue and Maxis desired to become women religious. Joubert helped facilitate this by gaining the approval of Baltimore's archbishop in 1829.[19]

The Oblates established their first school in Baltimore in 1828 while the charter members received the religious training they needed to become nuns. Committing themselves to the "Christian education of young girls of color," the Oblates soon opened several other schools within and outside of the United States.[20] By 1892, the Oblate Sisters of Providence established eight schools. By 1925 this number of schools staffed by Oblates rose to seventeen, including three in Cuba. Holy Name of Mary was the nineteenth school established by the religious community.[21]

The Oblates' tenure in Chicago began humbly in September 1941. Sister Claude Hudlin served as the school's first principal and as the local superior.[22] She was joined by Sisters Providentia Pollard, Juliana Brent, Chotilde Smith, and Anthony Garnier. The annals of the Chicago mission recall the sisters' introduction to the school by Father Ryan:

> Father promised the Srs.[sisters] he would take them to see the school before going to the convent in which they would reside until their house was prepared. Beautiful school buildings. Yes. We passed many. The car stopped. The Srs. heard Father's voice saying very solemnly. Here is our school. They stared. The object facing them was a pile high of soil a few bricks about four yards away a little wooden house for the use of the workmen.[23]

---

[19] Diane Batts Morrow, *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Sharon C. Knecht, *Oblate Sisters of Providence: A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Company Publishers, 2007).

[20] The Oblate Sisters of Providence subsequently opened co-ed schools as well.

[21] See Mary Emma Hadrick, O.S.P., "Contributions of the Oblate Sisters of Providence to Catholic Education in the United States and Cuba, 1829-1962" (M.A. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1964).

[22] A local superior is the head of a particular mission. On a mission, certain members of a religious community travel to a particular site to conduct work (i.e. conversion, establish schools, etc.).

[23] Annals, September 4, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

Because the school building was not ready for Holy Name of Mary's opening, classes were held at a nearby home. The primary students were taught in the parlor; the third and fourth grades met in the basement; the fifth and sixth grades were taught in the dining room; and the seventh and eighth graders had class in the kitchen. Some of the students even had to use benches as desks. But despite these meager conditions the school was filled to capacity in its first year with 110 students. The school moved to a larger, permanent location a year later.[24]

Within the school building, Holy Name of Mary educators coupled academic training with an emphasis on religiosity. The school's stated religious philosophy made it clear that "Holy Name of Mary is not only a private school, it is also a Christian school, and specifically a Catholic school. Religion is a daily part of our curriculum for all students."[25] Similarly the 1945 Oblate Sisters of Providence Teachers Handbook noted that its instructors were expected to develop in students the "ideas, the attitudes and the habits that are demanded for Christ-like living. . ."[26] Holy Name of Mary also monitored the religiosity of students outside of school. Catholic students were required to attend Mass every Sunday and non-Catholic students were obligated to attend a church of their choice. All students were required to attend Mass at Holy Name of Mary on the third Sunday of each month during the school year. The school verified church attendance by checking deposit envelopes given at Holy Name of Mary services and

[24] Holy Name of Mary Parish 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Annals, September 8, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[25] Holy Name of Mary School Religious Requirements, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center of the Archdiocese of Chicago, Chicago, IL. Hereafter known as Bernardin Archives.

[26] Oblate Sisters of Providence Teacher's Handbook of School Procedure, September 1945, Oblates sisters of Providence Missions Record Group, Box 115, Folder 5, AOSP.

correspondence from ministers at other churches. Parents were notified that the school would suspend and eventually expel students who failed to comply with this regulation.[27]

The Oblates' emphasis on religion was also tangibly employed through activities at the school that promoted social responsibility. The school's educators provided several opportunities for students to assist the less fortunate. Students regularly donated money to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith (SPF). The SPF is one of the primary organizations that supports the Catholic Church's global missionary activity. Holy Name of Mary School also organized several fundraisers for various orphanages.[28]

Along with religious instruction, some Holy Name of Mary instructors advocated progressive educational methods. An example of student-centered education is revealed in a photograph of teacher, Sister Providentia's class during the school's early years. She is shown assisting a small group of four students with a science experiment on the human respiratory system. Although Sister Providentia helped one of the students use a microscope, the three other students worked independently.[29] In addition, in 1949 Sister Stella Marie informed her fellow Holy Name of Mary teachers how to correlate science with other subjects such as religion and reading. She also suggested that teachers use music and poetry when teaching science as opposed to solely relying on textbooks. As mentioned in the previous chapter, small group and independent instruction, interdisciplinary approaches, and the use of materials to supplement textbook instruction are features of progressive education.[30]

---

[27] Holy Name of Mary School Religious Requirements, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives; Holy Name of Mary School Regulations, Undated, Box 18, AOSP; Rev. John C. Owczarek to Parents, September 1955, Box 14, Folder 7, AOSP.

[28] Annals, November 5, 1951, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP; Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author, July 26, 2008.

[29] Sister M. Providentia and Science Students, Box 10, Folder 11, AOSP.

[30] Annals, March 27, 1949, AOSP.

Despite these examples of progressive education, teachers at the school primarily used traditional pedagogical methods. For example, during Holy Name of Mary's first year the annals recorded that Sister Claude "usually gives her classes extra work or practice. Busy-find not time for mischief."[31] A faculty meeting in 1952 confirmed that Oblate teachers still adhered to this disciplinary approach eleven years later. The sisters discussed that the school had no serious discipline problems and "Keeping pupils very busy will solve many [behavioral issues]."[32] As stated earlier, traditional pedagogy privileges a more dominant role of the teacher as opposed to developing the curriculum around students' interests. There are also few other indicators of progressive education in the school's early years such as the use of learning centers and student autonomy.

Holy Name of Mary's emphasis on traditional curriculum partially stemmed from the Oblates' expectations of its teachers. For example, the religious community's 1945 teacher handbook did not encourage instructors to base classroom assignments on student interests. Instead, like the teachers at Holy Name of Mary, it urged teachers to concentrate on classroom order and "Plan your lessons so that your pupils will be kept so busy that they will not have time to get into mischief."[33] The handbook also suggested that supplementary educational experiences such as extracurricular activities would "interfere with the real work of the school, the education of the child."[34]

Large classroom sizes also accounted for Holy Name of Mary's use of teacher-centered instruction. Holy Name of Mary, like many other Catholic schools in the post-World War II era

---

[31] Annals, December 1, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[32] Holy Name of Mary School Faculty Meeting, December 1, 1952, Missions, Illinois: Holy Name of Mary: Correspondence (1968-1975), Box 14, Folder 7, AOSP.

[33] Oblate Sisters of Providence Teacher's Handbook of School Procedure, September 1945, Oblates sisters of Providence Missions Record Group, Box 115, Folder 5, AOSP.

[34] Ibid.

had large student to teacher ratios.[35] Photographs taken in 1953 of the Holy Name of Mary third and fourth grade students show 38 students in both classrooms. The school's combined seventh and eighth grade classroom had 39 students. The large number of students limited the amount of time that teachers could devote to individual and small group instruction. The class size also circumscribed instructors' ability to organize classroom furniture in student-centered arrangements that allowed for face-to-face exchanges, learning centers, and independent study. The photographs show that students were seated in rows facing the front of the classroom which suggests that teachers played a dominant role in instruction.[36]

In addition, some of the curricular decisions at Holy Name of Mary were determined by the Archdiocese of Chicago rather than the school's educators. The archdiocese gave ultimate authority to the archbishop to direct parochial schools. However, archbishops generally allowed the archdiocese superintendent and school board to handle the majority of policy decisions and administrative duties for parochial schools. Though variation remained among different schools and instructors, the archdiocesan superintendent and school board were charged to make system-wide decisions regarding the selection of textbooks, methods of evaluation (i.e. standardized tests), and curricular content. Catholic school authorities also appointed priests and sisters from various parishes to serve as supervisors to advise the superintendent and school board on curricular decisions and to oversee Catholic schools to ensure adherence to archdiocesan regulations.[37]

---

[35] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 192, 203.

[36] Missions: Illinois Holy name of Mary Photographs; Box 19, Folder 3, AOSP; Missions: IL: Chicago Holy name of Mary School and Students: Class Groups, Box 6, Folder 12; AOSP.

[37] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 144-159; Cathy Campbell, SP, "A Brief History of the Archdiocesan Board and Office of Catholic Education," Office of Catholic Education School Board Administrative Records, Bernardin Archives; Archdiocese of Chicago School Board Book of Polices,

At the individual school level, archdiocesan policy authorized that church pastors function as the administrative heads of parish schools. Although Catholic school principals, who were often nuns, were expected to have the "greatest responsibility in administering the educational program of the school" the archdiocese made it clear that "she is responsible to the Pastor, Supervisor, and Superintendent for all things pertaining to her school."[38] These structural provisions reinforced the patriarchy of the Catholic Church which often marginalized women devotees. In most cases, women religious were given relative autonomy to operate the schools. Nonetheless, archdiocesan structure permitted some domineering men to usurp nuns' control of schools.[39]

Father Ryan, Holy Name of Mary's first pastor, was one such male figure who often intervened in the management of the parish school. The Oblates had several complaints regarding Ryan's overbearing leadership style. The sisters noted that he unilaterally placed transfer students in inappropriate grades, cancelled student activities such as the 1946 graduation, and appointed a layperson to usurp control of the school from the Oblates.[40]

Elementary Schools, Office of Catholic Education School Board Administrative Records, Bernardin Archives.

[38] Archdiocese of Chicago School Board Book of Polices, Elementary Schools, Office of Catholic Education School Board Administrative Records, Bernardin Archives. It should be noted that Holy Name of Mary parish was presided over by archdiocesan priests, who are under the governance of the archdiocese of Chicago. Other parishes were headed by archdiocesan priests or priests that belonged to religious orders that were not under the direct governance of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

[39] For the experiences of women in the Catholic Church see Mary Jo Weaver, *New Catholic Women: A Contemporary Challenge to Traditional Religious Authority* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985); James Kennally, *The History of American Catholic Women* (New York: Crossroad, 1990); Carol K. Coburn and Martha Smith, *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts.*

[40] A layperson is a worshipper who is not a member of a clergy or a religious order. Sister M. Laurentia, O.S.P., to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., February 23, 1946, Box 18, AOSP; "Issues transfers without letting the sisters know the reason", Box 18, AOSP; Father Ryan to Mother Laurentia, O.S.P., February 21, 1946, Box 18, AOSP; Annals, February 16, 1944, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.Sister Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., to Sister M. Claude, O.S.P., April 1, 1943, Box 18, AOSP; Notes on Holy Name of Mary School, Box 18, AOSP; Notes on the Holy Name of Mary School Term 1946-1947, Box 18, AOSP.

However, the nuns were most frustrated by Ryan's verbal abuse. The sisters described Ryan as having a bad temper and noted several examples of him inappropriately yelling at the young students. In addition, Ryan often berated the sisters, sometimes in front of pupils. Many of Ryan's diatribes included his assertions that he was the sole authority of the school and the sisters had a secondary role.[41]

The sisters had little recourse in resolving their problems with Father Ryan. Some parents disapproved of Ryan's behavior. According to a teacher, "When there is trouble between Father and the parents, I am afraid that the thing might end in a riot."[42] However, besides this testimony, little is known about parent's responses to Ryan. Local Catholic authorities comprised another group that had the power to intervene and temper the pastor's actions. Nonetheless, Chicago's Catholic hierarchy was also comprised of men who may have also believed that women should play a secondary role in the Catholic Church and its institutions. The Oblates recognized the difficulty of seeking redress from this local hierarchy. In writing to the Oblate superior general, Sister Jean Marie stated that:

> We are in hopes that the bishop will change him but I doubt it, unless he actually fails in some of his priestly duties or he himself ask [sic] for the change. I am doubtful of the change because 1st he [Father Ryan] has a big pull with those in authority, and he uses beautiful flowery language to them. . .I am sure, those in authority judge him by his big talk. But if they only knew the truth, that is when he is with them he is a priestly man, all smiling and loving but with us he is just the opposit [sic], he is no man at all.[43]

Despite these concerns, the Oblate Sisters did report Ryan's actions to the Archdiocese of Chicago. Sister Laurentia, who served as Holy Name of Mary's principal and the Oblates' local

---

[41] Sister Jean Marie, O.S.P. to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., Undated, Box 18, AOSP; "Issues transfers without letting the sisters know the reason", Box 18, AOSP; Sister M. Laurentia, O.S.P., to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., February 23, 1946, Box 18, AOSP.

[42] Sister Jean Marie, O.S.P. to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., Undated, Box 18, AOSP.

[43] Sister Jean Marie, O.S.P. to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., Undated, Box 18, AOSP. A superior general is the head of a religious society.

superior from 1944 to 1946, detailed the issues at the school to Father David C. Fullmer, the assistant superintendent of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Father Fullmer then arranged for someone from the archdiocese hierarchy (possibly himself) to talk to Father Ryan about the problems at the school.[44] Nonetheless, Father Ryan's disrespectful behavior continued after the sisters appealed to the archdiocese.

The Oblates also unsuccessfully sought redress from their superior general, Sister Teresa Shockley. Sister Teresa's response suggests that she recognized and was resigned to accept the extant patriarchy of the Catholic Church. The general superior advised the sisters to fulfill their traditional role as teachers and focus on "winning the children for Christ." Moreover, Sister Teresa asked that the sisters not challenge Ryan for fear of jeopardizing his role as head of the parish. She instructed, "Be very careful never to criticize Father Ryan to any of the sisters because if you do it will lessen their respect for him and cause unpleasantness."[45]

Though women religious have traditionally assumed subordinate roles in the Catholic Church, the Oblates' gender did not totally account for their treatment by Father Ryan. The Oblate Sisters of Providence worked within a Catholic hierarchy and a larger society that discriminated against women and African-Americans. The gender and race of the Oblates accounted for their particular subordination at Holy Name of Mary.[46] For instance, the Oblates in Chicago reported that Father Ryan often told them that "They ought to be out scrubbing,

---

[44] Sister M. Laurentia, O.S.P., to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., February 23, 1946, Box 18, AOSP.

[45] Mother Teresa, O.S.P. to Mother M. Claude, O.S.P., April 1, 1943, Box 18, AOSP.

[46] In *Women of Color and Religious at the Same Time,* Diane Batts Morrow, the leading historian of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, also argues that their racial identity was central to their history in their beginning years.

cooking, or doing laundry work. They would do a better job at that than training children."[47] Many African-American women had been relegated to these domestic occupations for much of the 20th century.[48]

The Oblates also noted that although Ryan was among Chicago's white liberals, he maintained a paternalistic attitude towards blacks. In a letter to the Oblate general superior, Sister Jean Marie critiqued Ryan's liberalism by concluding that "Father does not want to work with our people but he wishes to work for them and this is what he is doing at the present time. Just working for our people giving us only what he judges best. . ." (not my emphasis).[49] She also believed that, given Ryan's initial expectations to work in the South, he thought that he would work among impoverished and downtrodden African-Americans. However, he was surprised and disappointed that Morgan Park's black community included several middle class residents who were "cultured" and "well mannered."[50] In this way, the Oblates' experience at Holy Name of Mary resembled the history of blacks in the post-Civil War South who resisted the efforts of some northern missionaries who sought to direct the education of freed men and women without the approval of African-Americans themselves.[51]

---

[47] "Issues transfers without letting the sisters know the reason", Box 18, AOSP; Sister M. Laurentia, O.S.P., to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., February 23, 1946, Box 18, AOSP.

[48] See Bonnie Thornton Dill, *Across the Boundaries of Race and Class: An Exploration of Work and Family Among Black Female Domestic Servants* (New York: Garland, 1994); Brenda Clegg Gray, *Black Female Domestics During the Depression in New York City, 1930-1940* (New York: Garland, 1993); Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, *Living In, Living Out: African American Domestics in Washington, D.C., 19101-1940* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1994. For the prevalence of African-American women who worked as domestic servants in Chicago in the mid-20th century see St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 214-262.

[49] Sister Jean Marie, O.S.P. to Mother Teresa Shockley, O.S.P., Undated, Box 18, AOSP.

[50] Ibid.

[51] See James M. Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South,* Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 80-95.

Although little is known about parental responses to Ryan's behavior, they and other local community members provided critical support to the school. The St. Martin de Porres Guild, mentioned earlier, was one of the school's major benefactors. After several name changes, the association settled on the Holy Name of Mary Ladies Guild and donated money raised from linen showers, pantry parties, and barbecues. Other black Catholic groups from Holy Name of Mary parish also provided support. The Willing Workers of Holy Name of Mary, another association of women in the church, held fashion shows, annual teas, dinners, minstrel shows, and raffles to raise funds for the parish. The Holy Name Society, a male organization also conducted fundraisers and helped the school with construction projects.[52]

In additions, Holy Name of Mary received individual support from members of Morgan Park's African-American community. The Oblate annals reveal that in February 1942 Mr. Alexander sent the sisters "four bottles of ginger ale and five pounds of meat" and Mrs. Spence donated "3 dozens of eggs." Later in the year the sisters received a "real Thanksgiving dinner" from Mr. Black. During the 1942 Thanksgiving holiday, the sisters also received turkeys from a school parent and "a lady of the parish who helps us in the convent for free."[53] Community members also gave the Oblates more substantial gifts and services. For instance, Mrs. Styker consistently offered her car to the sisters while Mrs. Rose Rudolph donated more than 30 sets of curtains.[54]

Holy Name of Mary also formed mutually supportive relationships with other predominantly African-American parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The Sisters of the

---

[52] Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS; Tenth Anniversary of Holy Name of Mary Church, 1972-1982" April 25, 1982, Vertical File 150, AOSP.

[53] Annals, February 15, 1942, February 24, 1942, November 26, 1942, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[54] Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS; Annals, February 15, 1942, February 24, 1942, November 26, 1942, September 15, 1942, July 13, 1943, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

Blessed Sacrament, who administered the predominantly African-American St. Elizabeth and St. Anselm schools were one of the first Catholic groups to welcome the Oblate Sisters of Providence to Chicago.[55] The Oblates maintained close ties with these two parishes throughout their tenure at Holy Name of Mary. The nuns and students of Holy Name of Mary, St. Elizabeth, and St. Anselm went to each other's church services, graduations, and classrooms for observation.[56] The Oblates also maintained similar relationships with other predominantly African-American schools and parishes such as Corpus Christi and Holy Angels.[57] Black parishioners at African-American Catholic churches also supported Holy Name of Mary. For example, in 1943, Mrs. Viola Williams and Mrs. Harrison of St. Elizabeth donated altar linens to the parish.[58]

Although Holy Name of Mary cultivated its closest relationships with predominantly African-American parishes and schools, the parish also received support from predominantly white parishes. The predominantly Lithuanian religious sisterhood, the Sisters of St. Casimir, welcomed and supported the Oblates during their early years in Chicago. The Sisters of Saint Mercy, who taught at Saint Francis Xavier College, allowed the Oblates to attend the school for free. The annals also record that in 1952, Reverend Monsignor T. Czastka of St. Wenceslaus, a predominantly white parish, donated a cross and a relic to the church. Czastka was described as "a constant benefactor of Holy Name of Mary Church."[59]

---

[55] Annals, September 4, 1941, September 5, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[56] Annals, June 7, 1942, June 14, 1942, November 8, 1942, April 29, 1952, August 2, 1953, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[57] Annals, March 1, 1942, March 16, 1952, April 25, 1952, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[58] Annals, October 14, 1943, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[59] Annals, November 1, 1941, November 8, 1942, June 22, 1942, September 18, 1942, July 6, 1952, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

The Oblate Sisters of Providence, however, did not insulate themselves within their school and religious communities. They also formed a collaborative relationship with public schools in the area. As early as 1941, predominantly black Shoop Elementary School made its facilities available to the more than one thousand people who welcomed the arrival of the Oblate Sisters of Providence. Shoop continued to make its facilities available for Holy Name of Mary activities after these initial years.[60] Holy Name of Mary also taught public school students by holding Confraternity of Christine Doctrine Classes (CCD). In CCD classes, the Oblates gave religious instruction to Catholic students in the area who attended public schools. The sisters held classes two times a week for public elementary school and high school students at Holy Name of Mary School.[61]

However, among their various affiliations in Chicago, the educators at Holy Name of Mary saw their relationship with parents of central importance. Holy Name of Mary educators believed that the success of students hinged upon the involvement of parents who were expected to reinforce what was taught at school. The significance of this relationship was discussed in a handout given to parents that noted that "Parents are required to see themselves as CO-EDUCATORS" and should cooperate "in the development of a proper attitude in their children toward school and parish programs."[62] Holy Name of Mary institutionalized this belief in parental involvement in many ways. Like several other predominantly African-American schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, the school's parents were required to attend Mass once a

---

[60] Holy Name of Mary Parish, 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Irene Steyskal, "5 Race Nuns Placed in a Parish Here," *Chicago Tribune,* October 19, 1941, SW1; Annals, October 12, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP; Annals, March 19, 1953, Box 16, Folder 1, AOSP.

[61] Holy Name of Mary Church Program in Annals, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP; Annals, November 16, 1966, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[62] The Meaning of Christian Education at Holy Name of Mary School, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives.

month and attend a series of theological classes.[63] These requirements were designed to ensure that parents were familiar with lessons learned at Holy Name of Mary with the hope of reinforcement at home. According to the policy, parents who did not comply with these regulations would be forced to remove their children from the school.[64]

Holy Name of Mary parents also participated in the school through the Parent Teacher's Association (P.T.A.). The Holy Name of Mary P.T.A. served two primary functions. First, it was a mechanism by which parents and Holy Name of Mary teachers could map out strategies to cooperatively work towards the education of the school's students. A second function of the P.T.A. was to raise money for the school. This financial support was critical because tuition, Holy Name of Mary's primary source of income, did not cover all of the school's operating expenses. The Holy Name of Mary P.T.A. organized teas, fashion shows, bingo parties, and other fundraisers to help supplement the school's revenue.[65]

Holy Name of Mary teachers reciprocated this support by making themselves available to parents and students after school hours. The school was different from many other public and private schools because of its larger institutional framework that was established to serve students' religious and educational needs. Given the function of the parish, Holy Name of Mary teachers were expected to participate in the lives of students beyond the classroom. The Oblate Sisters of Providence attended mass services and sacramental ceremonies (i.e. confirmation and

---

[63] Estella Anderson Faulk, "A Study of Catholic Education for Negroes in the Archdiocese of Chicago," 32; John C. Owczarek to Parents, September 1955, Missions, Illinois: Holy Name of Mary: Correspondence (1968-1975), Box 14, Folder 7, AOSP; Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 285.

[64] Holy Name of Mary School Religious Requirements, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives. This policy may have also been instituted to convert parents. Historically, Catholic schools have been instrumental in the conversion of African-Americans. See V.P. Franklin, "First Came the School."

[65] Holy Name of Mary Annual Home-Coming and Tea, August 24, 1952, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Annals, May 14, 1954, Box 16, Folder 2, AOSP.

baptism) of their students.[66] The parish structure also allowed Holy Name of Mary educators to continue their relationship with students who had graduated. The Oblates also attended the weddings, funerals, and other services of former students and parents who still belonged to the parish.[67]

The community of parents who sent their children to Holy Name of Mary School was socioeconomically diverse. Sister Clementina Givens, who taught at Holy Name of Mary School from 1950-1955, recalls that "We had both lower-class and middle-class [parents]." She further remembered that most Holy Name of Mary parents were middle-class and owned their homes. However, the Oblates had to feed and watch some students after school because their parents had no money for lunch or child care.[68] Cumulative records, which were much like student transcripts, also show a range of class statuses among parents in the school's early years. Although some parents held professional positions such as teachers, engineers, and electricians many other parents worked in working class occupations such as barbers, repairmen, and janitors.[69]

The class diversity of Holy Name of Mary students resembled the mixed socioeconomic character of the eastern Morgan Park area where many of the students resided. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Morgan Park's African-American family income and median school years completed was higher than most other predominantly black neighborhoods in Chicago.

---

[66] March 19, 1954, Box 16, Folder 2, AOSP; October 31, 1957, Box 17, Folder 1, AOSP; Holy Name of Mary Student Cumulative Folders, Bernardin Archives.

[67] Annals, July 10, 1955, Box 16, Folder 3, AOSP; Annals, May 11, 1970, Box 18, Folder 3, AOSP.

[68] Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author.

[69] Holy Name of Mary Pupil Record Cards, Bernardin Archives; Holy Name of Mary Student Cumulative Folders, Bernardin Archives. Data was recorded from a random survey of 270 pupil record cards and folders of students who attended Holy Name of Mary in 1941, 1951, 1961, 1971, and 1981. Fifty-four record cards or folders were reviewed for each year. The data referred to above was taken from the review of the pupil record cards and folders from the years 1941 and 1951.

However, the relative affluence of Morgan Park's blacks should not be overstated. The income and educational levels of blacks in Morgan Park consistently trailed whites who lived in the community.[70]

Regardless of class, parents sent their children to Holy Name of Mary because they believed it was superior to Chicago's public schools. In 1945 scholars St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton concluded that the Archdiocese of Chicago increasingly gained favor among blacks by establishing schools for blacks. The sociologists noted that "one of the primary attractions of the Catholic Church [for black Chicagoans] is the educational institutions. With the public schools running on double shifts. . . many parents felt that the parochial school offered a more thorough education in a quieter atmosphere with adequate discipline and personal attention for all students."[71] Similarly, Sister Clementina remembered that Holy Name of Mary parents sent their children to the school because they "thought that their children would be better trained" than students in public schools.[72]

The fact that many African-American parents favored Holy Name of Mary over public schools seemed even more plausible when considering the large class sizes at the parochial school. As mentioned earlier, photographs taken in 1953 show that some Holy Name of Mary classrooms had more than 35 students. Black public schools in Chicago were also often overcrowded. For example, in 1963 black Chicagoans expressed outrage when a report confirmed that 40% of black public schools averaged more than 35 students.[73] African-American parents, however, distinguished overcrowded facilities in Holy Name of Mary from

---

[70] Philip M. Hauser and Evelyn M. Kitagawa, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1950,* 308, 7; Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1960*, 165.

[71] St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis,* 413-414. Also see V.P. Franklin, "First Came the School," 54.

[72] Sister M. Clementina, O.S.P. interview by author.

[73] Mary J. Herrick, *The Chicago Schools,* 324.

similar conditions in Chicago's public schools. Holy Name of Mary was overcrowded because it received an outpouring of community support. On the other hand, African-American public schools were disproportionately large because public school administrators gerrymandered school boundaries and constructed schools in locations that resulted in overcrowding.[74]

Parents and supporters of Holy Name of Mary also failed to object to the school's racial composition. For example, although the *Chicago Defender* admonished Morgan Park Catholics for working to establish their own church in 1934, the newspaper did not criticize Holy Name of Mary after it was founded. From the school's establishment to 1954, the city's major black newspaper did not feature any major articles on the school. Though the *Defender* did not critique Holy name of Mary for being a black private school, it did express its disapproval of the racially exclusive practices of Catholic institutions in Chicago and the United States that were not administered by blacks.[75]

Despite their glaring absence in the *Chicago Defender*'s nuanced critique of other Catholic institutions, the Oblates had their own ideas regarding the importance of black schools. The clearest articulation of the Oblates' position on black schools can be found in a master's thesis written by Sister Mary of Good Counsel Baptiste in 1939. After writing her thesis, Sister Mary of Good Counsel went on to hold influential positions such as superior general and assistant dean of the Oblates' only school of higher education, Mount Providence College. The thesis posited that the common racial identity of black teachers and students allowed for an effective classroom intimacy that was absent among white instructors and black pupils.

---

[74] See Michael Homel, *Down from Equality;* V.P. Franklin, *The Education of Black Philadelphia*; Jeffrey Mirel, *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System*.

[75] See "Catholic Bishops Blast U.S. Race Hatred in D.C. Meet," *Chicago Defender,* November 20, 1943, 2;"Cardinal Stritch and the Church's Duty," *Chicago Defender,* March 9, 1946, 14; "Eight of the Outstanding Americans on *Defender* 1950 Honor Roll," *Chicago Defender,* January 6, 1951, 1.

According to Baptiste, "There is a natural bond of sympathy existing between [an African-American teacher] and her [African-American] pupils requiring in most cases, no external stimulus nor cultivation and which can seldom or never exist between persons of different races."[76] She went on to argue that societal racism and stereotypes made black students hesitant in expressing themselves in front of white teachers for fear of not positively representing their race. On the other hand, black students did not fear that black teachers would see their shortcomings as indicative of the entire African-American race. She also believed that some white teachers were concerned about disciplining and correcting black students because they did not want to be accused of racial prejudice. Black instructors, however, were obviously unafraid of being considered racist and thus were able to adequately correct the behavior of African-American children. Furthermore, Baptiste argued that black teachers' experiences with racism in the United States mandated that they see education as a tool of ridding society of discrimination and to instill in students racial pride through the study of black history and culture.[77]

Sister Mary of Good Counsel's thesis did not come out of a vacuum. In the 1930s, various black intellectuals, most famously W.E.B. DuBois, began to argue that black separate schools could shield African-American students from unsympathetic white teachers. Moreover, black teachers' racial identity made them best suited to understand the experiences of black students as well as prepare them for what they could expect in a white-dominated world after

[76] Mary of Good Counsel Baptiste, O.S.P., "A Study of the Foundation and Educational Objectives of the Congregation of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and of the Achievement of These Objectives as Seen in Their Schools," (M.A. thesis, Villanova College, 1939).

[77] Ibid.

they graduated.[78] Baptiste's thesis, however, specifically referenced the work of black intellectual Kelly Miller who also saw separate black schools as key "for developing the best powers and possibilities of Negro youth."[79] This theme as well as an advocacy for black history curriculum was also present in the work of black historian and intellectual Carter G. Woodson, who Baptiste also referenced. However, the advocacy of black educational institutions was not limited to black intellectuals. Vanessa Siddle Walker and David Cecelski have shown that black educators, parents, and students in the Jim Crow era South also saw African-American schools as viable institutions and did not view them as deficient.[80]

Several black organizations in the 1930s also questioned the virtues of integration. Baptiste's 1939 thesis, which defended black schools, was written shortly after the Nation of Islam established its first school in 1932. Moreover, although weakened by the deportation of its leader Marcus Garvey in 1927, the UNIA, an international black nationalist organization continued to operate in the United States throughout the 1930s. Other groups with black nationalist leanings such as the Moorish Science Temple of America and the Peace Movement of Ethiopia were also active during this decade.[81]

---

[78] W.E.B. DuBois, "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools,"; Derrick Aldridge, *The Educational thought of W.E.B. DuBois: An Intellectual History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008), 82-85.

[79] Kelly Miller, "The Reorganization of the Higher Education of the Negro in Light of Changing Conditions," *Journal of Negro Education* 5, no.3 (1936), 491. For work on Miller's earlier educational thought see August Meier, "The Racial and Educational Philosophy of Kelly Miller, 1895-1915," *Journal of Negro Education* 29, no.2 (1960).

[80] Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential,* David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road.*

[81] For work on the Nation of Islam's schools see Hakim M. Rashid and Zakyyah Muhammad, "The Sister Clara Muhammad Schools". For work on the UNIA see Robert A. Hill, ed. *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). New insights on the Moorish Science Temple of American and the Peace Movement of Ethiopia are featured in Micahel Gomez, *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience,* 91-108.

Many Holy Name of Mary educators also believed in the viability of black schools. An example of this perspective is seen in an address delivered at a 1933 Federation of Colored Catholics (FCC) convention by Holy Name of Mary's second principal, Sister Laurentia. As mentioned earlier, the FCC was a black led activist organization that attempted to end racial discrimination in the Catholic Church as well as the larger society. Like Baptiste's thesis, Sister Laurentia also believed that the Oblates, by virtue of their race, played a key role in the education of black youth and to "bring to fruition the highest potentialities of our race."[82] It is likely that Sister Laurentia maintained this perspective while at Holy Name of Mary. In like manner, teacher Sister Clementina also remembered that the Oblates at Holy Name of Mary were guided by a racialized educational objective which was "to bring our little black children up to par, and to get them into being in leadership roles as adults."[83]

Holy Name of Mary teachers also shared Baptiste's belief in the importance of teaching black history and culture. In 1946 the sisters developed programs and assignments for students to participate in Negro History Week.[84] Sister Clementina also remembered that Sister Patricia Ford, who taught at Holy Name of Mary from 1953-1956 imparted African-American musical traditions to the students and adults as the school's music teacher and head of the church's choir.[85] Sister Clementina, who taught at Holy Name of Mary from 1950-1956, also remembered that new developments in the Civil Rights Movement provided the school's teachers with opportunities to instruct students about this struggle against racism. Teachers discussed "the names of those who were trying to better our people, and explaining to them

---

[82] Sister M. Laurentia, O.S.P. "The Oblate Sisters of Providence and Higher Education," *The Chronicle* 5, no.1 (January 1932), 8-9 in Congregation: Sisters-Deceased Shortt, Sr. M. Laurentia, Box 72, Folder 13, AOSP.

[83] Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author.

[84] Annals, December 1946, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[85] Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author.

[the students] the things that they heard or read about." She further stated that these lessons "were necessary because we wanted to move up. We didn't want to stay doormats."[86]

This emphasis on racial pride and progress coincided with similar national and local developments. African-Americans activists increasingly pressured American institutions to end racially discriminatory practices in the 1940s and early 1950s. The early civil rights victories of the 1950s drew on earlier campaigns in the 1940s such as the March on Washington Movement and African-American interest in international developments such as the United Nations Human Rights Charter and anti-colonialism. In addition, antiracist Catholic organizations such as the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago (CIC) also struggled against racism in archdiocesan institutions. Much of this activism focused on integration. Holy Name of Mary, however, shows that some African-Americans did not necessarily believe that racially mixed schools were the best educational institutions for black children.

Holy Name of Mary supported racial progress, black pride, and an antiracist agenda. However, the school still promoted an identification with the American state. This tradition partially stemmed from the educational philosophy of the national Oblates organization. The religious community's handbook for teachers noted that "Oblate schools can be counted upon to inculcate a loyalty to the United States of America.[87] Various activities at Holy Name of Mary promoted American nationalism such as program that commemorated the 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights was held in 1941. The Cold War, which encouraged (and often pressured) groups to demonstrate their loyalty to the United Sates and denounce communism, may have helped to influence the Oblates' American nationalism. Parish programs clearly

[86] Ibid.

[87] Oblate Sisters of Providence Teacher's Handbook of School Procedure, September 1945, Oblates sisters of Providence Missions Record Group, Box 115, Folder 5, AOSP.

showed that the Holy Name of Mary supported the United States' efforts in this conflict. For instance, in 1954 a special mass was held at the church for East European Catholics who were under Soviet Rule.[88]

While Holy Name of Mary educators may have feared the spread of communism, they could be confident in the success of their school. One indication of this success was the school's growing enrollment. Holy Name of Mary accepted 110 students in its first year. Four years later during the 1945-1946 school year Holy Name of Mary's enrollment almost tripled to 300 students. By 1952, the school accepted 339 children.[89] Unlike Howalton, little evidence survives of the school's early academic success. However, in 1944 evaluators from the Illinois State Board of Education "were very pleased with the results of the school."[90] Despite this success, the school would experience greater challenges later in its history.

1954-1968

Holy Name of Mary was caught up in the same sweeping historical changes as Howalton from the mid 1950s to the late 1960s. Unprecedented economic growth, the Civil Rights Movement, a reemergence of liberalism, and Cold War themes left an indelible impression on American Catholicism. Nonetheless, the Catholic Church would also initiate its own unique contributions to these historical trends. Inspired by civil rights activists, Catholics increasingly played a greater role in this movement against racial discrimination. Catholic religious and laypeople participated in several major civil rights demonstrations occurring in Albany, Georgia in 1962, the March on Washington in 1963, and other campaigns. Historian John T. McGreevy, however, considers the Selma, Alabama protest of 1965 the apex of Catholic involvement in the

[88] Annals, December 15, 1941, Box 15, Folder 7; Annals, December 26, 1954, Box 16, Folder 2, AOSP; Carol Anderson, *Eyes Off the Prize;* Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights.*

[89] Annals, September 8, 1941, September 5, 1945, September 3, 1952, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[90] Annals, May 4, 1944, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

Civil Rights Movement. Priests from more than fifty dioceses across the county participated in the demonstrations for black voting rights. Protests in sympathy with the campaign were also held outside of Selma. For example, in New York more than 500 Catholics were among the 15,000 demonstrators who marched in Harlem in support of the Selma protests. Antiracist activism of Catholics in the United States was endorsed by Pope Paul VI who publically opposed racial discrimination and communicated his support for the Civil Rights Movement to the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and President Lyndon B. Johnson.[91]

With the pope's blessings, Catholic officials in Chicago also demonstrated their approval of antiracist activities. Albert Meyer, who replaced Samuel Stritch as Chicago's archbishop in 1958, moved more forcefully on issues of racial justice than his predecessor. An indication of the archdiocese's changing mood on race relations was Meyer's agreement to hold a clergy conference in 1960 on The Catholic Church and the Negro in the Archdiocese of Chicago where the archbishop pledged to "remove from the Church. . .any possible taint of racial discrimination or racial segregation."[92] Catholic antiracists in Chicago were also emboldened by the installation of Meyer's successor, John Cody in 1965. Cody was heralded for excommunincating racist Catholics in his previous post as Archbishop of New Orleans. In Chicago, he promoted liberal policies such as residential integration and African-American membership in predominantly white unions.[93] Under the two archbishops' leadership, Catholic priests, nuns, and laypersons increasingly used "direct action techniques" to attack residential segregation and racial discrimination in (public and private) schools and various Chicago Catholic institutions. In addition, the Chicago's primary antiracist organization, the Chicago Catholic Interracial Council,

[91] See John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 133-173.

[92] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 306-308.

[93] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 186-187, 221; Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 344-346.

joined the city's most prominent civil rights organization, the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, during this period.[94]

Along with the Civil Rights Movement, Catholic activism was influenced by the Second Vatican Council. Held from 1962-1965, and including more than 2,000 bishops from several nations, the council instituted far reaching changes in the Catholic Church. The bishops spurned the Catholic Church's emphasis on hierarchy dominated by male church officials and called for a greater leadership role by laypersons. Service to the impoverished and oppressed peoples of the world was also given greater legitimacy as a result of the council. In addition, the bishops permitted greater liturgical freedom which allowed traditionally non-Catholic groups to more fully participate in Church services by contributing their own cultural forms to the Catholic mass. These various provisions not only supported the work of civil rights activists in the United States but also showed the Church's willingness to appeal to the many nations of color that became independent during this period.[95]

The reforms of the Second Vatican Council also significantly impacted women religious. Several nuns correlated the council's stance against hierarchy and inequality with their own struggle for freedom within a male dominated Catholic Church. Many sisters expressed their desire for freedom by eschewing a traditional cloistered lifestyle and actively participating in the Catholic Church's struggle against inequality. Two of the more notable examples in Chicago included the involvement of nuns in protests against the Illinois Club for Catholic Women and

[94] Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church,* 295-297, 309-311.
[95] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 155-173.

the arrest of six Daughters of Charity who joined the CCCO-led demonstrations against school segregation in 1965.[96]

However, not all Catholics supported this liberal activism. Many Catholics protested African-American demands for access to traditionally white Catholic neighborhoods, churches, and schools. Several white families unable to avoid black migration into their parish areas moved to the suburbs. During Cardinal Albert Meyer's tenure from 1958 to 1965, all but three of the thirty newly established parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago were created in suburban areas.[97] In addition, some white Catholics, like residents in Chicago's Calumet Park neighborhood in 1957, used violence to avoid integration. However, some of the most violent clashes between Catholic liberals and conservatives occurred during the Chicago Freedom Movement's march into Chicago's heavily Catholic Northwest and Southwest neighborhoods. Racially liberal Catholics participating in the demonstrations were specifically targeted by neighborhood residents. According to Chicago CIC executive director, John McDermott, "the scores of nuns and priests who marched became a special target" for attacks by local Catholics.[98] A local priest also acknowledged that "the sight of a Roman collar incited [the rioters] to greater violence and nastier epithets". One notable example occurred when riot participants cheered when a local Catholic nun was knocked to the ground by a brick.[99]

---

[96] Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts,* 135-148. The influence of the Civil Rights Movement, the Second Vatican Council, and their own reflections on their subordinate status in the Catholic Church sparked by the growing feminist movement also encouraged women religious to critique sexism in the Catholic Church. Many women religious even left their orders to pursue work that was perceived be less limiting. In 1970 alone more than 4,000 nuns left their religious orders. John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 146.

[97] Harry Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, xviii-xxi.

[98] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 189.

[99] Alan B. Anderson and George W. Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line,* 225; John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 189.

Holy Name of Mary did not go unaffected by these historical developments. Teachers at the school were quite cognizant and participated in various antiracist activities in Chicago. For example, the sisters participated in the Urban Apostolate of the Sisters which was an interracial organization of nuns in Chicago that worked to improve race relations in the city.[100] Not only was the organization representative of the changes engendered by the Civil Rights Movement, but also the tendency of nuns to work directly with oppressed groups. Holy Name of Mary teachers also attended events held by and for local civil rights activists and organizations such as Dick Gregory and the Catholic Interracial Council during the height of Chicago's black freedom struggle. In addition, the Oblates were aware of other antiracist activity at the time such as a Chicago Freedom Movement rally in 1966 and the elections of Gary and Cleveland's first black mayors, Richard Hatcher and Carl Stokes respectively.[101]

Nonetheless, the activity of Holy Name of Mary School should not be overstated. The Oblates did not participate in Chicago's major civil rights demonstrations in the mid-1960s that involved direct action techniques. Moreover, no teachers traveled outside of Chicago to attend some of the more famous civil rights events. For instance, Sister Virginie, who taught at Holy Name of Mary during the 1965-1966 school year, remembers that some Oblates were cautious of participating in civil rights campaigns. Although Sister Virginie was allowed to join the Chicago Urban League, her local superior and principal, Sister Angela, did not permit her to participate in the 1965 civil rights demonstrations in Selma.[102]

---

[100] Annals, February 4, 1964, November 28, 1964, Box 17, Folder 2, AOSP; Annals, November 8, 1965, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP; Sue Ellen Hoy, *Good Hearts,* 135-137.

[101] Annals, June 20, 1965, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP; Annals, November 7, 1967, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP; "Cite Gregory at Music Festival," *Chicago Defender,* March 20, 1965, 4.

[102] Sister M. Virginie Fish, O.S.P., interview by author.

Holy Name of Mary provided opportunities for students to study black historical and cultural experiences in spite of the lack of civil rights activity by its educators. Sister Reginald Gerdes, who taught at Holy Name of Mary in the late 1950s, remembered that she found creative ways to teach this subject by creating her own reading lists and assignments and using the encyclopedia when she could not access appropriate books about African-Americans.[103] Holy Name of Mary students also had the opportunity to engage black history and the Civil Rights Movement outside of the classroom. For example, in 1960, the Holy Name of Mary parish held a black history program which honored George Washington Carver, Mary McLeod Bethune, Frederick Douglass, Marion Anderson, and other notable African-Americans. Possibly as a result of the Civil Rights Movement, the event also challenged parishioners and students to make their own contributions to the development of black people by asserting that "the small exhibition of Negro history and culture on display…presents only enough to produce a sense of honest pride. More than that, we hope it will present a challenge to the present generation that they might continue and hasten that progress."[104] In another program, the Morgan Park Credit Union held its 1962 annual meeting at Holy Name of Mary Church which featured Chicago Urban League executive director Edwin Berry. It is likely that Berry's speech, which was titled "Race Relations-Problems of the Sixties" also allowed Holy Name of Mary educators, students, and parishioners to engage the issues highlighted in the Civil Rights Movement. Holy Name of Mary community members had another opportunity to demonstrate their support of the

[103] Sister M. Reginald Gerdes, O.S.P., interview by author, August 8, 2008.

[104] Holy Name of Mary 12th Annual Homecoming and Tea, August 28, 1960, Vertical File 150, AOSP.

movement when the parish held its own program in 1965 in sympathy with civil rights demonstrators in Selma, Alabama.[105]

Despite the focus of integration during the Civil Rights Movement, many black Chicagoans held Holy Name of Mary in high regard. African-Americans did not see the black private school as a vestige of the oppressive Jim Crow era. One clear example of this is the school's growing enrollment. After peaking to approximately 300 children in the early 1950s, Holy Name of Mary's student body grew to more than 450 pupils by the mid 1960s. This growth in enrolment forced the school to establish waiting lists. Still, the number of students attending the school remained large. Not until 1966, when archdiocesan policy mandated that the school reduce its class sizes, did Holy Name of Mary's enrollment fall below 400 students.[106]

Another example of the school's positive reception was its coverage in the *Chicago Defender.* The publication consistently criticized racially separate schools and even admonished Morgan Park blacks who desired their own parish prior to Holy Name of Mary's establishment. However, the *Chicago Defender,* did not critique Holy Name of Mary in its initial years. By the middle 1950s and into the 1960s, the newspaper began to consistently feature Holy Name of Mary school and parish events.[107] As had been the case with Howalton, the *Chicago Defender* supported black private schools while opposing the racially exclusive polices of Chicago's public educational system.

---

[105] "Edwin Berry to Talk in Morgan Park, *Chicago Defender,* January 25, 1962, 2; Annals, March 13, 1965, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[106] Annals, September 5, 1956, Box 17, Folder 1, AOSP; Annals, September 5, 1962, Box 17, Folder 2, AOSP; Annals, April 25, 1965, July 23, 1966, September 7, 1966, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[107] For examples of the *Chicago Defender's* coverage of Holy Name of Mary events see Marion B. Campfield, "Mostly About Women," *Chicago Defender,* August 20, 1955, 14; Ethel L. Payne, "E. African Bishop Visits White Fathers of Africa," *Chicago Defender,* November 13, 1956, 3; "Edwin Berry to Talk in Morgan Park, *Chicago Defender,* January 25, 1962, 2; "Holy Name of Mary Celebrates Silver Jubilee," *Chicago Defender,* September 11, 1965, 12.

Holy Name of Mary School was also warmly received by its parents and community of supporters. The PTA continued to support the school's efforts throughout the 1960s.[108] In addition, individual parents assisted the school's teachers by helping to organize extracurricular activities, lending their own materials for school programs, and assisting the sisters with student supervision during recess periods.[109] This community support even benefitted the national Oblate community. Mildred Dickerson, a local dressmaker who supported Holy Name of Mary, traveled to Baltimore to make aprons that were sold to help the Oblate Sisters of Providence build their present Motherhouse.[110]

However, community support was not the only thing that remained consistent at Holy Name of Mary during this period. The school also continued to emphasize traditional teaching practices from the late 1950s to the late 1960s. Photographs of the school's classrooms reveal large class sizes and indicate student-centered methods. Two pictures taken in 1957 show the school's fourth and seventh grade classrooms with 53 and 34 students respectively. Both classes had desks that were arranged in columns facing the front of the room which suggests that teachers still played a dominant role in instruction. Another photograph taken during the school's 1965-1966 school year, shows more than 50 students engaged in whole group instruction. Six students completed an assignment on the board while the remaining students followed along. [111]

---

[108] Annals, October 6, 1957, April 26, 1959, October 6, 1960, Box 17, Folder 1, AOSP; Annals, November 14, 1965, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[109] Annals, September 6, 1961, Box 17, Folder 2, AOSP; Annals, December 9, 1966, August 31, 1966, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP; Annals, January 11, 1967, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP.

[110] Untitled Document, History, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP. A Motherhouse is the headquarters of a community of women religious.

[111] Missions: Illinois Holy name of Mary Photographs; Box 19, Folder 3, AOSP; Missions: IL: Chicago Holy name of Mary School and Students: Class Groups, Box 6, Folder 12; AOSP; Sister M. Virginie, 1965-1966, Box 10, Folder 11, AOSP. Nonetheless, there is evidence that the school more frequently used

Holy Name of Mary teachers were not beset by the intrusive paternalism of priests like they were during the school's early years. Father Ryan left Holy Name of Mary in 1949 due to health problems. John C. Owczarek replaced him first as an administrator and then as pastor after Ryan died in 1953. Owczarek remained in this position until 1965 when he was replaced by James W. Keating. Though the new pastors stayed abreast of school matters by consulting with Oblate principals and teachers, it is likely that they allowed the sisters autonomy in administering the school. The Oblate annals and correspondence have no record of these two pastors usurping control over the school as had been the case with Father Ryan. In remembering, Father Owczarek, Sister Clementina recalled that he "left [school matters] in our hands. . . It was left to the nuns to run the school."[112]

Data on Holy Name of Mary's academic record during this period of Oblate autonomy is fragmentary and ambiguous. An internal history of the school remarked that low test scores by students could have forced the school to close in 1956. Unfortunately, the document is not detailed and does not indicate key information such as the extent of underachievement, what body (i.e. Archdiocese of Chicago or Oblate Sisters of Providence) threatened to close the school, or the severity of the threat.[113] On the other hand, an annals entry in 1962 indicated academic success. Archdiocesan evaluators visited the school that year and determined that Holy Name of Mary was "above average in reading."[114] In 1966, however, low standardized test

---

field trips as an educational tool. Annals, May 4, 1961, May 7, 1964, Box 17, Folder 2, AOSP; Annals, May 19, 1966, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[112] Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author, July 26, 2008. It should be noted that Holy Name of Mary parish was presided over by archdiocesan priests, who are under the governance of the archdiocese of Chicago. Other parishes were headed by archdiocesan priests or priests that belonged to religious orders that were not under the governance of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

[113] Untitled Document, History, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP.

[114] Annals, May 24, 1962, Box 17, Folder 2, AOSP.

scores caused the school to implement a tutoring program "to improve the Reading levels of some of the pupils."[115]

Indebtedness also challenged Holy Name of Mary during this period. In 1959, the parish's debt was more than $100,000.[116] The debt remained substantial in the mid-1960s despite the work of parishioners to reduce it. A 1966 church bulletin listed the debt as $83, 656.[117] The parish's debt prevented the school from making necessary renovations. In May of 1966, the school's seventh grade classroom was condemned and forced to close. The following month, the school discontinued its kindergarten because of "fire regulations." Problems with Holy Name of Mary's physical plant and increasing debt continued to plague the school in its latter years.[118]

1968-1986

Catholics were active participants in America's turn to the right during the late 1960s. Hostility to civil rights, student activism, women's liberation, and other progressive reforms swelled the conservative ranks during this period. As mentioned earlier, large groups of Catholics never embraced the various liberal reforms of the 1960s. This was seen by their opposition to residential and school integration and resistance to civil rights activities such as the Chicago Freedom Movement's demonstrations. However by the early 1970s, Catholic conservatives began to more frequently express their frustrations in the national political arena. Catholics had traditionally allied with the Democratic Party. Yet in 1972, more Catholics voted

---

[115] Holy Name of Mary Tutoring Program in Annals, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[116] The debt was listed as $200,000 in 1959 in the Tenth Anniversary of Holy Name of Mary Church, 1972-1982" April 25, 1982, Vertical File 150, AOSP. However the debt was listed as $130,000 in 1959 in the Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS.

[117] Holy Name of Mary Church Bulletin, May 22, 1966, in Annals, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP.

[118] Annals, May 9, 1966, May 29, 1966, Box 17, Folder 3, AOSP. Low attendance was also cited as the reason why the school was closed.

for Nixon for president than his liberal Democratic opponent, George McGovern. Supported by Republic overtures, Catholics consistently split their votes between both parties in subsequent national elections.[119]

Racial liberalism in the Catholic Church also declined during this period. In many cases the resolve of racial conservatives matched (if not exceeded) the determination of liberals to integrate Catholic institutions. In addition, the suburban exodus of white Catholics made desegregation efforts more difficult. Despite some examples of racially mixed parishes, most of Chicago's black and white Catholics attended segregated schools and churches. In addition, the liberal organizations that were on the forefront of racial activism in the 1960s scaled back their operations in the 1970s. In 1975, the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice (NCIJ) canceled its annual convention because of low registration numbers. The NCIJ was the national organization that coordinated the efforts of various Catholic interracial organizations throughout the country. Even the Chicago Catholic Interracial Council, which had been one of the most prominent antiracist religious organizations of this time, also declined. Lack of support from white liberals and financial problems made the Chicago CIC dormant by 1975. A *Chicago Defender* editorial published in the same year reflected a well-known belief when it stated that the Catholic Church "as a unified, powerful organization challenging a racist society is dismally mute."[120]

---

[119] John T. McGreevy shows the rise of conservatism among Catholic laymen in *Parish Boundaries,* 234. Patrick Allitt examines Catholic conservative intellectuals during this period in *Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Politics in America, 1950-1985* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). For information regarding Catholic voting patterns after the 1972 presidential election see "Iron City Trinity: The Triumph and the Trials of Catholic Social Activism in Pittsburgh, 1932-1972," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22, no.2 (Spring 2004), 145.

[120] Robert McClory, "Catholic Church Retreat Seen on Race Injustice," *Chicago Defender,* October 4, 1975, 5; Richard Philbrick, "Catholic Race Council Chief Gives Up Post," *Chicago Tribune,* May 29, 1969, 25.

This decline in white liberalism coincided with growing black Catholic militancy. Much like the Federation of Colored Catholics in the 1920s and 1930s, black Catholics in the late 1960s and 1970s increasingly argued that racial activism should be led by African-Americans as opposed to an emphasis of fostering interracial understanding. In many ways the emergence of the national Black Power Movement influenced the militancy of African-American Catholics. Like many Black Power activists, black Catholics increasingly concentrated on racial pride, an appreciation of African diasporic culture, and racial autonomy. One such example of this activism occurred at the first Black Catholic Clergy Caucus in 1968. Held in Detroit, the caucus attracted approximately 50 to 75 of the United States 150 black priests to discuss the role of African-Americans in the Catholic Church. The meeting resulted in a proclamation that asserted that the Catholic Church was "primarily a white racist institution." The priests also supported more aggressive recruitment of African-American priests, that black clergy be given greater roles in shaping Catholic Church policy, and advocated black self defense in response to white violence.[121] Similar conferences were held for black nuns in 1968 and black lay Catholics in 1969. The combined efforts of these three groups were institutionalized with the formation of the National Office for Black Catholics in 1970.[122]

Examples of greater racial consciousness among black Catholics coincided with these conferences. Many African-American Catholics instituted black cultural traditions in religious

---

[121] "A Statement of the Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, 1968" in *"Stamped with the Image of God": African Americans as God's Image in Black*, eds. Cyprian Davis, O.S.B. and Jamie Phelps (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003); Joseph M. Davis and Cyprian Lamar Rowe, "The Development of the National Office for Black Catholics," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 7, no.2/3 (Spring-Summer 1988), 269-269. Rhonda Williams has identified Oblates in Baltimore who participated in Black Power activism in "Black Women, Urban Politics, and Engendering Black Power," in *The Black Power Movement,* 91-94.

[122] Joseph M. Davis and Cyprian Lamar Rowe, "The Development of the National Office for Black Catholics," 269-270. Also see, M. Shawn Copeland, "A Cadre of Women Religious Committed to Black Liberation: The National Black Sisters' Conference," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 14, no.1 (Winter 1996), 123-144. Also see, Sister Mary Roger Thibodeaus, S.B.S., *A Black Nun Looks at Black Power* (New York: Shhed and Ward, 1972).

service, replaced white images of saints with black figures, and protested black subordination in the Catholic Church.[123] Black Catholics in Chicago also participated in these sweeping changes. One noteworthy example occurred when Cardinal Cody selected Rollins Lambert, the archdiocese' first ordained black minister, to become pastor at St. Dorothy's parish. Lambert's appointment dismayed many blacks who expected that St. Dorothy's assistant black pastor, the more outspoken George Clements, would be chosen to head the parish. Cody's refusal to appoint Clements resulted in threats of resignation from four of the city's black priests. In addition, a press conference and a "Black Unity" mass were held with Jesse Jackson and the Illinois Black Panther Party in protest of Cody's decision. The imbroglio finally ended when Cody agreed to appoint Clements as pastor of Holy Angles parish.[124]

Several other religious groups also promoted racial pride and autonomy during this period. The Nation of Islam, though founded in the 1930s, became more popular in the 1960s as a result of the black freedom struggle and the attraction of its most popular minister, Malcolm X. Other groups, particularly Albert Cleage's Shrine of the Black Madonna, first emerged during this tumultuous period.[125] However, unlike the Nation of Islam, the Shrine of the Black Madonna, and other more radical Black Power era organizations, black Catholic activists focused on reform within the Catholic Church. Generally, they never threatened to denounce Catholicism or establish their own separate churches. Black Catholic objectives

---

[123] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 224-225.

[124] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 225-226.

[125] For work on the impact of Malcolm X on the history of the Nation of Islam see Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience,* 174-237. For work on Albert Cleage see John H. Bracey Jr., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick, *Black Nationalism in America*, xxvi, li; Albert Cleage, *The Black Messiah* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968); Albert Cleage, *Black Christian Nationalism: New Directions for the Black Church* (New York: W. Morrow, 1972). For other work showing the impact of Black Power on American Christianity see James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (New York: Seabury Press, 1969); James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (New York, Seabury Press, 1975).

included ending the racist practices among Catholics, greater black decision-making power, and the promotion of black history and cultural forms within the Catholic Church.

Schools were also sites of African-American Catholic activism in Chicago. Black students and parents increasingly demanded that Catholic school educational programs reflect broader societal changes. Providence-St. Mel High School is one notable example. Several students of this predominantly black school on Chicago's West Side initiated a series of protests against school policies in 1968 that mirrored the community control campaigns in the city and across the nation. Specifically, students demanded more black teachers, official recognition of the black student union, a curriculum that centered on black history and culture, and greater student input in school administrative decisions. The protest activities included vandalism, sit-ins, and even meetings held with Black Panther Party representatives. [126]

Members of the Holy Name of Mary community were cognizant of these major developments occurring in the nation generally and the Catholic Church in the United States. The Oblate annals note the urban rebellions that occurred on Chicago's West Side in 1966 in response to police brutality and other instances of racial discrimination. However, one of the most transformative moments occurred after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. The Oblates, Holy Name of Mary School parents, and the larger black Chicago community were shocked. Records described rebellions occurring in the city's West Side neighborhoods,

[126] George V. Fornero, "The Expansion and Decline of Enrollment and Facilities of Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1955-1980: A Historical Study," 382-383. This was not the only time that the Black Panther Party became involved in Catholic education. The Archdiocese of Chicago was alarmed when Black Panthers held classes at Precious Blood parish on "guerilla tactics and the teachings of communist leader Mao Tse-Tung." See "Chancery: Did Not Sanction Black Parleys," *Chicago Tribune,* November 27, 1969, A17.

downtown area, and in Morgan Park high schools. Holy name of Mary even closed temporarily after word spread of the civil right leader's assassination.[127]

The Oblates demonstrated a greater racial consciousness after this point. Beginning in 1968, the sisters attended meetings of the Concerned Black Catholics held in Chicago. They also maintained a relationship with the fiery George Clements by teaching at his parish school, Holy Angels.[128] In addition, the sisters interacted with a national network of black Catholics. In 1968 Holy Name of Mary teacher, Sister Vincetta Johnson attended the inaugural meeting of the National Black Sisters' Conference (NBSC) in Pittsburgh. Like its male counterpart, the Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, the NBSC advocated black self-determination and a commitment to struggle against racism in the Catholic Church and broader society.[129]

Along with the emergence of the Black Power Movement, the leadership of Father Anthony Vader also played a pivotal role in Holy Name of Mary's racial consciousness in its later years. Cardinal Cody named Vader pastor of Holy Name of Mary in 1968. Vader was one of Chicago's white liberal clergy who struggled to rid the Catholic Church of racism. As early as 1962, Vader wrote a Master's thesis on segregation in the Archdiocese of Chicago. He subsequently used the publication to advocate his larger interracialist goals. White Catholics were encouraged to "identify ourselves with the Negro population of Chicago." He also urged the archdiocese to establish an office to promote integration in all of its institutions. He envisioned this body to "have teeth to effect [sic]the popular image of racial integration. . ."

---

[127] Annals, April 4, 1968, April 5, 1968, April 6, 1968, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP.

[128] Annals, January 17, 1969, January 18, 1969, February 14, 1969, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP; Paul Smith to Mother Mary of Good Counsel, OSP, May 1, 1975, Missions, Illinois: Holy Name of Mary: Correspondence (1968-1975), Box 14, Folder 7, AOSP.

[129] Annals, August 26, 1968, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP; Shawn Copeland, "A Cadre of Women Religious Committed to Black Liberation," 123-144

"The aim of this committee is to let Catholics know," he wrote, "that if they identify themselves with the Church, they identify with racial integration."[130]

Father Vader also participated in demonstrations to end racism in the Archdiocese of Chicago and broader society. In 1964 Cardinal Meyer appointed Vader to organize a study group that allowed archdiocesan priests to gather and discuss race relations. The study sessions focused on ways that priests could evangelize blacks and participate in direct action campaigns against racial discrimination. Vader also worked closely with George Clements to integrate St. Philip Neri School on Chicago's South Side in the 1960s. The Holy Name of Mary parish history also stated that Vader was "befriended by Dr. Martin Luther King." Quite possibly Vader worked among Catholics participating in the Chicago Freedom Movement's protests in 1966. In addition, Vader traveled to Washington D.C. with other Chicago Catholic priests to participate in the March on Washington in 1963.[131]

Vader maintained his interest in interracial activism when he came to Holy Name of Mary in 1968. He showed his support of African-American parishioners developing their own racial consciousness shortly after his arrival. Holy Name of Mary students and parishioners attended a memorial service for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for their first parish outing under Vader's leadership. Vader also advocated that the school curriculum more prominently feature black history in the first faculty meeting he attended. He continued to encourage the study of

---

[130] Anthony J. Vader, "Racial Segregation Within Catholic Institutions in Chicago: A Study in Behavior and Attitude" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1962), 112, 116.

[131] Steven Avella, *This Confident Church,* 311-321; Holy Name of Mary Parish, 50th Golden Anniversary Program, 1990, Vertical File 150, AOSP.

African-American history and culture, African diasporic art, and black liturgical forms throughout his tenure at the parish.[132]

Holy Name of Mary parish activities, architecture, and material culture reflected this greater interest in racial activism and consciousness by the Oblates and Vader. Since the establishment of Holy Name of Mary, the Oblates believed that their work in education contributed to the overall advancement of African-Americans. They also encouraged their students to develop a positive racial identity. However, the Black Power sociopolitical climate as well as institutional support encouraged the parish to place an even greater emphasis on black racial pride in the late 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. For example, the school replaced white depictions of Mary and Jesus with black images of these figures during this period.[133] The Holy Name of Mary parish also used material culture to promote racial consciousness when it constructed its new church in 1970. According to Father Anthony Vader, the building (designed and constructed by black architectural and construction firms) contained an "African Madonna which represents the strength of Mother Africa."[134] Vader also noted that the church was adorned with black statues, stained glass, and banners "which proclaim who we are and why we are proud of our church as an Afrocentric center of worship."[135] In addition, the Oblates used

[132] Holy Name of Mary Church Program in Annals, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP; Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS; July 6, 1968, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP; Annals, February 19, 1968, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP.

[133] Tenth Anniversary of Holy Name of Mary Church, 1972-1982" April 25, 1982, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Holy Name of Mary Church Burn the Mortgage Celebration Program, December 14, 1985, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Names of Graduates from Holy Name of Mary School, 1978, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives; Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS. These depictions can be compared to earlier images of Mary with European features. See, A Testimonial Welcome to Chicago Under the Auspices of the Holy Name of Mary Parish, Box 18, AOSP.

[134] Harry Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, 388.

[135] Holy Name of Mary Parish 60th Diamond Jubilee, September 17, 2000, RHS.

black material culture in its fundraising programs. A 1968 church program reported that the sisters sought contributions for their work by selling dashikis.[136]

The Oblates also emphasized racial consciousness in the Holy Name of Mary School curriculum. They of course continued to teach students about black history and culture. For instance, the 1981-1982 yearbook shows a photograph of a first grade student in a work area decorated with images of historically notable figures of African descent. [137] In addition, Holy Name of Mary adults were offered black history instruction along with children in 1968 when Father Vader and the Oblates established "Afro-American studies" courses for the entire parish community. [138]

Holy Name of Mary School also encouraged its students to protest inequality and racism. In 1968 students took a field trip to the Chicago Civic Center to participate in a demonstration that advocated that more money be given to summer programs for underprivileged children.[139] Holy Name of Mary eighth grade student, Sheryl Walkup, also received local recognition when her essay, which critiqued Mick Jagger's sexual objectification of black women, was published in the *Chicago Sun-Times*. In the article, Walkup mentioned that her protest was inspired by the lessons she learned from her school, family, and church communities. Holy Name of Mary School congratulated Walkup's protest activity by naming her student of the month.[140]

---

[136] Holy Name of Mary Church Program in Annals, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP

[137] See Holy Name of Mary 1982 Yearbook, Box 10, Folder 11. For other examples of continued emphasis on black history see Annals, February 22, 1968, Box 18, Folder 1; Holy Name of Mary School In-Service Day, January 8, 1982, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives.

[138] Holy Name of Mary Church Program in Annals, Box 18, Folder 2, AOSP.

[139] Annals, May 23, 1968, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP; "Local," *Chicago Tribune,* May 24, 1968, 3.

[140] Sheryl Walkup, "Mick Jagger Owes Black Women an Apology!" *Chicago Sun-Times,* October 12, 1978 in Vertical File 150, AOSP.

Despite Holy Name of Mary's greater racial consciousness, the school maintained its devotion and identification with the United States. Holy Name of Mary still did not see its commitment to the development of black people and its loyalty to America as contradictory. As late as 1976, Holy Name of Mary teachers were advised to inculcate in students a "Devotion to our country" in a faculty meeting.[141] Similarly, a 1979 faculty meeting directed teachers to "Encourage a deep patriotism for America with songs, poems, drawings, etc." in response to the Iran hostage crisis.[142] Holy Name of Mary's emphasis on patriotism differentiated it from black nationalist schools that emerged during this period.

The leadership of Father Vader also distinguished Holy Name of Mary from other black nationalist schools. Several black nationalists during (and before) the Black Power era were wary of white liberals who they feared could challenge black autonomy.[143] Although this was not the case with all white liberals, Holy Name of Mary had its own negative experience with the paternalism of the liberal Father John Ryan. Father Vader also shared these two characteristics. Vader did not insult the sisters and students like Father Ryan, but he did assume an uncharacteristically dominant role in the school. For instance, Vader made school budgetary decisions without consulting the Oblates. In addition, an external report conducted on the school in the 1970s concluded that Vader "seems to have 'taken over' many of the

[141] Holy Name of Mary Faculty Meting, October 11, 1976, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives.

[142] Holy Name of Mary Mini-Faculty Meeting, November 28, 1979, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives. During the crisis, a group of Iranians took over the United States embassy and held sixty-six Americans hostage. For more information on the crisis see David Farber, *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005).

[143] Peniel Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour,* 129; Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle,* 236-242.

responsibilities of the principal" and did "not seem to be a team person as evidenced by his planning of projects and programs in isolation from the rest of the staff."[144]

However, unlike the tenure of Ryan, the Oblates also shared administrative power with the priest and other community members through the Holy Name of Mary School Board in the late 1960s.[145] Following the Second Vatican Council, which modified the church's earlier emphasis on hierarchy, Cardinal Cody increasingly allowed Catholic lay members to assume greater responsibilities in the operation of parochial schools. According to the Archdiocese of Chicago, parish school boards were responsible for the "formulation of policies to govern the operation of the school." The Holy Name of Mary school board consisted of the pastor, the school principal, and nine elected lay persons. At least six of the lay persons were required to be school parents. All lay persons were required to practice Catholicism or receive Catholic instruction and attend Mass at least five times a year.[146]

Holy Name of Mary also enjoyed support from other organizations. One main group, the Holy Name of Mary Home School Association, replaced the school's P.T.A. in the 1970s. Nonetheless, the Home School Association focus on fundraising and collaboration between parents and teachers made it much like the prior group. The school association was key in coordinating skating parties and other events to raise money in order to build a playground and fence in the 1970s. Parents of students who graduated even continued to support the school

---

[144] Annals, September 25, 1970, Box 18, Folder 3, AOSP; Report of the Evaluation Team for Holy Name of Mary School, Evaluation Report (undated, 1976), Box 15, Folder 3.

[145] The first record of the Holy Name of Mary school board that I was able to uncover was in 1968. See Annals, November 7, 1968, Box 18, Folder 1, AOSP.

[146] See John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 216.218; Email sent as a fax from Margaret Farley to Julie Satzik, August 3, 2005, Julie Satzik Subject File, Bernardin Archives; Archdiocese of Chicago School Policies and Administrative Procedures for Elementary Schools, Office of Catholic Education School Board Administrative Records, Bernardin Archives;Holy Name of Mary School Board Constitution, Holy Name of Mary School Minutes and By-Laws (1992-1994), Bernardin Archives.

such as a mother who continued to coach the cheerleading team after her daughter graduated.[147] Other groups affiliated with Holy Name of Mary Church such as the Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver also contributed their time and money to the school.[148]

The Holy Name of Mary community also continued to be warmly received outside of its parish. As had been the case in earlier years, the *Chicago Defender* highlighted various school and church events without critiquing the parish's predominantly black racial composition.[149] Actually, the fact that the parish served and was administered by blacks was celebrated by individuals outside of the Holy Name of Mary community. For example, during the parish's forty-fifth year anniversary in 1985, Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, assigned the week of December 9 Holy Name of Mary Week and wrote a proclamation that honored the parish for establishing "the only Catholic Church built by Blacks for Blacks." Similar statements were written in a parish program by Illinois governor James Thompson, the black auxiliary bishop of Chicago Wilton Gregory, the Illinois General Assembly, and the Chicago City Council.[150]

Holy Name of Mary instructors sustained their cooperative relationship with local public schools. The Oblates continued to teach catechism courses to public school students as they had done in the past. In addition, new developments brought on by the black freedom struggle allowed the Oblates to work with public schools in unprecedented ways. For example, in 1973 Holy Name of Mary School joined Shoop Elementary School, Barnard Elementary School, Clissold

---

[147] Tenth Anniversary of Holy Name of Mary Church, 1972-1982" April 25, 1982, Vertical File 150, AOSP; Juanita Bratcher, "Holy Name of Mary," *Chicago Defender,* December 22, 1981 in Vertical File 414, AOSP.

[148] See Annals, May 12, 1980, Box 18, Folder 4, AOSP; Annals, September 11, 1980, Box 18, Folder 4, AOSP.

[149] For example of the *Chicago Defender's* coverage of Holy Name of Mary see, "Fashion Show to Benefit Holy Name of Mary Church," *Chicago Defender,* May 23, 1970, 20; Rev. R. C. Keller, "'Plant, Water, Growth' Saga of Holy Name of Mary Church," *Chicago Defender,* May 20, 1972; Juanita Bratcher, "Holy Name of Mary," *Chicago Defender,* December 22, 1981 in Vertical File 414, AOSP.

[150] Holy Name of Mary Church Burn the Mortgage Celebration Program, December 14, 1985, Vertical File 150, AOSP.

Elementary School, and Morgan Park High School in a series of race relations workshops sponsored by the Chicago Urban League.[151]

There were curriculum changes in Holy Name of Mary's educational program in the school's latter years. A 1973 article by *The New Crusader* described the "ongoing progressive educational program to which the [Holy Name of Mary] students are exposed." The article depicted an assignment that allowed the school's fourth grade class to gather in small groups and conduct science projects with minimal teacher involvement.[152] Photographs also indicate the use of student-centered methods. The 1972-1973 Holy Name of Mary yearbook revealed Sister Joanne Burks' fourth grade class learning in small group of students whose desks were arranged in a circle. No teacher is featured in the photograph. The arrangement of the furniture and the absence of the teacher suggest that the students were encouraged to learn from each other and not exclusively depend on the instructor for direction.[153] Other photographs in the school's 1981-1982 yearbook also suggest progressive educational methods. Pictures of the third and fifth grade classes reveal students leading classroom assignments. One photograph of a male third grade student shows him conducting a musical exercise in front of his class. Another photograph shows a fifth grade female student speaking to her classmates behind a podium in the front of the class. Teachers are not featured in either of the photographs which implies that the students were given the opportunity to work autonomously.[154]

---

[151] Jonina Erwin, "CUL Tells Racial Plan," *Chicago Defender,* July 19, 1973, 4.

[152] "Holy Name of Mary School Science Project," *New Crusader,* November 24, 1973, in Vertical File 414, AOSP.

[153] Holy Name of Mary Yearbook, 1972-1973, Holy Name of Mary Programs, Box 15, Folder 5, AOSP.

[154] Holy Name of Mary 1982 Yearbook, Box 10, Folder 11.

Nonetheless, the extent of progressive instruction at Holy Name of Mary should not be overstated. An evaluation of the school conducted in the early 1970s indicated that teachers at the school combined traditional teaching methods with more student-centered practices. The evaluators acknowledged "mini-learning centers in many of the classrooms" but also reported that the students were "too regimented" and had "few opportunities to express themselves or share in decisions about school regulations."[155] Apparently, the evaluators were cognizant of the growing popularity of progressive education in the 1960s and 1970s. This seems especially plausible because the evaluators noted that the school's "traditional program is unrealistic for the 70's." The report recommended that students have a role in selecting the school curriculum and policies. It is plausible that while Holy Name of Mary educators employed progressive practices such as learning centers and small group instruction, they still believed that it was their primary role to determine school procedures and guidelines.

Similar to Howalton, Holy Name of Mary faced major financial challenges in its latter years. In a 1981 article Holy Name of Mary principal Sister Carmela Duncan noted that the school could not complete much needed renovations until it paid off its extant debts. She also lamented that the school's facility was "cramped" and in need of laboratories. Holy Name of Mary's debt would eventually grow to more than $300,000 by the time the school closed in 2002.[156] Holy Name of Mary School's reliance on lay teachers (instructors who were not women or men religious) also attributed to its financial difficulties. The school hired lay teachers only

---

[155] Report of the Evaluation Team for Holy Name of Mary School, (Evaluation Report, 1976), Box 15, Folder 3, AOSP. Although the folder is listed as 1976, Sister Mary De Sales, O.S.P. was the principal at the time of the evaluation. Her term as principal ended in 1975. Because this gives me no definitive date, I determined that the report was conducted in the early 1970s.

[156] Juanita Bratcher, "Holy Name of Mary," *Chicago Defender,* December 22, 1981 in Vertical File 414, AOSP; H. Gregory Meyer, "Legacy of Learning, Love Spelled 'Sister,'" *Chicago Tribune,* July 27, 2002, 1; Dorothy A. Drain, "Catholic Capsules," *Chicago Defender,* January 11, 1975, 20.

for temporary positions in its early years. These lay teachers were replaced as soon as an Oblate was available.[157] However, by the early 1960s, lay teachers became more prominent members of the Holy Name of Mary faculty. Holy Name of Mary hired its first regularly scheduled lay teacher in 1962. By 1969, the school employed three permanent lay teachers. In 1978, lay teachers outnumbered Oblates nine to six.[158]

Most parishes preferred to staff their schools with religious teachers who usually accepted less money than lay teachers. These "contributed services" kept many parishes financially solvent.[159] Nonetheless, many Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago and other Catholic school systems increasingly depended on lay teachers out of necessity in the post-World War II era. Fewer women joined religious communities at this time as career opportunities gradually expanded for females. Inspired by the Second Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965, the Women's Liberation Movement, and the Civil Rights Movement, many nuns also left their religious communities as they increasingly saw their treatment in the Catholic hierarchy as oppressive.[160]

The Oblate Sisters of Providence were also affected by declines in their membership. Like other religious communities, the Oblates experienced difficulties in recruiting new members. At the same time, existing Oblates increasingly reached retirement age. By 1977,

---

[157] See Annals, December 13, 1944, Box 15, Folder 7, AOSP; Annals, March 10, 1958, Box 17, Folder 1, AOSP.

[158] Annals, August 21, 1962, Box 17, Folder 1, AOSP; Holy Name of Mary Convent Report, Programs 1970s, Box 15, Folder 5, AOSP; Harry Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, 388.

[159] James Sanders, *Education of an Urban Minority,* 204.

[160] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries,* 218-219, 236; George V. Fornero,, "The Expansion and Decline of Enrollment and Facilities of Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1955-1980: A Historical Study," 322.

50% of the Oblates' total membership was sixty years or older.[161] These difficulties inevitably affected the number of nuns the Oblates could send to Holy Name of Mary. In 1969, superior general Sister Mary of Good Counsel Baptiste informed Father Vader that the Oblates lost 24 members the previous two years and therefore would have to reduce the number of sisters sent to Holy Name of Mary from eight to six.[162] Four years later, the superior general wrote Vader to tell him that additional reductions in the religious order's membership prevented her from promising a specified number of nuns to the school. Furthermore, she was unable to replace an Oblate teacher at Holy Name of Mary if a sister left for any reason.[163]

Holy Name of Mary also experienced enrolment decline in its later years. The number of students admitted to Holy Name of Mary initially dropped in the late 1960s when the school was forced to reduce its student to teacher ratio. However, Holy Name of Mary's student population continued to decrease in the 1970s and 1980s. The school admitted 356 students in 1970. By 1975, 312 students attended and ten years later Holy Name of Mary's enrollment dropped to 247 students. By 1995, only 195 students were enrolled.[164]

Demographic changes in Morgan Park may have influenced this decline in enrollment during this period.[165] Like Howalton's surrounding neighborhood, Morgan Park's black residential area also experienced these social and economic dislocations. Sister Clementina, who taught at Holy Name of Mary in the mid 1950s witnessed this change. In reflecting on a

---

[161] Statistics on Current Status of Membership, Congregation: Education: Oblate Education Board, Box 19, Folder 8.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Mother Mary of Good Counsel Baptiste, O.S.P. to Anthony J. Vader, October 26, 1973, Administration: Sup. Gen/Baptiste,. Correspondence: Holy Name of Mary (Chicago) 1955-1977, Box 17, Folder 4.

[164] Annals, September 8, 1970, Box 18, Folder 3, AOSP; Holy Name of Mary Faculty, 1974-1975, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives; Holy Name of Mary School Survey, 1984-1985, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives ; Holy Name of Mary School Survey, 1994-1995, Holy Name of Mary School Administrative Files, Bernardin Archives.

[165] William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 49-56.

return visit to the parish neighborhood in the 1990s she remembered, "And yet, it wasn't terrible, at least not in the very vicinity but. . .it did look a little bit poorer [than it had in the 1950s]."[166] Census data confirms Sister Clementina's appraisal of the Morgan Park neighborhood. Neighborhood decline in Morgan Park was partially the result of the construction of government subsidized homes that was largely occupied by African-Americans in the early 1970s.[167] In addition, during the 1970s, the population in the predominantly black census sections of Morgan Park declined yet the percentage of impoverished and unemployed residents grew. This suggests that many of the blacks who migrated from Morgan Park were middle class individuals who could pay for a private school tuition.[168]

Greater competition may have also contributed to Holy Name of Mary's decline in enrollment. Less than 5,000 African-Americans attended Catholic schools in Chicago at the time of Holy Name of Mary's founding. By the 1983-1984 school year, more than 29,000 black children were enrolled in archdiocesan schools.[169] African-Americans also began to patronize previously predominantly white parishes in Morgan Park during this period. For example, St. Margaret's of Scotland, which had previously excluded black students, became a predominantly black parish in the 1970s.[170]

---

[166] Sister M. Clementina Givens, O.S.P., interview by author.

[167] Brian J. Berry, *The Open Housing Question: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1966-1976* (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1979), 235-245. Janet Nancy Tarsitano, "The History of Integration and Integration Maintenance in the Beverly Hills/Morgan Park Community," (M.A. thesis., Governors State University, 1982).

[168] Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Taeuber, eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1960*, 165; The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area: Based on the 1970 and 1980 Censuses*, 189-190. The 1960 Morgan Park census tract areas of 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, and 935 were converted to census tract areas 7503, 7504, 7502, 7505, 7501, and 7506 respectively in 1970; The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990,* 211.

[169] James Sanders, *The Education of an Urban Minority,* 219; James G. Cibulka, "Catholic School Closings: Efficiency, Responsiveness, and Equality of Access for Blacks," in *Visible Now,* 146.

[170] Harry Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, 563.

These developments took their toll on Holy Name of Mary. As early as 1976, the Oblate Sisters of Providence considered discontinuing their Chicago mission. A report conducted by several of the sisters confirmed that the lack of women religious, financial difficulties, and enrollment declines threatened Oblate schools in Illinois and Michigan. However this group of Oblates, headed by Holy Name of Mary principal, Sister Carmela, and included the school's first principal, Sister Claude, resolved to continue these schools.[171] The sisters' advocacy was successful and Holy Name of Mary remained open for another twenty-six years. The problems discussed by the sisters, however, continued and eventually forced the school's closing in 2002.

Conclusion

The development of Holy Name of Mary was linked to the larger history of black Chicago. The affluence of Morgan Park's African-American community allowed the school to flourish in its early years. However, the school's decline in enrollment coincided with the growth of the community's impoverishment. The history of the school also reflected political changes in Chicago's black community. The school had always been an example of black self-determination as it provided African-Americans with an alternative to Chicago's racially discriminatory school system. However, the onset of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements facilitated an even greater racial consciousness in the school.

The history of Holy Name of Mary contributes to the history of 20th century Catholicism in America. Studies in this field have tended to focus on how urban archdioceses managed African-American demands for access to Catholic institutions rather than treating black Catholics as central subjects themselves. This examination of Holy Name of Mary illuminates the unique experiences of African-Americans within the Catholic Church. It shows that belonging to a

[171] Proposal for Re-evaluating Plans to Withdraw the Oblate Sisters of Providence from Immaculate Conception School, Three Rivers, Michigan, (undated, 1976), Box 15, Folder 3.

network of Catholic schools provided blacks with an educational alternative to public schools. However, the Archdiocese of Chicago's racially discriminatory practices also circumscribed the autonomy of black administrators and teachers at Holy Name of Mary. In focusing on the Oblate Sisters of Providence, a black female religious order, this chapter highlighted the distinctive experiences of black women, who simultaneously faced racial and gender discrimination in the Catholic Church.

The history of Holy Name of Mary also demonstrates the need to include black private education in broader studies of African-American educational history. It shows that African-Americans did not limit their involvement to public schools. Holy Name of Mary parents and supporters responded to the racial discrimination in Chicago's public educational system by establishing and maintaining a black private school that served their interests. In addition, like the Howalton Day School community, educators and patrons of Holy Name of Mary saw the public and private educational sectors as more porous than what existing scholarship indicates. Members of the Holy Name of Mary school community did not insulate themselves in the private educational sector but made tangible relationships with public schools. The history of the school also shows that black Chicagoans did not object to the racial composition of Holy Name of Mary even though so much local and national activism was devoted to the integration of public schools throughout much of its history. Many of these themes became even more prominent during the Black Power era when African-Americans increasingly questioned the merits of school integration.

"Because like I said, when that is instilled in you at such a young age, it's so hard to ignore it and suppress it, and act like it wasn't there. Because when you're saying 'We have done black things today and we're going to do black things again tomorrow' everyday, that becomes a part of you in a way you can't even really describe."[1]

Rika Lawrence

"We Have Done Black Things Today and We're Going to Do Black Things Again Tomorrow": New Concept Development Center, 1972-1986

The Black Power Movement (BPM) certainly was a transformative moment for African-American education. During this period many activists abandoned hopes of school integration and embraced the promise of community control in public schools. Black private education was also greatly impacted by the Black Power Movement. The curriculum of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary reflected this political change by exhibiting a greater racial consciousness in their programs. Moreover, the fact that these schools served and were established by African-Americans gained a new currency. However, the Black Power era did not just transform existing schools' racial politics. It also inspired a national movement to establish black nationalist private schools. Like earlier black private schools, Black Power era black nationalist schools were seen as an alternative to the institutional deficiencies of public education. However, Black Power schools differed from earlier manifestations of black private education in many respects. First, black identity was their raison d' etre and influenced all aspects of their curriculum. Second, the supporters of black nationalist schools had much less optimism in public education, which was seen as a tool to perpetuate and legitimize racism in America. Third, many Black Power private school advocates believed that these institutions should play a role in a larger black nationalist movement. Independent schools would prepare students to develop and contribute to an

[1] Rika Lawrence, interview with author, July 22, 2009.

autonomous black nation. This chapter reconstructs the history of one such school, New Concept Development Center (NCDC) from 1972 to 1986 and the various historical forces that impacted its history.

The Black Power Movement in the United States emerged in the mid-1960s as many African-Americans became disillusioned with the goals and results of the Civil Rights Movement. Many scholars and activists pinpoint the beginning of the BPM with the 1966 "March Against Fear" in Greenwood, Mississippi. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee leader, Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture) and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. clashed over the former's use of the term, "Black Power."[2] This dispute between Carmichael and King symbolized a larger chasm regarding the future direction of the postwar black freedom struggle. Many scholars characterize civil rights priorities as focusing on the reformation of the United States' institutions through the termination of racial segregation and the attainment of voting rights for African-Americans.[3] Frustrations with the limited results of the Civil Rights Movement, growing black militancy, and continued interests in Third World international developments convinced many activists to identify new strategies for black liberation. Several older civil rights organizations such as SNCC and CORE adopted more radical platforms while new organizations emerged with BPM radical ideologies already in place. While the Civil Rights Movement focused on reform, according to scholar Peniel Joseph, "At its core, [the Black Power Movement]

---

[2] Peniel Joseph, ed., "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement,* 1-2. A number of the historical actors in this chapter such as Carmichael adopted African names as a result of their involvement in the Black Power Movement. For the sake of clarity, the first time an individual who has two known sets of names (given and adopted) is mentioned, this dissertation will first use the name that they were most often referred to in the documentation and then list their other name in parenthesis. The name that appeared most often in the documentation will appear in subsequent references.

[3] Nonetheless, it should be noted that activists during the widely accepted period of Civil Rights activism, the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, embraced a complex variety of strategies and objectives. See, Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," 1233-1263.

attempted to radically redefine the relationship between blacks and American society. Black Power activists trumpeted a militant new race consciousness that placed black identity as the soul of a new radicalism."[4]

Many Black Power activists and organizations adopted black nationalist ideologies which included themes such as the support a separate state, Pan-Africanism, black self-reliance, racial pride and solidarity, and armed self-defense.[5] Black cultural nationalism was a major subset of this broader ideology. It asserted that African and African-descendant peoples had a distinctive culture and worldview. Two of the most prominent cultural nationalist organizations of the time were the US Organization, the Congress of African People (CAP), and the Institute of Positive Education (IPE) led by Maulana Karenga (Ron Everett), Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones), and Haki Madhubuti (Don L. Lee) respectively.[6] Members of these groups and other adherents to this ideology believed that blacks in the United States needed to create institutions and reclaim and recreate cultural forms that promoted, legitimated, and further developed this distinctive culture and worldview. Black cultural nationalists were also known for their participation in the Black Power Movement's aesthetic arm, the Black Arts Movement (BAM). Participants in the BAM reflected the politics of the time in their cultural productions. According to BAM participant Larry Neal, "The Black Arts and the Black Power concept both relate broadly to Afro-

[4] Peniel Joseph, ed., "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement,* 2-3. Also see Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour.*

[5] As mentioned in the introduction, I use John H. Bracey Jr., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick's definition of black nationalism which defines the ideology as ". . .a body of social thought, attitudes, and actions ranging from the simplest expressions of ethnocentrism and racial solidarity to the comprehensive and sophisticated ideologies of…Pan-Africanism." in *Black Nationalism in America.*

[6] See Scot Brown, *Fighting For Us*; Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation*; James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement,* 179, 240, 300. Further elaboration on the Institute of Positive Education will follow in this chapter.

American's desire for self-determination and nationhood. . . One is concerned with the relationship between art and politics; the other is with the art of politics."[7]

Certainly cultural nationalists placed a great emphasis on culture. On the other hand, revolutionary nationalists such as the Black Panther Party (BPP) and Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), placed a greater emphasis on a class analysis of black liberation and building coalitions with progressive groups regardless of their race. These points and cultural nationalists' emphasis on a distinctive black worldview were often vigorously debated and could erupt into violence.[8] Various other forms of nationalism (i.e. religious, economic, emigrationism) also flourished during this period.[9]

Education was also a major concern among Black Power activists. Many groups formed during the era held political education classes where members studied organizational doctrine and different areas of inquiry that were related to the freedom struggle. In addition, proponents of community control demanded African-American autonomy and a curricular focus on black history and culture. Although the Ocean Hill-Brownsville conflict in Brooklyn, New York in 1968 was perhaps the most popular campaign, several other community control struggles occurred in many of America's urban public school districts. For instance, historian Jeffrey Mirel has shown that community control protests spread throughout Detroit from 1969 to 1971 in support of issues such as black control of school districts, more African-American administrators,

---

[7] Larry Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," *The Drama Review* 12, no.4 (Spring 1968), 29. Also see James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement.*

[8] See Charles E. Jones ed., *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered,* William Van Deburg, *The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 144-149, 165, 168; Scot Brown, *Fighting for Us,* 107-130.

[9] For the various strains of black nationalism and other radical traditions during the period see, John H. Bracey Jr., August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick, eds., *Black Nationalism in America*; Alphonso Pinkney, *Red, Black, and Green: Black Nationalism in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), William Van Deburg, ed., *Modern Black Nationalism: From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan* (New York: New York University Press, 1997).

and black studies programs.[10] Similar demonstrations also took place on several college campuses. One of the more well known demonstrations occurred at Cornell University in 1969 when black student activists staged an armed takeover of a school building which led to the resignation of the university's president.[11] The era also witnessed the growth of a national association of black nationalist private schools with the formation of the Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI) in 1972. The organization was led by several black nationalist educators such as Jitu Weusi (Les Campbell), who played a significant role in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville campaign for community control. Member schools were established in several cities across the United States such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Los Angeles.[12]

Other black organizations and individuals exhibited many of the features of Black Power activism before the late 1960s. Individuals such as Martin Delaney, Bishop Henry McNeal Tuner, and Alexander Crummel advocated black nationalism as early as the 19th century. This tradition was continued in the following century by groups such as the United Negro Improvement Association, the Peace Movement of Ethiopia, and the Nation of Islam. Several blacks such as the Deacons for Defense and Justice and Robert Williams advocated armed self defense before the Black Power Movement. Moreover, as mentioned in previous chapters, there is a long history of African-Americans who correlated their struggle with that of other Third World

---

[10] Jeffrey Mirel, *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System,* 329-337. For more community control struggles see Diane Ravitch, *The Great School Wars,* Daniel Perlstein, *Justice, Justice,* Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children*.

[11] Donald Alexander Downs, *Cornell '69: Liberalism and the Crisis of the American University* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1999). Peniel Joseph, ed., "Black Studies, Student Activism, and the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement,* 264.

[12] *Fundisha!-Teach!,* 5, no. 3 (1981) in CIBI Folder, SRW. For work on CIBI see Kwasi Konadu, *A View from the East;* Mwalimu J. Shujaa and Hannibal T. Afrik, "School Desegregation, the Politics of Culture, and the Council of Independent Black Institutions," in *Beyond Desegregation*; Kofi Lomotey and Craig C. Brookins, "Independent Black Institutions: A Cultural Perspective" in *Visible Now.*

peoples.[13] The Black Power era, however, is distinct in that these various radical tenets gained an unprecedented currency and acceptance among African-Americans than in earlier years.

Several African-Americans in Chicago also accepted the tenets of Black Power. Support of the Black Power Movement was demonstrated during the height of Chicago's civil rights activism. Members of SNCC and CORE, two organizations that had been radicalized during the 1960s, publicly opposed Chicago's leading civil rights organization, the Chicago Freedom Movement. For example, in July 1966—a month after Rev. Martin Luther King's dispute with Stokely Carmichael in Mississippi—King entered another tense debate with CORE leader, Floyd McKissick. King defended the merits of the civil rights strategy of nonviolence while McKissick advocated Black Power which he believed "means economic and social programs through Negro unity."[14] Nonetheless, as an illustration of the multiple meanings of Black Power, Chicago gang members at the rally held signs with the slogans "We Shall Overcome" and "Freedom Now" with submachine guns drawn on them.[15] A similar dispute involving King and SNCC leader Monroe Sharp occurred at a Chicago rally in August 1966 after the Chicago Freedom Movement reached an agreement on "open housing" with Mayor Daley. When given an opportunity to speak at the rally, Sharp expressed his support of Black Power which in his estimation was a repudiation of integrationist objectives such as "open housing." Sharp announced to the audience, "You make sure first that you can stand on your own corner, and that it belongs to you. Black Power means

---

[13] Wilson Jeremiah Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism*; William Van Deburg, ed., *Modern Black Nationalism*; Robert A. Hill, ed. *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers*; Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience*; Essien Udosen Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*; C. Eric Lincoln, *The Black Muslims in America*; Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*; Lance E. Hill, *The Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*; Brenda Gayle Plummer, *A Rising Wind.*

[14] Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line,* 202-203; Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children,* 64.

[15] Ibid.

that you tell the man to get out, not that he must hire some more Negroes or sell better merchandise."[16]

Black Power activism in Chicago continued after the apex of the city's Civil Rights Movement in 1966. Founded in 1968 and led by charismatic leader, Fred Hampton, the Illinois BPP chapter organized various activities in Chicago such as political education classes and the Free Breakfast Program which provided meals to area youth. The party also became a symbol of government repression against Black Power militants when local, state, and federal law enforcement authorities led a campaign of counterintelligence that led to the brutal murders of Hampton and fellow member Mark Clark.[17] The Organization of Black American Culture (OBAC) was one of Chicago's most popular groups that merged art with Black Power political activism. Founded in 1967, OBAC included several writers, visual artists, and musicians who according to scholar James Smethurst were "ideologically unified by [black] nationalism."[18] OBAC is perhaps most well known for its work in creating the "Wall of Respect" which was an outdoor mural on Chicago's South Side that depicted several notable black figures.[19] The Black Power Movement also left an impression on African-American education in Chicago through the community control movement and the creation of black nationalist schools that belonged to the Council of Independent Black Institutions.

It is widely believed that the Ruth B. Lott Black Experience (also referred to as the Black Experience) was Chicago's first black nationalist school to be created as a result of the Black

---

[16] Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line*, 276. The Chicago Freedom Movement's "open housing" campaign sought to desegregate the city's housing market. Nonetheless, to the dismay of many black Chicagoans, the agreement made by the Chicago Freedom Movement and Chicago city officials did not secure solid commitments that Chicago officials would implement their demands regarding residential integration. See, Anderson and Pickering, *Confronting the Color Line.*

[17] Jon F. Rice, "Black Radicalism on Chicago's West Side."

[18] James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement,* 210.

[19] Ibid,, 213.

Power Movement. Founded in 1968 on Chicago's South Side by the Black Women's Committee for the Protection and Care of Our Children (also referred to as the Black Women's Committee or BWC), the Ruth B. Lott Black Experience was named in honor of a grandmother of one of the students who bequeathed money to the school upon her passing. The Black Experience was relatively small and instructed approximately twenty-five to thirty students from preschool to the second grade. It was a full day school that instructed students five days a week for an entire academic year.[20] The Black Experience curriculum prominently featured black history and culture as well as other subjects such as language arts, math, and science. The school also studied and implemented progressive Montessori pedagogical methods by basing the curriculum on students' individual needs in an open classroom setting.[21]

Community outreach was central to the development of the Black Experience. Because the school did not charge tuition, financial contributions from black Chicagoans (and the refusal of teachers to accept payment) sustained it. The BWC sold jewelry and chicken dinners to raise funds for the Black Experience. The school also attracted the support of Pulitzer Prize winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks who donated money and materials and held fundraisers.[22] The BWC also associated with other black educators in Chicago. Christine Johnson, who served as principal of the University of Islam in Chicago, advised the BWC and provided the school with instructional materials. The school's outreach also extended to the public school sector. A small number of black public school teachers met with the Black Women's Committee on ways to

---

[20] Adalisha Safi (Jacqueline Robbins), interview with author, July 24, 2009.

[21] Adalisha Safi, interview with author. For information on the Montessori method of instruction see Maria Montessori, *The Montessori Method: The Origins of an Educational Innovation,* ed. Gerald Lee Gutek (Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004);Angeline Stoll Lillard, *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005)

[22]Adalisha Safi, interview with author; "Black Women Honor Gwendolyn Brooks," *Chicago Defender,* March 22, 1969, 24; "20 Poets Pay Tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks," *Chicago Defender,* December 27, 1969, 17.

integrate black history and culture in their courses. In turn, the public school teachers donated materials to the Ruth B. Lott Black Experience.[23]

The Black Women's Committee was an all women's black nationalist organization formed in Chicago from 1968 to the mid 1970s. Founded by Adalisha Safi (Jacqueline Robbins) and Betty Randall, the BWC emphasized self-reliance and black nationalism like many other Black Power organizations of the time. However, the BWC's gender composition distinguished it from other groups. According to Safi, the BWC was put off by the sexism of other Black Power activists and organizations and sought to provide "revolutionary Black Women a creative outlet" to participate in the African-American freedom struggle.[24] The BWC's experiences with sexism were not unique. Many black women experienced sexism from Black Power participants who were radical on issues of race and class yet reactionary in their gender politics. For example, scholar Tracye Matthews has shown that the US Organization and the Black Panther Party, two prominent Black Power groups, often marginalized the interests of black women for the sake of their larger antiracist agendas.[25]

Adalisha Safi also believed that gender discrimination played a role in the closing of the Black experience in the mid-1970s. By this time other black nationalist private schools opened in Chicago that were associated with well known male activists in the city.[26] Haki Madhubuti

---

[23] Adalisha Safi, interview with author. For more information on Christine Johnson see, James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 46 and 182.

[24] Black Women's Committee Ideology, from the private collection of Adalisha Safi (Jacqueline Robbins); Adalisha Safi, interview with author.

[25] Tracye Matthews, "'No One Ever Asks What a Man's Place in the Revolution Is'", 267-304. E. Frances White also looks at the reactionary gender politics of black nationalists in "Africa on My Mind, 73-97. For a broader examination of gender in the post World War II black freedom struggle see Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith eds. *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Routledge, 1999) and Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[26] Adalisha Safi, interview with author.

and Hannibal Afrik were associated with New Concept Development Center and Shule Ya Watoto (Children's School in Kiswahili) respectively. Madhubuti gained national attention for his poetry and work in publishing while Afrik was a public school teacher activist who played a key role in Chicago's community control movement.[27] Safi remembered that some members of Chicago's black community "just looked at us [women in the BWC] as playing games. I mean, we weren't really taken that seriously."[28] Nonetheless, Safi and other members of the BWC were pleased that their contributions to the development of black nationalist education in Chicago was acknowledged by Black Power educators who came after them.[29]

The Institute of Positive Education drew from many of these national and local developments in the Black Power Movement. Founded in 1969, IPE became Chicago's premier black cultural nationalist organization under the leadership of acclaimed poet and activist Haki Madhubuti. IPE's other co-founders were also instrumental in the organization's development. This group included Jabari Mahiri, Chaga Walton (Chaga Olamina), Soyini Rochelle Walton (Soyini Olamina), and Safisha Madhubuti (Carol Lee).[30] As cultural nationalists, IPE members

---

[27] For examples of Haki Madhubuti's work see *Think Black!* 2nd ed.(Chicago: Nu-Ace Social Printers, 1967)*From Plan to Planet: Life Studies: The Need for Afikan Minds and Institutions*, 10th ed. (Chicago: Third World Press, 1992); *Enemies: Clash of the Races* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1978). A further exploration of Madhubuti and his work with NCDC will follow in this chapter. For work on Hannibal Afrik see Dionne Danns, *Something Better for Our Children,* 99-106; John F. Lyons, *Teachers and Reform,* 194-195. A discussion on Haki Madhubuti and his work with NCDC will come later in this chapter.

[28] Adalisha Safi, interview with author.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Institute of Positive Education Orientation, IPE 1979-Present Folder, from the private collection of Soyini Rochelle Walton. Hereafter referred to as SRW. The primary documentation for this chapter comes from two collections. The vast majority of sources are found in the private collection of Soyini Rochelle Walton. These documents are organized in several folders by theme. Items from her collection will be listed by the title or description of the document, the date if available, the folder where it was found, and the abbreviation SRW. The second body of sources for this chapter is found in the school files of the New Concept School of the Institute of Positive Education (IPE eventually changed the school's name from New Concept Development Center to New Concept School). The documents in this collection are also organized in several folders by theme. Items from the New Concept School files will be listed by the title or description of the document, the date if available, the folder where it was found, and the

believed that blacks had a distinctive culture that had been vilified and suppressed by racism. IPE sought to draw from selected African traditions to help develop a culture that would promote the positive development and liberation of blacks.[31]

Several organizations influenced IPE's cultural nationalist ideology. For example, one of the guiding tenets of IPE was the Nguzo Saba, which was created and interpreted to mean "Seven Principles" in the Kiswahili language by Maulana Karenga and the US Organization. Kiswahili, a bantu language primarily spoken in eastern and central Africa, would become a lingua franca among many Black Power era cultural nationalist organizations. The Nguzo Saba includes such principles as unity (umoja), self-determination (kujichagulia), and collective work and responsibility (ujima). These principles are also the foundation of the Kwanzaa holiday. IPE also briefly joined the Congress of African People, which was a national network of organizations that adopted much of the cultural nationalist ideology of the US organization, which declined in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a result of several internal and external problems. CAP then became the leading cultural nationalist organization in the country under its head Amiri Baraka. On the local level, members of IPE also participated in the Organization of Black American Culture.[32]

IPE members also believed that it was necessary for black people to create their own institutions to develop, legitimize, and sustain a liberatory black culture. The importance placed

---

abbreviation NCS after the first notation from this collection is listed. These two bodies of sources are private and not currently available to the public.

[31] Institute of Positive Education, Staff Criteria, IPE Folder, SRW.

[32] Kiswahili was adopted by many cultural nationalists who also embraced Pan-Africanism because it was an African language that was not tied to a specific group. Therefore, it was argued that all people of African descent, regardless of their specific nationality or ethnicity could use the language. For work on the US Organization's advocacy for Kiswhaili and the creation of the Nguzo Saba and Kwanzaa see Scot Brown, *Fighting for Us,* 10-17. For work on the Congress of African People see Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation.* For work on OBAC see James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement,* 210-213.

on institution building is reflected in the organization's name. Thus IPE created several institutions, programs, and publications to accomplish its objectives. Third World Press, which is one of the longest standing black-owned publishing companies, was actually created two years before the founding of IPE. IPE also created *Black Books Bulletin* magazine; *Black Pages,* a pamphlet series; a food co-operative*;* the Hieroglyphics, Inc. typesetting company, a study session called Nation Studies Classes which was geared to adults; and the New Concept Development Center (NCDC) for children.[33] Among these various entities, NCDC would grow into one of IPE's most primary and enduring projects.

NCDC had humble origins as a Saturday program in October 1972. Its educators infused the curriculum with a black cultural nationalist political ideology. Records show the school was organized to teach children "the knowledge of ourselves as Afrikan People, responsibility to Afrikan People, cooperativeness with each other and self reliance upon ourselves."[34] Students learned reading, mathematics, Swahili, black history and culture, African geography, and the Nguzo Saba. School educators also offered free counseling services two days a week to students enrolled in the Saturday classes.[35] Few records of the Saturday program survive, but its success can be surmised from the reception that it received from parents. They were so impressed by what their children learned at the Saturday sessions that they successfully convinced IPE to

---

[33] Institute of Positive Education: An Idea Becoming Reality Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW.

[34] New Concept School Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW. IPE and several other black cultural nationalist organizations used the letter "K" in Africa. In 1972, IPE director, Haki Madhubuti argued that "Most vernacular or traditional languages on the continent spell Afrika with a K." This new spelling was an act of self determination and a basis for a new politicized lexicon for black people. See Haki Madhubuti, *From Plan to Planet,* 13. Madhubuti later revised his statement and argued "In spelling Afrika I use "k" rather than "c" because for many activists the "k" represents an acknowledgment that "Africa" is not the true name of that vast continent. . .the Afrika spelled with a "k" represents a redefined and potentially different Afrika, and also it symbolizes for me a coming back together of Afrikan people worldwide." See Haki Madhubuti: *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?: Afrikan American Families in Transition: Essays in Discovery, Solution and Hope* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1990).

[35] New Concept School Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW.

expand NCDC into a tuition-based full day school serving two to eight year old students in 1974.[36] The full day school began in Chicago's Greater Grand Crossing community on the South Side with 25 students. By the1980-1981 school year, NCDC enrolled 48 students. NCDC's student body almost increased twofold by the 1984-1985 school year with a total enrollment of 80 children.[37]

Initially, NCDC was jointly managed by IPE members and NCDC staff. The Baraza Ya Kazi (Kiswahili for work council) functioned as the administrative body of IPE. Individuals who served on the Baraza Ya Kazi were elected by other IPE members. It was charged with overseeing the day to day functions of the organization, developing policy, and ensuring that IPE accomplished its stated objectives. The IPE director served as the organization's chief executive officer and saw to it that all directives and resolutions approved by the Baraza were carried out. NCDC, however, also had its own director, Safisha Madhubuti (who is the wife of Haki Madhubuti). She was specifically responsible for the daily operations of NCDC and made administrative decisions in consultation with faculty members. All decisions made by IPE departments (i.e. NCDC, Nation Studies, Hieroglyphics) and the Baraza Ya Kazi could be amended by general IPE membership.[38] NCDC's integration into the IPE structure was designed to ensure that the school reflected the goals of its umbrella organization.

---

[36]Safisha Madhubuti (Carol Lee), interview with author, July 21, 2009; New Concept School Brochure, Brochures Folder, from the school files of New Concept School of the Institute of Positive Education. Hereafter referred to as NCS. The school maintained this age range of students until 1992 when it moved beyond the third grade.

[37]NCDC Building Fund Campaign, Auction 1985 Folder, NCS; New Concept Development Center Parent Roster, 1980-1981, Parent Roster 83-84 Folder, NCS; Role L. Blouin, "A New Concept in Education," *Chicago Observer,* March 9, 1985 in NCDC/BSIC Media Coverage Folder, NCS; Mary A. Mitchell, "New Concept's Bill Comes Due," *Chicago Sun-Times,* April 14, 1998.

[38] Institute of Positive Education, Staff Criteria, IPE Folder, SRW; Carol Lee, "Profile of an Independent Black Institution," *Teach Freedom,* 211-213.

NCDC educators, however, handled most curricular matters. The school's faculty held frequent in-service training programs and meetings where curriculum development and pedagogy were discussed and planned.[39] Some NCDC educators also created their own curriculum material. Soyini Walton developed a lesson plan guide for instructors. NCDC educators, Safisha Madhubuti and Shalewa Crowe (Phyllis Crowe) also developed a language arts curriculum. [40]

As a member of the Council of Independent Black Institutions, NCDC was also influenced by the educational ideas and experiences of other black nationalist educators. The school's teachers and administrators attended CIBI's Teacher Training Institutes. During these annual gatherings, teachers and administrators from affiliated schools met to study classroom instruction, administration, community involvement, history, politics, and other skills that could be used in their respective schools. NCDC director, Safisha Madhubuti also worked with educators from member schools to publish a social studies curriculum for CIBI entitled *Positive Afrikan Images for Children*.[41] The efforts of CIBI schools in metropolitan Chicago were coordinated through the Chicago CIBI Regional Chapter where member institutions met to raise funds, develop future programs, and hold local science fairs for students.[42] The Chicago CIBI chapter also held the CIBI Teacher Training Institute in 1981 and began maintaining the

---

[39] Christiana Roxianne, "Alternative Education: New Concept Developmental Center," in IPE/NCDC Capital Campaign, 92/93 Folder, SRW.

[40] Soyini Olamina (Walton), Lesson Planning, Part 2, NCDC Curriculum Folder, SRW; Pre-School Communications Curriculum, Language Arts Folder, SRW.

[41] Council of Independent Black Institutions, *Positive Afrikan Images for Children: Social Studies Curriculum* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1990), Council of Independent Black Institutions 5th Annual Teacher Training Institute Program, 1976, CIBI Folder, SRW; CIBI Executive Committee Meeting, April 24, 1987, NCDC- CIBI Folder, NCS; Carol Lee, interview with author.

[42] CIBI Chicago Regional Minutes of Meeting, March 11, 1981, CIBI Folder, SRW; Chicago CIBI Regional Fifth Annual Science Fair Flyer, 1981, CIBI Folder, SRW.

headquarters of CIBI's National Teacher Training Institute in 1983. The center was created to provide year-round in-service teaching programs for educators in CIBI schools.[43]

Although men were employed as teachers at NCDC, the school was primarily staffed by women, several of whom were also members of IPE.[44] This fact raises the question if IPE relegated its female members to roles that have traditionally been occupied by women such as teachers. Scholars have observed that other Black Power black nationalist organizations held reactionary perspectives of gender roles.[45] Also as stated earlier, Adalisha Safi of the Black Women's Committee experienced gender discrimination among activists in Chicago. Former IPE member and NCDC educator Soyini Walton, however, believed that she and other women were not forced to teach at the school. The dominance of women in the NCDC faculty was a reflection of prevailing notions of gender in the larger society. According to Walton, she and other women "self-appointed" themselves to become teachers because "that's what women did." Moreover, she and several other female NCDC teachers had worked as teachers before working at the school.[46] In addition, there is no evidence that male members of NCDC's umbrella organization, IPE, usurped the power of the school's predominantly female faculty as

[43] "National Teacher Training Center Established," *Fundisha!-Teach!* 7, no.1 (1982) in CIBI Folder, SRW; CIBI Teacher Training Institute Lesson Plan by Soyini Olamina (Walton), CIBI Folder, SRW; Pan Afrikan Science Newsletter, August 17, 1976, 1, no.1, CIBI Folder, SRW; Pre-School Communications Curriculum, Language Arts Folder, SRW. Safisha Madhubuti helped create CIBI's social studies curriculum which was published as Council of Independent Black Institutions, *Positive Afrikan Images for Children* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1990).

[44] See for instance IPE Monthly Report, November 2, 1981, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW.

[45] In discussing the marginalization of women in the ideologies of some cultural nationalists E. Frances White argues that "Afrocentric ideology [which is championed by many cultural nationalists] can be radical and progressive in relation to white racism and repressive in relation to the internal organization of the black community." in "Africa on My Mind," 76-77. Tracye Matthews makes a similar critique of cultural nationalist groups, the US Organization in particular in "'No One Ever Asks What a Man's Place in the Revolution Is,'" 271-273.

[46] Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author.

had been the case with the Oblate Sisters of Providence and archdiocesan priests at Holy Name of Mary.

Nonetheless, Walton did recall that males in IPE did have conservative notions of gender. Some male members believed held conservative notions of gender roles. Several circumstances disallowed these paternalistic views to impact NCDC and its teachers. First, women were members of the Baraza Ya Kazi, IPE's central decision-making council, which gave them a voice in the formulation of school and organizational policy. Second, though NCDC was housed under IPE, the school administrators enjoyed relative autonomy in the administration of the school. Finally, Walton acknowledged that IPE members gradually abandoned reactionary gender ideas.[47] As an example of IPE's evolution, its longtime director, Haki Madhubuti, increasingly advocated gender equality in the decades following the establishment of NCDC. For example, in his 1990 essay, "Before Sorry: Listening to and Feeling the Flow of Black Women," Madhubuti critiqued patriarchy and urged black men to abandon oppressive notions of gender roles. He poetically concluded the essay by connecting progressive gender perspectives to racial progress: "As women go, so go the people. Stopping the women stops the future. If Black women do not love, strength disconnects, families sicken, growth is questionable and there are few reasons to conquer ideas or foe."[48]

NCDC adopted many of the black nationalist ideological tenets of its parent organization, IPE. The study of black history and culture played a central role in the school. According to NCDC's stated philosophy, "The education of the Black child is incomplete without

---

[47] Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author.

[48] Haki Madhubuti, ed., "Before Sorry: Listening to and Feeling the Flow of Black Women," in *Black Men*. Also see Madhubuti's critiques on sexism in Haki Madhubuti, ed., *Confusion By Any Other Name: Essays Exploring the Negative Impact of The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1990).

a solid foundation in the **culture** and **history** of his people" (emphasis in original).[49] Moreover, the school intended to teach students a distinctive black culture and skills that would prepare them to contribute to an autonomous black nation.[50] NCDC's political ideology was reflected in the school's curriculum and pedagogy in various ways. Every morning NCDC students (as well as other CIBI schools) recited the following oath: "We are African people struggling for national liberation. We are preparing leaders and workers to bring about positive change for our people. Our commitment is to self-determination, self-defense and self-respect for our race. We stress the development of our bodies, minds, souls and consciousness."[51] This oath was followed by the song, "Praise the Red, the Black and the Green."[52] Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association created the red, black, and green flag to inspire fidelity to the people of Africa and its diaspora.[53]

Classroom assignments also focused on black history and culture. A 1985 NCDC newsletter featured student poems on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a report on black cowboys, and art and grammar projects on Egyptian cultural artifacts.[54] The school's curricular focus on black history and culture was also seen in an undated social science evaluation report. The evaluation shows that along with recognizing various continents, NCDC students were expected to draw a map of Africa. Pupils were not required to draw a map of any other continent. The

---

[49] New Concept Development Center: A Division of the Institute of Positive Education Brochure, Brochures Folder, NCS.

[50] New Concept Handbook, NCDC History Folder, SRW; New Concept Handbook, NCDC History Folder, SRW.

[51] Ibid..

[52] Ibid.

[53] For work on Garvey see, Amy Jacques Garvey, ed., *the Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey,* 2d ed.(Dover, MA: Majority Press, 1986); Robert A. Hill, ed. *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers;* Tony Martin, *Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association* (Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1976); Edmund Cronon, *Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association*(Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1969)

[54] New Concept Newsletter, February 1985, NCDC Publications, NCS.

evaluation report also shows that the NCDC children were graded on their ability to identify various African countries such as Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, and Tanzania. Students were not required to locate countries from other continents. [55] Similarly, a reading development lesson plan indicated that NCDC educators instructed pupils in identifying vocabulary words pertaining to the activism of the era such as "Black Power" and the principles of the Nguzo Saba.[56]

Tenets of black nationalism also informed the way that NCDC teachers taught students social responsibility. Black cultural nationalists such as NCDC staff embraced Third World cultural philosophies. For example, NCDC staff studied Mao Tse Tsung and his advocacy of a "Cultural Revolution" in China and compared it to their own struggle to reclaim and recreate a liberatory black culture.[57]. Just as important, conceptions of traditional African society as articulated by African heads of state, Leopold Senghor of Senegal and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, influenced NCDC educators. Proponents of this perspective argued that indigenous African culture was not based on competition like western society. For example, in comparing European and African cultures, Senghor argued, "Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on *solidarity* than on the activity and needs of the individual, more on the *communion* of the person than on their autonomy" (emphasis in original).[58] Similarly, the Ujamaa villages of Tanzania were part of a broader program by Julius Nyerere to

---

[55] Social Science Evaluation, Evaluation Folder, SRW.

[56] Reading Development, Language Arts Folder, SRW.

[57] World Revolutionary Models, Objectives Curriculum Folder, SRW; Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author. For African-American radicals who were inspired by developments in China see Robin D. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 60-109.

[58] Leopold Senghor, *On African Socialism* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 93-94. Ideas about traditional African culture would be key for black cultural nationalists who adopted them as the basis of their own conceptualizations of nationhood. See Scot Brown, *Fighting For Us,* 12-17; Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation,* 161; Haki Madhubuti, *From Plan to Planet,* 51, 83-84. Several scholars and African leaders (some of whom previously held these views) have critiqued this communal view of indigenous African society. See Marina and David Ottaway, *Afrocomunism,* 2d ed. (New York: Africana Publishing, 1981).

inculcate communal values in the nation. He and his supporters believed that this worldview had been lost as a result of colonialism.[59] NCDC educators also tried to instill communal values in students. For instance, whenever a student brought an item such as food to school it had to be shared among every classmate. This school tradition was tied to the NCDC's larger black nationalist worldview which emphasized teaching what it saw as a distinctive black value system. According to a school newsletter's description of this practice, "Sharing must be taught as it is not a natural part of the dominant culture."[60]

NCDC's curriculum certainly focused on people of African descent. However, teachers also taught students the experiences of other cultures. For instance, all NCDC classes had units on Native Americans. The school also included the study of other cultural groups such as Asians, South Americans, and Europeans. Former NCDC director Safisha Madhubuti noted that the history and culture of black people was not studied in isolation of other groups: "How can anyone be silly enough to think that we're going to offer an education in which children don't know anybody or anything unless it came out of Africa?. . .That's a recipe of failure. We're not stupid."[61]

Progressive pedagogy also informed NCDC's educational program. NCDC was established at a time when many liberal educators in the United States believed that school curriculum should reflect the political and social activism of the 1960s and 1970s. Several of these educators believed that traditional, teacher-centered education mirrored the oppressive status quo in the larger society. Therefore, student-centered educational advocates gained a

---

[59] Marina and David Ottaway, *Afrocommunism,* 13-35, 44-51.

[60] IPE News, Mama Soyini's Photograph Book Folder, SRW.

[61] Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS; World Revolutionary Models, Objectives Curriculum Folder, SRW; Institute of Positive Education Newsletter, Vol. 1, Marketing Brochures Folder, NCS.

new currency during this period.[62] NCDC's emphasis on progressive education coincided with this educational movement. The school's faculty studied the ideas of several theorists that influenced this resurgence of progressive education such as John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and Jean Piaget.[63] According to student literature and curriculum guides, NCDC put these ideas into practice by using student centered approaches such as learning centers, interdisciplinary approaches, movable furniture, and open classroom techniques.[64]

Other sources also indicated the use of progressive educational techniques at NCDC. The *Chicago Defender* noted "A browse around the stimulating learning centers at NCDC depicts remnants of Montessori, Piaget and traditional African educational methods and techniques."[65] Photographs also illustrate the use of student-centered methods at the school. One brochure published in the 1980s included a picture of four students working independently at a small table. A male pupil is shown standing in order to use a microscope. No teacher is in the photograph.[66] Another picture in the brochure shows three students completing a lesson on a computer. Again, no teacher is shown in the picture. The accompanying caption states, "Computers offer an opportunity for young children to direct their own learning and to

---

[62] For work on the movement for alternative schooling during this period see, Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught,* 149-155; Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 228-266.

[63] Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author. Safisha Madhubuti also acknowledged the influence of Dewey, Montessori, and Piaget. Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author. For the influence of these theorists on progressive education see Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught;* Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade.*

[64] New Concept Development Center: Five Years Old and Getting Stronger, Brochures Folder, NCS, Classroom Environment, 2 and 3 Year Old Curriculum Folder, NCS; Teacher Preparation and Methodology, 2 and 3 Year Old Curriculum Folder, NCS; Evaluating and Recording Open Learning, Evaluation Folder, SRW. For these progressive educational features see, Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught,* 5-6; Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 44-45.

[65] Regina L. Henderson, "New Concept Center Launches Fundraising Campaign," *Chicago Defender*, April 22, 1985, 13.

[66] New Concept Development Center: A New Concept in Early Education for the 1980's! Brochure, NCDC Blue Folder, SRW.

construct their own problems and solutions to them."[67] The absence of teachers in the photographs suggests that students were encouraged to work independently on assignments.

NCDC's small student to teacher ratios influenced the implementation of progressive education. Mesi Walton, who attended the school in the mid-1980s, remembered that no more than twenty students were enrolled in her classes at NCDC.[68] Other documentation affirms Walton's memory of the school's small class sizes. The NCDC 1981-1982 school graduation program listed 58 students and ten instructional staff members. Similarly, a 1984-1985 parent roster showed that the school's largest classes were the kindergarten and second grade levels which both enrolled twenty-two students. Both of these grade levels also had a primary teacher and a teacher aide. [69]

Although progressive educational methods were privileged at NCDC, the school's educators also employed teacher-centered approaches. For instance, a photograph in a school brochure shows a teacher directing four students in a reading assignment. The teacher and the students stood at the front of the classroom area which suggests that the assignment involved the entire class. The classmates not directly involved in the demonstration were apparently expected to follow along under the teacher's direction.[70] Another brochure published in the 1980s featured a photograph of an NCDC teacher working directly with five students on a reading assignment. However, it is unclear if this assignment involved the entire class. No other children are shown and the photograph does not reveal if the demonstration occurred at the

---

[67] Ibid.

[68] Mesi Walton, interview with author, July 24, 2009.

[69] 10th Anniversary Celebration, New Concept Development Center, NCDC History Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Parent Roster, 1984-1985, Roster Students, NCS.

[70] New Concept Development Center: A Division of the Institute of Positive Education Brochure, Brochures Folder, NCS.

front of the class. The teacher, however, did direct the learning assignment for the students in the picture.[71]

NCDC also created an affirming, family-like environment for its students. In recalling their experiences, the school's former parents and students constantly evoked this image of family. The fact that many NCDC teachers enrolled their children surely influenced this social dynamic.[72] Students were also encouraged to call female adults "Mama" and male adults "Baba" (Kiswahili for mother and father) so that children could see school staff as part of their extended family.[73] This is not to say that Howalton and Holy Name of Mary did not have a similar environment. NCDC representatives, however, consistently referred to a familial atmosphere.[74]

Members of the NCDC community often related the school's atmosphere to the institutional caring they believed was present in southern black segregated schools. In describing her experiences at NCDC, former student Mesi Walton recalled, "Everybody was a Mama or a Baba for us, and we were all their children. . . So I guess it's kind of that southern style of being a family. And then it shows that everybody is on the same page, and that they care."[75] Saundra Washington, a former parent made a similar connection when she explained why she sent her child to NCDC: "When schools became integrated, we lost a lot of important things. . .There were some really valuable things going on in those [southern black] segregated

---

[71] New Concept Development Center: A New Concept in Early Education for the 1980's! Brochure, NCDC Blue Folder, SRW.

[72] Kenya Nalls, interview with author, July 23, 2009; Mesi Walton, interview with author.

[73] Zakiya Williams, interview with author, July 22, 2009.

[74] It should be noted that this NCDC chapter includes interviews from former parents and students while the Howalton and Holy Name of Mary chapters do not. Former parents and students from Howalton and Holy Name of Mary may have also considered their schools as having family-like environments.

[75] Mesi Walton, interview with author.

schools that we weren't paying attention to."[76] The NCDC community's recollections of the school environment suggest that the institutional caring uncovered in southern black segregated schools by scholars such as Vanessa Siddle Walker was not limited to the South.[77] After the *Brown* decision, NCDC educators were also able to create caring environments for black children.

NCDC attracted the support of several blacks who either supported or directly participated in the Black Power Movement. Some activists supported NCDC by sending their children to the school. This group included noted psychologist and educator Bobby Wright and his wife Easter as well as educators Jacob Carruthers and Wellington Wilson.[78] Wright was a teacher activist in the public school system of Chicago and a psychologist whose research focused on the psychological foundations of white racism. Jacob Carruthers was a professor at the Center for Inner City Studies at the Northeastern Illinois University. His research focused on classical African civilizations and Afrocentric education. Wilson was an administrator at Kendall College in Evanston, Illinois who supported black studies and antiracist activism.[79] NCDC also benefitted from the patronage of other local educators who raised money for the school such as Northeast Illinois University professor Anderson Thompson and University of Chicago professor George Kent. Anderson Thompson was a colleague of Carruthers at the Center for Inner City Studies and also focused on Afrocentric education. George Kent was an African-American

---

[76] Juanita Poe, " 3 R's Joined by Big A," *Chicago Tribune,* March 27, 1995, 1.

[77] Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential*; David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road.*

[78] James Childs, interview with author.

[79] James Childs, interview with author; Soyini Walton, interview with author. For work on and by Bobby Wright see John F. Lyons, *Teachers and Reform,* 185-186; Bobby Wright, *The Psychopathic Racial Personality* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1975). For information on and by Jacob Carruthers see "Jacob Hudson Carruthers, Jr., Renowned Student, Teacher of Africa, Dies," *Chicago Weekend,* January 7, 2004, 1; Jacob Carruthers, *Intellectual Warfare* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1999). For information on Wellington Wilson see " 'Black Week Program' at Kendall College, *Chicago Defender,* April 10, 1969, 3; Arthur Siddon, "Students in Black Studies Decide Who'll Teach What," *Chicago Tribune,* June 1, 1969, 7.

literary scholar at the University of Chicago.[80] Haki Madhubuti and other IPE members' participation in the Black Arts Movement also helped to attract the aid of several local and national artists. This group of supporters included Gwendolyn Brooks, critics Addison Gayle Jr. and Hoyt Fuller, and famous actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee. Gayle and Fuller, who may be less well known, were leading theorists of the Black Arts Movement who argued for the existence and further development of a distinctive black cultural aesthetic.[81]

The reception of NCDC was more mixed among black Chicagoans uninvolved directly with the Black Power Movement. There were few examples of public criticism of black nationalist education in Chicago's media. Extant examples appeared in the 1990s. For example, the *Chicago Tribune* published an article on NCDC and similar schools that likely reflected opposition to them in the 1970s and 1980s. The article featured Paul Adams, the principal of the predominantly black and Catholic Providence St. Mel High School who accused black nationalist educators of racial insularity. The principal questioned the African-centered focus of black nationalist schools and argued that African-Americans "don't live in a vacuum, and we are going to have to be able to tolerate people in other parts of society."[82] Similarly, in an article in

---

[80] IPE Contributors, June 26, 1974, IPE Folder, SRW; Press Release, August 11, 1976, IPE Folder, SRW; IPE Building Fund Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Financial Status Report, February 1, 1982, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW. For further information on Anderson Thompson see "NEIU's Center for Inner City Studies Builds Upon Its Legacy of Scholar Activism," *Chicago Defender,* April 7, 2001, 33. For work on and by George Kent see James W. Coleman and Joanne Veal Gabbin, "The Legacy of George Kent," *Black American Literature Forum,* 17, no. 4 (Winter, 1983): 143-147; George Kent, *Blackness and the Adventure of Western Culture* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1972).

[81] IPE Contributors, June 26, 1974, IPE Folder, SRW; Press Release, August 11, 1976, IPE Folder, SRW; IPE Building Fund Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Financial Status Report, February 1, 1982, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW. For work on and by Addison Gayle see Nathaniel Norment Jr., ed. *The Addison Gayle Jr. Reader* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009)*;* Addison Gayle Jr., *The Black Aesthetic* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1971). For work on and by Hoyt Fuller see James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement,* 204-210; Hoyt Fuller, "Towards a Black Aesthetic," in *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present,* ed. Angelyn Mitchell (Durham, Duke University Press, 1994), 199-206.

[82] Juanita Poe, "3 R's Joined by Big A," *Chicago Tribune,* March 27, 1995, 1.

the local newspaper, the *Chicago Reader,* black journalist Salim Muwakkil, critiqued Afrocentrism and noted he found "this whole notion of 'centering' troubling. . . On the one hand, I understand Afrocetricity. . . But I also understand the disturbing and destructive role nationalism and tribalism plays in the world."[83] The widely read black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender,* failed to feature the school until the 1980s and the coverage then was positive. The newspaper featured articles on the school's curriculum, fundraising drives, and various programs. [84]

Although NCDC clearly privileged independent black institutions, it was never estranged from the public schools. Similar to Howalton educators, NCDC teachers and administrators such as Kimya Moyo (Saundra Malone), Soyini Walton, and Safisha Madhubuti were employed as public school teachers either before or while they worked at NCDC.[85] Up to 1986, NCDC taught children from two to eight years old. The school also maintained relationships with public schools so that their graduates were placed in schools that met their approval. According to NCDC director Safisha Madhubuti, many NCDC alumni attended Beasley Magnet School because "We had contacts there. We had teachers there who knew us and knew our school, so they [NCDC alumni] had a community to receive them." [86] NCDC educators also established the Mary McLeod Bethune Teacher Training Institute in 1989 to work with teachers and parents from public (as well as other private schools) on matters such as curriculum development, strategies

---

[83] Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS.

[84] See Regina L. Henderson, "New Concept Center Launches Fundraising Campaign," *Chicago Defender,* April 22, 1985, 13; Stephen Thomas, *New Concept Embraces Old Themes," Chicago Defender,* July 12, 1994 in What The Media Said About New Concept School Folder, NCS; Michael Brown, "Workshop Teachers Parents to Work With Teachers," *Chicago Defender,* November 1, 1990, 6; Harold E. Charles, "Center Starts Building Drive," *Chicago Defender,* November 2, 1991, 20.

[85] IPE Brochure, IPE Folder, SRW; Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author.

[86] Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author.

to include black studies into lesson plans, and guidance for parents to better communicate with school officials.[87]

Of the wide ranging network of community relationships at NCDC, parents played the most crucial role in the functioning of the school. The NCDC Parent Council provided critical financial assistance to the school. It held various fundraisers such as raffles and auctions to raise money. This money was used for scholarships and to augment the school's operating revenue. The Parent Council also helped teachers with building maintenance.[88] Other NCDC parents supported the school independently of the Parent Council. Nonetheless, like the council, these instances of individual support focused on fundraising and the upkeep of the school's physical plant.[89] At other times, parents contributed their own specific skills. For instance, in 1981, a parent used her experience as a proposal writer to assist the school in attaining funding.[90]

NCDC staff and parent interaction, however, was not limited to the school building. NCDC educators also worked with parents so that the lessons taught at school could be reinforced in the children's home. Some NCDC recommendations could be found in most schools regardless of political orientation. The NCDC handbook expected parents to check homework assignments, discuss the students' experiences at school, and monitor the media that their children engaged. Other recommendations, however, were more germane to NCDC's black nationalist ideology. For instance, the handbook asked parents to discuss current events

---

[87] Mary McLeod Bethune Teacher Training Institute Annual Report,1992-1993 Fiscal Year, Bethune Annual Report Folder, NCS.

[88] New Concept Handbook, NCDC History Folder, SRW; Haki Madhubuti to Staff, November 28, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW; New Concept development Center General Report Staff Meeting, October 17, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW.

[89] New Concept Development Center Financial Status Report, February 1, 1982, SRW; New Concept Development Center- Report to IPE Staff, August 19, 1985, Board Matters Folder, NCS; New Concept Development Center Administrative Report, September 19, 1985, NCS.

[90] NCDC Update: Scholarship Fund/Carpeting, September 18, 1981, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW.

involving people of African descent with their children, use Kiswahili, and reinforce the values of the Nguzo Saba.[91] Similar to Holy Name of Mary's extracurricular efforts to promote Catholicism, these practices at NCDC sought to reinforce black nationalism.

Records show that parents sent their children to NCDC for several reasons. James Childs, one of NCDC's early parents, recalled that he supported the school's emphasis on black nationalism. Childs sent his children to NCDC because he believed it was a "culturally-oriented school, which means that, for instance, my children, being African American, would have a better advantage of knowing who they were and how they happened to get where they were. . ."[92] Some parents sent their children to NCDC because they did not want them to replicate their experiences in schools that marginalized black history and culture. Zandra Stewart, a former NCDC parent, remembered that she "didn't learn about black leaders until eighth grade" in the Catholic schools she attended as a child. She sent her children to NCDC to develop an appreciation and awareness of black history and culture.[93] Other parents sent their children to NCDC because of its academic reputation. Zakiya Williams was one such parent. However, she did not view the school's ideology and its academic profile as mutually exclusive. Williams approved of both and believed that NCDC helped her children become well rounded with an awareness of the black experience.[94]

Several sources corroborate Williams's belief in NCDC's academic success. For instance, in an article on the school, NCDC director Shalewa Crowe noted that the school's students were taught at an accelerated rate: "We work on children a year ahead-kindergartners work at first-

---

[91] New Concept Handbook, NCDC History Folder, SRW.

[92] James Childs, interview with author.

[93] Lindsey Tanner, "School Stresses, Instills Heritage in Black Students, found in "What The Media Said About New Concept School Folder, NCS.

[94] Zakiya Williams, interview with author.

grade level and start a formal reading program and math." [95] Standardized test results, when instituted, also suggested academic success at NCDC. A study conducted by the Institute for Independent Education in 1988 concluded that students from NCDC scored above the 75th national percentile in reading and mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.[96]

NCDC alumni also achieved success after leaving the school. Several school documents affirmed that NCDC alumni attended many of Chicago's top magnet public schools and prestigious private schools.[97] NCDC graduates continued their academic accomplishments in college. Mesi Walton, head of the NCDC alumni chapter estimated that approximately 70 to 80% of the school's graduates attended college.[98] Other NCDC alumni had the same impression. When interviewed by the *Chicago Reader* newspaper in 1997, NCDC graduate, Tareta Lewis, who was then enrolled at Northwestern University, recalled that her former classmates attended historically black colleges and universities such as Spelman College, Morehouse College, and Howard University, and historically white schools such as Princeton University, the University of Illinois, and Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.[99] However, not all NCDC

---

[95] Lindsey Tanner, "School Stresses, Instills Heritage in Black Students, found in "What The Media Said About New Concept School Folder, NCS.

[96] Although beyond the scope of this chapter, in all likelihood, the test results reveal a level of academic achievement that occurred prior to 1988. For further elaboration on the Institute of Independent Education study see Joan Davis Ratteray, Farid I. Muhammad, and Gordon Vaughn-Cooke, *Chicago Independent Neighborhood Schools: A Pilot Study on Student Performance* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Independent Education, 1989), Box 5, Folder 17, Institute for Independent Education records, #6693, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. Further elaboration on the NCDC's use of standardized text will appear later in this chapter.

[97] Proposal for Two Year Expansion, Mission Statements Folder, NCS. NCDC alumni also remember that they performed well at these schools. Rika Lawrence, for instance, remembers that she and many other NCDC graduates at Beasley fared well in comparison to students who did not come from black nationalist private schools: "At Beasley they would divide you up based on where you were academically, so there were like five classes in each grade level. And so we [NCDC alumni] were all pretty much in the top tier classes. . .We were able to hang with the students who had been at Beasley from kindergarten. So I felt like we were definitely prepared." Rika Lawrence, interview with the author.

[98] Mesi Walton, interview with author.

[99] Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS.

graduates went on to college. Kobie Mahiri, a student at Morehouse in 1997, remembered that some of his NCDC classmates struggled in high school and became involved in Chicago's gang culture. Clearly the exception, according to Mahiri: "College was the thing at New Concept. They [NCDC teachers and administrators] were always encouraging us to do well and go on to college."[100]

In addition, as late as 2010, many alumni still practiced the values taught at NCDC, which attests to the school's impact. Mesi Walton recalled that she and other NCDC graduates attended activities such as Kwanzaa events and African dance and drum classes. She also noted that alumni often sent their children to various African-centered programs and schools that shared the same values as NCDC.[101] Some NCDC graduates even returned to work for the school. Mesi Walton became director of NCDC after it transitioned to a preschool while Rika Lawrence worked as IPE's human resources manager. Although NCDC graduates never established the black autonomous nation that IPE for, they continued to practice black nationalist values.[102]

NCDC also had many challenges. For example, in 1977 several members of the NCDC Parent Council met with the faculty and IPE representatives to express their displeasure with certain aspects of the school. The parents were particularly concerned about the adequacy of school materials and supplies, the expertise of teachers, and the quality of the school's curriculum. These concerns crystallized into two parental proposals: 1) the implementation of

---

[100] Ibid. It should also be noted that all of the NCDC alumni who were interviewed graduated from college.

[101] Mesi Walton, interview with author. Some graduates also sent their children to schools in the Betty Shabazz International Charter School system. This collection of schools resulted after NCDC transitioned to a mixed public and private educational institution in 1998. See conclusion for further elaboration.

[102] Mesi Walton, interview with author; Rika Lawrence, interview with author.

standardized tests to evaluate students' academic progress; and 2) a greater role for parents in the administration of NCDC. The conflict was even more alarming because the dissenting parents included some of NCDC's most prominent supporters such as Bobby Wright, Jacob Carruthers, and Wellington Wilson.[103]

Some NCDC faculty and IPE members maintained reservations about the parents' demands. NCDC teachers and several other black nationalist educators questioned the efficacy of standardized testing. They also acknowledged that this method of evaluation has historically been used to stigmatize African-American students and deny them educational and occupational opportunities.[104] Some IPE members and NCDC educators were also cautious about giving parents' a greater role in the administration of the school. They particularly desired that all NCDC administrators contribute an equal amount of time and effort to the school and commit to the school's black nationalist goals. Some administrators argued that the extant structure was appropriate because decision making power rested in the hands of those most invested in the school's success and black nationalist goals.[105]

Despite these misgivings, NCDC agreed to provide parents with a greater role in the school's administration. Some IPE members such as director Haki Madhubuti believed that a

---

[103] New Concept Development Center General Report Staff Meeting, October 17, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center-Administrative Report, November 7, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW; James Childs, interview with author.

[104] Asa G. Hilliard III, a major critic of the cultural biases of standardized tests spoke at functions sponsored by NCDC and other African-centered educational institutions in Chicago. NCDC faculty also studied the work of Hilliard and other educational theorists who questioned the efficacy of standardized tests in their own study sessions and through CIBI. See Distinguished Educator's Forum 1985, CIBI Folder, SRW; African-Centered Curriculum Conference Program, November 9-10, 1990, Objectives Curriculum Folder, SRW; Asa G. Hilliard III and Harold E. Dent, "Black Consumer's Bill of Rights and Guide to Standardized Testing" *Fundisha! Teach!,* 5, no.2, SRW; CIBI Teacher Training Institute Checklist of Objectives. Also see Asa G. Hilliard III, "Excellence in Education Versus High-Stakes Standardized Testing," *Journal of Teacher Education* 51, (2002): 293-304; Asa G. Hilliard III and Barbara Sizemore, *Saving the African American Child: A Report of the National Alliance of Black School Educators, Inc.* (Washington D.C.: National Alliance of Black School Educators, 1984); R. Scott Baker, *Paradoxes of Desegregation*.

[105] Haki Madhubuti to Staff, November 28, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW.

new administrative structure would reduce the workload of NCDC faculty and allow parents to share in the collective responsibilities of operating the school.[106] To this end, the NCDC Coordinating Council was created. It included six to eight members comprising equal numbers of IPE staff and Parent Council members. The specific duties of the new school appendage included formulating school policy, determining school curriculum, and overseeing school committees. The Coordinating Council also presented voting propositions to the Parent Council. A proposition would become binding only after three fourths of Parent Council members with voting privileges approved the measure. Only parents who paid Parent Council dues, regularly attended Parent Council meetings, consistently supported Parent Council functions, and were active on a committee were given voting rights. NCDC also eventually administered standardized tests.[107]

These changes, however, did not prevent several parents from leaving NCDC and establishing their own school. Called Edward Wilmot Blyden Center for Creative Development (Blyden), the school was named after the noted late 19th and early 20th century black nationalist.[108] This group of parents included Bobby Wright, Jacob Carruthers, Wellington Wilson. Blyden taught grades kindergarten to eighth grade and reflected the parents' concerns by instituting standardized tests to evaluate student achievement. According to the school's literature, it also established an "auxiliary staff" to work with Blyden's administrators and

---

[106] Ibid.

[107] The Coordinating Council would later expand further to a NCDC Board of Directors which included members of the NCDC staff, parent body, Mary McLeod Bethune Institute and general members of Chicago's black community. See New Concept Handbook (Post 1978), NCDC History Folder, SRW; Carol Lee, "Profile of an Independent Black Institution: African-Centered Education at Work" *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (1992), 163-164. I have been unable to find an exact date when NCDC began to administer standardized tests. However, for evidence of the use of standardized tests see Carol Lee, "Profile of an Independent Black Institution," *Teach Freedom,* 220.

[108] For work on Edward Wilmot Blyden see Thomas W. Livingston, *Education and Race: A Biography of Edward Wilmot Blyden* (San Francisco: Glendessary Press, 1975); Hollis Ralph Lynch, *Edward Wilmot Blyden: Pan-Negro Patriot* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).

faculty.[109] It is likely that this component of the school was established in response to the parents' demands that the group of NCDC policymakers extend beyond the school's staff and IPE members. Despite these differences, Blyden shared the same black nationalist focus as NCDC. Blyden and NCDC also worked together through the CIBI Chicago Regional Chapter and offered reduced tuition to families who sent their children to both schools.[110] The conflict between NCDC and the founders of Blyden illustrated the diversity in black nationalist education. Black nationalist educators developed a range of views on significant educational issues such as evaluation and parental involvement.

NCDC was also beset by its inability to acquire a suitable building. After occupying several temporary locations, NCDC moved into a permanent location on 7524 S. Cottage Grove on Chicago's South Side in 1976. Although the new site gave the school stability, it required constant repair and was also too small for NCDC to expand its student population.[111] Consequently, attempts at securing another building started as early as 1977.[112] However, no building was acquired until after 1986.[113]

Like Howalton and Holy Name of Mary, financial challenges frustrated NCDC's attempts to secure a new building. As an example of NCDC's problems, the Internal Revenue Service took

---

[109] Edward Wilmot Blyden Center for Creative Development Curriculum Statement, May 1979, Independent Schools Folder, SRW.

[110] Edward Wilmot Blyden Center for Creative Development Curriculum Statement, May 1979, Independent Schools Folder, SRW; CIBI Chicago Regional Minutes of Meeting, March 11, 1981, CIBI Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Financial Status Report, February 1, 1982, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW; James Childs, interview with author.

[111] Proposal for Two Year Expansion, Mission Statements Folder, NCS; Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author; Chaga to IPE Staff, April 1982, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Financial Status Report, February 1, 1982, IPE 1979-Present Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Administrative Report, September 19, 1985, Board Matters Folder, NCS.

[112] Moving Force 1977-1978, IPE Folder, SRW.

[113] The school subsequently added grades until it included the eighth grade by the 1996-1997 school year. Minutes from March 1996 Board Meeting, Board Matters Folder, NCS; Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS.

a lien against the school for taxes during the 1985-1986 school year. NCDC primarily depended on tuition, which did not cover all of its operating revenue. Although NCDC's supporters raised funds to supplement the school budget, allocating money for a new building was more difficult. For instance, during the 1984-1985 school year, NCDC launched a building fund campaign. Although the school aimed to raise $150,000, the school only collected $10,000 in donations.[114]

Some decline in Black Power activism may have also hindered NCDC's fundraising efforts. By the late 1970s, many of the major Black Power organizations and personalities declined as a result of internal conflicts and government repression, particularly the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO). The Black Panther Party, one of the movement's most prominent groups officially disbanded in 1982. However, the organization's deterioration was apparent by the early 1970s. Similar to the BPP, the Congress of African People declined in the 1970s. Their collapse was accelerated in 1974 when its leader, Amiri Baraka, transformed the formerly cultural nationalist group to a Marxist-Leninist organization.[115] Chicago Black Power organizations also experienced major setbacks. The vibrant Illinois BPP chapter failed to regain its prior efficacy after the brutal murder of Fred Hampton in 1969. IPE also underwent major challenges as many of its programs discontinued in the late 1970s and 1980s.[116] NCDC's clientele reflected these changes. Soyini Walton noted that parents in NCDC's early years tended to be more active in the Black Power era. The school,

---

[114] NCDC Building Fund Campaign, Auction 1985 Folder, NCS.

[115] For a description of the decline of the Black Power Movement see Peniel Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour,* 296-304. For the demise of the Black Power, especially the BPP see Winston A. Grady-Willis, "The Black Panther Party: State Repression and Political Prisoners," in *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*, 363-390*;* Ollie A. Johnson, III, "Explaining the Demise of the Black Panther Party: The Role of Internal Factors," in *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered,* 391-416. For the decline of CAP see Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation,* 219-254.

[116] For work on the Illinois BPP see Jon F. Rice, "Black Radicalism on Chicago's West Side." Former IPE members Safisha Madhubuti and Soyini Walton acknowledge the group's decline in the 1970s. Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author; Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author.

however, increasingly attracted families less interested in black nationalism and more drawn to the school's academic reputation in its latter years.[117]

It would also seem that IPE's commitment to only receiving financial assistance from blacks would hamper its fundraising efforts. For instance, the NCDC handbook published during the 1978-1979 school year stated that "New Concept Development Center is an independent Black institution. . . We define independent as not dependent on resources outside of our community for the maintenance of our program."[118] Nonetheless, NCDC explored the possibility of receiving funding outside of the black community as early as 1977.[119] The school eventually sought external funding from governmental and private sector sources such as the Department of Children and Family Services, the Illinois Arts Council, IBM, Amoco, and the MacArthur Foundation. NCDC also received funding from black institutions in Chicago such as the Chicago-based newspaper, *N'Digo,* the Black Ensemble Theater, and the Michael Jordan Foundation contributed much needed funds to the school.[120] Nonetheless, these funds were not enough to resolve NCDC's financial problems. In a *Chicago Sun-Times* article, Safisha Madhubuti affirmed that the school's economic woes could have been avoided "If there had been some black foundation that we could have gone to for support. . ."[121]

Black Chicagoans' own economic problems surely limited their ability to provide adequate support to NCDC. Admittedly, members of the NCDC community such as Soyini

---

[117] Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author. Despite a national and local malaise in Black Power activism, several organizations in Chicago continued the political traditions of this era. Conrad Worrill, who is based in Chicago, served as the national chairman of the black nationalist organization, the Black United Front.

[118] New Concept Handbook, NCDC History Folder, SRW.

[119] Moving Force 1977-1978, IPE Folder, SRW; Staff Study Session, October 24, 1977, IPE Folder, SRW.

[120] Case Statement, Revised April 20, 1994, Equipment Request Folder, NCS; Mary A. Mitchell, "New Concept's Bill Comes Due," *Chicago Sun-Times,* April 14, 1998; Soyini Walton, interview with author; Zakiya Williams, interview with author.

[121] Mary A. Mitchell, "New Concept's Bill Comes Due," *Chicago Sun-Times,* April 14, 1998.

Walton and Zakiya Williams recalled that several parents were member of Chicago's black middle class.[122] Nonetheless, some NCDC students came from less privileged families. Former parent, James Childs, a law student at the time, sent his two daughters to NCDC. He remembered that the range of parents ran the gamut from people who attained doctorate degrees to individuals who were common laborers. In addition, NCDC's problems with collecting and raising tuition suggest that students came from families with varying means.[123]

Moreover, the school began when Chicago (and many other American urban centers) underwent daunting economic dislocations, the same dislocations that affected the economic circumstances of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary. The majority of NCDC's students came from South Side neighborhoods which experienced dramatic poverty and unemployment during the 1970s and 1980s.[124] Surely, as had been the case with Howalton and Holy Name of Mary, these developments impacted NCDC's financial viability. These many challenges eventually forced NCDC to relinquish its cherished status as an independent institution and transition to a charter school in 1998.

---

[122] Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author; Zakiya Williams, interview with author. Although beyond the scope of this chapter, similar findings were featured in an article on NCDC published in the *Chicago Reader* in 1997. A survey of the parents of NCDC's 150 students uncovered that public school teachers were "the best represented profession among New Concept parents." Yet, the article also said mentioned that NCDC parents worked in a variety of occupations such as doctors, attorney, plumbers, and secretaries. Some parents were even on welfare. Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS.

[123] James Childs, interview with author; Stages Needed for Development, 1978, IPE Folder, SRW. There is less information on the class composition of NCDC in comparison to Howalton and Holy Name of Mary, especially before 1986. Several sources written in the 1990s, however suggest that the school attracted both middle and working class African-Americans. See New Concept Development Center Director's Annual Report, January 19, 1991, NCDC Blue Folder, SRW; New Concept Development Center Annual Summary to Board of Directors, January 19, 1991, NCDC Blue Folder, SRW; Case Statement, Revised April 20, 1994, Equipment Request Folder, NCS; Gary Rivlin, "Eyes on the Prize," *Chicago Reader,* May 23, 1997. Found in Articles Folder, NCS.

[124] D. Aileen Dodd, "'Afrocentric' School Offers New Outlook," *Chicago Sun Times,* in NCDC Fundraiser, SRW; The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area: Based on the 1970 and 1980 Censuses*, 176-177, 441, 459; The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990,* 18, 197.

Conclusion

The emergence of the Black Power Movement greatly impacted the racial politics of black education. Many African-Americans exchanged appeals for integration with demands for community control. Also influenced by the era, black private schools in Chicago such as Howalton and Holy Name of Mary began to emphasize racial pride and the study of black history and culture. Nonetheless, two factors differentiate the racial politics of NCDC and these two earlier black educational institutions. First, black nationalism was the predominant philosophy that undergirded the curriculum of NCDC. Second, Howalton and Holy Name of Mary identified with the United States. NCDC, on the other hand, never attempted to promote American patriotism in students. Rituals such as pledges to the American flag and an emphasis on "citizenship education" were absent in the NCDC curriculum. NCDC students performed pledges and other rituals that were intended to promote pride in and fidelity to African and African-descendant peoples only.

Along with its emphasis on black nationalism, NCDC's use of progressive educational methods is also noteworthy for several reasons. First, it shows that black educators were active participants in the alternative education movement in the 1960s and 1970s. It has already been mentioned that scholars often marginalize the role that African-Americans played in this struggle for educational reform.[125] It is also significant that student-centered approaches remained a central focus of NCDC's curriculum well after the movement for alternative education declined in the mid-1970s.[126] In addition, the history of NCDC suggests that participants of the alternative education movement in the United States did not solely borrow

[125] Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 43-80 and 228-266; Larry Cuban, 103 and 112, Arthur Zilversmit, *Changing Schools*.

[126] Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade,* 255-266.

from European theorists. The educational ideas of Third World peoples were also key influences to the post World War II movement for progressive education.

Although NCDC's political ideology differed from that of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary, it shared many of the same financial challenges. Nonetheless, Howalton and Holy Name of Mary had two advantages that allowed it to experience relative financial stability at least in its early years. First, these two schools were established during a period of unprecedented economic growth in the 1940s. Second, both schools had less competition as a result of racially discriminatory educational and housing policies. NCDC had neither of these advantages. NCDC began when blacks in the city experienced massive economic decline and had greater educational options. This surely impacted the number of students who attended NCDC. The transformation of Chicago's urban landscape, which caused the closing of Howalton and the decline of Holy Name of Mary, fits William Julius Wilson's concept of institutional disinvestment. Nonetheless, the history of NCDC complicates William Julius Wilson's characterization of the decline of black institutions during the "urban crisis."[127] NCDC shows that some black institutions continued to exist and even thrive in spite of these daunting circumstances. NCDC and similar black nationalist schools were telling examples of what Peniel Joseph has identified as a "second wave" of Black Power activism that extended well beyond the 1970s and into the 1980s despite economic, social, and political retrenchment.[128]

The history of NCDC also demonstrates the need to include black private schools in broader histories of African-American education. African-American educational activism in the Black Power era was not limited to the community control movement. It also included the

---

[127] William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 44; William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 56.

[128] Peniel Joseph ed., "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement.*

establishment of private schools, which actually drew participants from the community control movement. Moreover, NCDC educators continued to work to improve the educational opportunities for black children in public schools by establishing the Bethune Institute and building relationships with public school educators. Even Black Power educators, who often critiqued public schools as racist, saw public and private educational sectors as more porous than what historical memory indicates. Studies of education in the Black Power era are incomplete without including African-Americans' multifaceted agenda which included both spheres.

Epilogue and Summary

At the turn of the 21st century black Chicagoans experienced many of the same challenges in the city's public schools as they had in earlier decades. Integration remained elusive despite generations of activism. By 1999, Chicago was listed among the top ten most segregated metropolitan school systems in the United States.[1] In addition Chicago's public schools failed to adequately educate many of its predominantly minority and underprivileged students who consistently underperformed on standardized tests and maintained alarmingly low graduation rates.[2]

Given these problems, it would seem that private education would be a preferable option for some African-Americans as it had been before. However, Chicago's private schools had many daunting challenges of their own. The city's largest private school system, the Archdiocese of Chicago, experienced a massive decline in enrollment by the turn of the 21st century. Decades of economic dislocation and the relocation of Catholics from the center city reduced the number of families who sent their children to parochial schools. In addition, more affordable alternatives such as magnet and charter schools were available to Chicagoans. These circumstances led to several Catholic school closings. In 1964, nearly 366,000 students attended approximately 500 schools in the archdiocese. By 2007, only 98,225 students were enrolled in

[1] John R. Logan et al., "Choosing Segregation: Racial Imabalance in American Public Schools, 1990-2000" from the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research, 2002; "After Deseg in Chicago" *Chicago Tribune,* October 24, 2009, 14; Andrew Herrmann, "School Desegregation Rule Set to End" *Chicago Tribune,* May 2, 2006, 12; "After Deseg in Chicago" *Chicago Tribune,* October 24, 2009, 14.

[2] Jonathan Kozol, *Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2005), 321-324; Charles Payne, *So Much Reform, So Little Change: The Persistence of Failure in Urban Schools* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2008), 13-14; Tracy Dell'Angela, "Study: Graduate Rate Is Inflated- School Districts Find a Loophole" *Chicago Tribune,* February 26, 2004, 1.

the parochial school system's 257 schools. Between 1990 and 2003 alone, 80 Catholic schools were closed in Cook and Lake counties.[3]

Holy Name of Mary shared in the archdiocese's troubles. By 2002, less than 200 children attended the school.[4] The school enrolled more than 400 students and had to administer waiting lists at its peak in the 1960s. The number of Oblate Sisters of Providence who taught at Holy name of Mary also decreased. Although Oblates comprised the majority of Holy Name of Mary's faculty in the school's early years, by 2002 only four sisters remained.[5] As discussed earlier, Morgan Park had also experienced major demographic changes which left fewer families who were able to afford a private school education. These factors caused Holy Name of Mary's decline in enrollment which resulted in major indebtedness. In March of 2002 the Archdiocese of Chicago told the Holy Name of Mary community that it had three months to resolve its debt of $300,000 in order to stay open.[6] Despite the community's best efforts, the school was forced to close after the spring semester of 2002.[7]

The decision to shut down Holy Name of Mary was also part of a larger trend of black private school closings. As mentioned earlier, Howalton closed in 1986. Also, Marva Collins Prepatory, which was established by the famed the educator who bears the same name, closed in 2008 for financial reasons. Black nationalist private schools also struggled to remain viable at the turn of the 21st century. Although twenty schools belonged to CIBI in 1981, by July 2010 the

---

[3] Diane Rado, "Catholics Fight for Their Schools" *Chicago* Tribune, February 27, 2007, 1; Lori Olszewski, "Church Showing Faith in Schools" *Chicago Tribune,* May 23, 2007, 1; Tracy Dell'Angela and Manya A. Brachear, "Up to 40 Catholic Schools May Close" *Chicago Tribune,* November 13, 2004, 1.

[4] H. Gregory Meyer, "Legacy of Learning, Love Spelled Sister" *Chicago Tribune,* July 27, 2002, 8.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Teresa Puente and Ana Beatriz Cholo, "Not Closing Without a Fight" *Chicago Tribune,* January 27, 2002, 1; H. Gregory Meyer, "Legacy of Learning, Love Spelled Sister" *Chicago Tribune,* July 27, 2002, 8.

organization's website listed only eleven member institutions. Chicago, which had the largest number of CIBI schools in 1981, had no institutions listed.[8]

NCDC, which belonged to CIBI for much of its history, continued to be plagued by financial challenges in the 1990s. On May 14, 1997, Bob Dale, chairman of the New Concept School (the school had recently changed its name from New Concept Development Center) board wrote a letter to members of the school community announcing that "New Concept School is facing a VERY SERIOUS financial crisis at this time; we must raise nearly $100,000 by June 30th" (emphasis in original).[9] The New Concept community could only collect a little more than half of that amount. NCDC's financial challenges continued and by 1998 the school's debt ballooned to $250,000 including back taxes and operating expenses.[10]

These financial liabilities forced New Concept to transition into a mixed public and private educational institution in that same year. Its preschool component remained private. However, the school's higher grades were reformulated into the Betty Shabazz International Charter School (BSICS) in honor of El Hajj Malik Shabazz's (Malcolm X) wife.[11] The BSICS taught grades kindergarten through eighth grade. By 2006, the Barbara A. Sizemore Academy serving

---

[8] CIBI Institutional members, http://ww.cibi.org/schools.html (July 14, 2010).

[9] Bob Dale to Friend, May 14, 1977, CIBI Folder, NCS.

[10] Mary A. Mitchell, "New Concept's Bill Comes Due" *Chicago Sun-Times* in NCDC/BSICS Media Coverage Folder, NCS.

[11] The name of the umbrella charter school system and the first charter school under this system are named after Betty Shabazz. To differentiate the two, I refer to the umbrella organization as the Betty Shabazz International Charter School system. I refer to the first school under this system only as Betty Shabazz International Charter School.

Charter schools are generally k-12 educational institutions that receive public funding yet are not bound to the same rules and restrictions as most other public schools. Nonetheless, charter schools usually maintain this autonomy by meeting prescribed standards as set forth in their charter. See Eric Rofes and Alisa Stulberg, *The Emancipatory Promise of Charter Schools: Toward a Progressive Politics of School Choice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

elementary and middle school grades levels and the DuSable Leadership Academy for high school students were opened under the BSICS system umbrella.[12]

Some observers recognized the irony of a school, which emerged out of the Black Power Movement and trumpeted its independence, becoming a public institution. Although the *Chicago Sun-Times* acknowledged that changing to a charter school was necessary to NCDC's survival, it noted that: "It is a bittersweet victory for the school's founders and black Chicagoans. That a school born out of the independent activist movement could end up under the very auspices it was created to avoid. . ."[13] CIBI also recognized this irony and recommended the new configuration warranted associated status in the organization instead of full membership. The offer was declined and the former NCDC separated from the Council of Independent Black Institutions altogether.[14]

In Reflection

Far from passive educational consumers, black Chicagoans responded to swiftly changing historical developments by taking matters into their own hands and establishing private schools. During the 1940s, waves of southern migrants relocated to northern urban areas in search of higher wages and racial equality. Although some African-Americans experienced relative financial gains, they soon realized that racial inequality was a national dilemma and not confined to one region. Black Chicagoans, in particular, faced staunch racial discrimination in housing, education, and employment. These factors led to a critical mass of

---

[12] Betty Shabazz International Charter School About Us Page, http://www.bsics.net/aboutus.html (February 1, 2010); Soyini Rochelle Walton, interview with author.

[13] Mary A. Mitchell, "New Concept's Bill Comes Due" *Chicago Sun-Times* in NCDC/BSICS Media Coverage Folder, NCS.

[14] Safisha Madhubuti, interview with author. For CIBI's position on charter schools see Lisa M. Stulberg, *Race, Schools, and Hope: African Americans and School Choice After Brown* (New York: Teaches College Press, 2008), 150-152.

blacks who sought to enroll their children in private schools. Thus Howalton and Holy Name of Mary were established and experienced dynamic growth during the 1940s. Enrollment gains increased during the 1950s and 1960s as national and local civil rights activism emerged and climaxed. Many of these campaigns, such as the landmark *Brown vs. Board* case*,* aimed to integrate America's institutions. Surely, many black Chicagoans supported of integration. Nonetheless, many African-Americans in the city, such as the educators and supporters of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary, provided critical support to black private schools.

The idea of establishing independent black institutions grew in popularity during the Black Power Movement of the late 1960s to the mid 1970s. Frustrated with the progress of the Civil Rights Movement and inspired by newly independent African and Caribbean countries and continuing anti-colonial struggles (especially in southern Africa), many African-Americans increasingly advocated more radical tactics and objectives to end racism. In education, these perspectives manifested in the community control movement in the public sector and the establishment of black nationalist private schools. New Concept Development Center grew out of these broader developments. Nonetheless, the examples of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary shows that African-Americans pursued the establishment of their own schools, partially in response to educational racism, prior to the Black Power Movement.

Black private schools were also impacted by daunting economic dislocations that occurred in the United States in general and Chicago specifically. The urban crisis, which became increasingly apparent by the 1970s, included the deindustrialization of American cities and the suburbanization of many of the nation's most economically stable families. Economic challenges had beset the black private schools throughout their history and limited their ability to secure adequate facilities. However, the urban crisis exacerbated these financial problems

and resulted in the closing of Howalton in 1986 and Holy Name of Mary in 2002. These school closings illustrate William Julius Wilson's conception of "institutional disinvestment," which explains the deleterious impact of these economic and demographic dislocations on black institutions.[15] NCDC, however, complicates this idea by showing how black private schools continued to provide a viable service to black Chicagoans in spite of these circumstances.

The history of black private education also shows the diversity of American-American educational interests from the early 1940s to the mid 1980s. Members of the Howalton community were interested in an education that provided black families with a refuge from the problems they faced in Chicago's public schools. Although many supporters of Holy Name of Mary also wanted an alternative to public schools, they specifically felt that a school should promote religious and moral values. Members of the NCDC believed that an appropriate education should help African-American students develop a black nationalist political ideology.

These varied educational philosophies led to other differences in the schools. Holy Name of Mary's Catholic orientation placed the school within the bureaucratic network of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Undoubtedly, the archdiocese aided the school in providing an educational alternative to African-Americans. Nonetheless, the Catholic school system's structure allowed priests to challenge the Oblates' autonomy in the operation of Holy Name of Mary. Howalton and NCDC also functioned under hierarchical structures. However, there is no evidence that Howalton's board of directors and IPE's Baraza Ya Kazi (for NCDC) conflicted with administrators and teachers over control of their schools.[16]

---

[15] William Julius Wilson, *When Work Disappears*, 44; William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged,* 56.

[16] Howalton also belonged to the Anne Tyskling Consortium of the Midwest. Often referred to as the Consortium, the organization was comprised of several Chicago area private schools with varied racial compositions. The Consortium shared resources and collectively lobbied for legislation that was favorable

Race played a major role in the development of all three schools in this study. However, the schools emphasized race differently. Educators and supporters of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary saw that they were providing black students with an alternative to the racially discriminatory public school system of Chicago. Moreover, the education at these institutions was designed in part for racial progress. These features, along with a greater curricular emphasis on black history and culture, were accentuated more prominently as a result of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements in Howalton and Holy Name of Mary. Both schools also maintained a loyalty and identification with the United States. NCDC, on the other hand, emerged during the Black Power era when black nationalism grew in popularity among African-Americans. Therefore, the school encouraged its students to privilege an identification with African and African-descendant peoples over the American nation-state. Moreover, while black history and culture were components of Howalton and Holy Name of Mary's educational program, over time these subjects animated the entire curriculum of NCDC. The racial politics of NCDC in comparison to Howalton and Holy Name of Mary illustrates the dramatic shift in the postwar black freedom struggle brought on by the Black Power Movement.[17]

The black private schools in this study also employed a range of pedagogical approaches and experienced different levels of academic success. Howalton and NCDC emphasized progressive education while Holy Name of Mary focused on traditional education. The available sources also indicate that students at Howalton and NCDC performed better than Holy Name of Mary pupils. Nonetheless, there is not enough evidence to suggest a direct relationship

---

to private education. See "Private Schools Form 'Melting Co-Op,'" *Chicago Tribune,* December 13, 1970, W10; Ed Van Gorder to Doris Anderson, March 28, 1973, Box 3, Doris Allen-Anderson Correspondence, HSA; Ed Van Gorder to unnamed recipient, July 2, 1970, Box 1, Administrative Committee Reports, HSA.

[17] For other scholars' ideas on the continuities and ruptures in the black freedom struggle see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,"; Sundiata Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The 'Long Movement' as Vampire."

between a pedagogical style and student performance. It should also be reiterated that this dissertation places no hierarchy on student-centered or teacher-centered approaches. The schools' various curricular decisions and academic success were the result of various factors such as class sizes, school governance, and student preparation before entering the classroom. Yet, the history of progressive education at Howalton and NCDC places black educators in broader discussions of curricular history in the United States. Not only did they participate in progressive educational movements, they also continued to use these practices when they became less popular in mainstream educational circles. Furthermore, it shows how the ideas of Third World philosophies and theorists such as Julius Nyerere and Mao Tse Tung, were also appropriated by progressive educators in the United States (particularly by NCDC faculty).

Despite their religious, political, and curricular differences, community support was central to all of the featured schools. All three schools were established in response to the demands of their respective communities. Parental groups urged Howalton and NCDC to transition into full schools while the St. Martin de Porres Guild lobbied for the establishment of Holy Name of Mary. This community support was continued by patrons who provided critical financial assistance, developed mutually beneficial relationships with teachers, and offered their services and expertise. Obviously, it would have been more financially palatable for the school's parents to send their children to public schools. Nonetheless, racial discrimination in the public school system led parents to "double tax" themselves to expand the educational opportunities of their children much like southern African-Americans at the turn of the 20th century.[18]

This acceptance of the schools generally extended to other black Chicagoans. Most African-Americans did not oppose black private schools despite their racial composition. It is

[18] See James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South.*

likely that black Chicagoans recognized that Howalton and Holy Name of Mary were de facto segregated because of housing patterns and the fact that most whites did not want to attend these schools. They also distinguished these circumstances from the explicit tactics that the Chicago Board of Education and many whites in the city employed to prevent racial integration. The black nationalist policies of NCDC elicited opposition from some African-Americans, although the school never received the level of opposition that was directed toward the racially exclusionary policies of Chicago's public and private school systems. It is likely that this dynamic resulted from NCDC's racial identity and the political climate engendered by the Black Power Movement.

It should also be noted that women played central roles in the development of black private education; perhaps unsurprising given that the occupation of teaching has been feminized throughout the 20th century.[19] Black private schools provided black women the opportunity to assume leadership roles that they were often denied in the public educational sector. The history of Holy Name of Mary, however, shows that female autonomy did not go unchallenged. The Archdiocese of Chicago's structure allowed paternalistic pastors, particularly Fathers Ryan and Vader, to usurp control of Holy Name of Mary from the Oblate Sisters of Providence. There is no evidence that similar overarching structures for Howalton and NCDC (the Howalton Board of Directors and IPE's Baraza Ya Kazi), which included men, challenged black female authority in the operation of their respective schools.

Despite their private status, all schools in this study also maintained mutually beneficial relationships with the public educational sector. Public school workers and advocates often supported black private schools. In like manner, black private educators participated in various

[19] Regina Cortina and Sonsoles San Román, eds., *Women and Teaching: Global Perspectives on the Feminization of a Profession* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006).

organizations, programs, and movements to expand the opportunities of the many black children in public schools. The histories of all three schools indicate that black Chicagoans saw both the public and private educational spheres as more porous than is revealed in current scholarship. African-Americans developed a complex educational agenda that included activity on multiple fronts.

In the 21st century African-Americans continue to explore a number of options to ensure that their children receive a quality education. As the number of black private schools continues to decrease, other options such as charter schools and school vouchers may become more viable and affordable strategies. However, these strategies are not entirely new. They rest on the foundations of African-Americans who in the past did not sit idly and allow black children to receive an inadequate education. Time will determine, using 21st century options, if black Chicagoans once again take matters into their own hands.

Bibliography

Manuscript and Archival Collections

Black Women's Committee for the Protection and Care of Our Children Files. Collection of Adalisha Safi (Jacqueline Robbins), Chicago, Illinois.

Collection Pertaining to the Historically Black Neighborhood of Morgan Park. Ridge Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois.

Holy Name of Mary Mission. Archives of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, Baltimore, Maryland.

Holy Name of Mary Collection. Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Record Center, Chicago, Illinois.

Howalton School Archives. Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Woodson Regional Library, Chicago, Illinois.

Institute for Independent Education Records. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

Mildred Johnson Papers. Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature, Woodson Regional Library, Chicago, Illinois.

New Concept Development Center Files. Collection of Soyini Rochelle Walton, Chicago Illinois.

Office of Catholic Education School Board Administrative Records. Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Record Center, Chicago, Illinois.

School Files of the New Concept School. New Concept School, Chicago, Illinois.

Interviews (by author)

Mary Trineta Baeza, O.S.P., August 8, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mary Katherine Brent, O.S.P., July 29, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland.

James Childs, July 23, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Mary Virginie Fish, O.S.P., July 26, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mary Reginald Gerdes, O.S.P., August 8, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mary Clementina Givens, O.S.P., July 26, 2008, Baltimore, Maryland.

Rika Lawrence, July 22, 2009, Chicago Illinois.

Safisha Madhubuti (Carol Lee), July 21, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Kenya Nalls, July 23, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Adalisha Safi (Jaqueline Robbins), July 24, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Mesi Walton, July 24, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Soyini Rochelle Walton, July 24, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Juba Williams, July 22, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Zakiya Williams, July22, 2009, Chicago, Illinois.

Newspapers

Catholic New World

Chicago Daily News

Chicago Defender

Chicago Reader

Chicago Sun-Times

Chicago Tribune

Fundisha! Teach!

N'Digo

New York Times

Published Books

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

Anderson, James. *The Education of Blacks in the South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Avella, Steven M. *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965.* South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992.

Baker, R. Scott. *Pardoxes od Desegregation: African American STrugles fo Educational Equity in Charleston, South Carolina, 1926-1972.* Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2006.

Berry, Brian J. *The Open Housing Question: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1966-1976.* Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1979.

Biondi, Martha. *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Bolden, Marsha J. *Growing Up Brown in Morgan Park.* Ann Arbor, MI: Huron Valley Publishing, 2001.

Bracey Jr., James, August Meier, and Elliot Rudwick. *Black Nationalism in America.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.

Brown, Scot. *Fighting for US: Maulana Karenga, the US Organization, and Black Cultural Nationalism.* New York: New York University Press, 2003.

Bullock, Henry A. *A History of Negro Education in the South.* New York: Praeger Publishers, 1967.

Bush, Roderick D. *We Are Not What We Seem: Black Nationalism and Class Struggle in the American Century.* New York: New York University Press, 1999.

Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Cecelski, David S. *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

The Chicago Fact Book Consortium. *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area: Based on the 1970 and 1980 Censuses.* Chicago: Chicago Review Press Press, 1984.

---. *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990.* Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1995.

Cibulka, James G., Thomas J. O'Brien, and Donald Zewe. *Inner-City Private Elementary Schools.* Milwaukee: Marquette University press, 1982.

Clotfelter, Charles T. *After Brown: The Rise and Retreat of School Desegregation.* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004.

Coburn, Carol K., and Martha Smith. *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836-1920.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Coleman, James S., and Thomas Hoffer. *Public and Private Schools.* New York: Basic Books, 1987.

Collins, Marva. *"Ordinary" Children, Extraordinary Teachers.* Norfolk, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Co., 1992.

---. *Values: Lighting the Candle of Excellence: A Practical Guide for the Family.* Los Angeles, CA: Dove Books, 1996.

Collins, Marva, and Tamarkin Civia. *Marva Collins' Way.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982.

Cremin, Lawrence. *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876.* New York: Harper and Row, 1980.

Cuban, Larry. *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1890-1990*. 2nd ed. New York: Teachers College Press, 1993.

Danns, Dionne. *Something Better for Our Children: Black Organizing in Chicago Public Schools, 1963-1971.* New York: Routledge, 2003.

Davis, Cyprian, O.S.B. *The History of Black Catholics in the United States.* New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1990.

Douglas, Davison M. *Jim Crow Moves North: The Battle Over Northern School Segregation, 1865-1954.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Downs, Donald A. *Cornell '69: Liberalism and the Crisis of the American University.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.

Drake, St. Clair, and Horace Cayton. *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City.* Revised and Enlagred Edition. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.

Duncan, Otis, and Beverly Duncan. *The Negro Population of Chicago: A Study of Residential Succession.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Erickson, Donald A. *Crisis in Illinois Nonpublic Schools: Final Research Report to the Elementary and Secondary Nonpublic Schools Study Commission, State of Illinois.* Springfield: State of Illinois, 1971.

Essien-Udom, Essien Udosen. *Black Nationalism: A Search for Identity in America.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Fairclough, Adam. *A Class of Their Own: Black Teachers in the Segregated South.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

---. *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Souther Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987.

Fisher, Maisha T. *Black Literate Lives: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives.*New York: Routledge, 2009.

Formisiano, Ronald V. *Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Franklin, V.P. *The Education of Black Philadelphia: The Social and Educational History of a Minority Community, 1900-1950.* Philadelphia: University of Pennysylvania Press, 1979.

Gittell, Marilyn., et al. *Local Control of Education: Three Demonstration School Districts in New York City.* New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972.

Gosnell, Harold F. *Negro Politicians: The Rise of Negro Politics in Chicago.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935.

Green, Robert L. *Student Desegregation Plan for the Chicago Public Schools: Recommendations on Educational Components and Student Assignment.* Chicago: Board of Education, City of Chicago, 1981.

Grimshaw, William. *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Grossman, James. *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

Hauser, Philip M., and Evelyn M. Kitagawa., eds. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1950.* Chicago: Chicago Community Inventory, University of Chicago, 1953.

Havighurst, Robert J. *The Public Schools of Chicago: A Survey for the Board of Education of the City of Chicago.* Chicago: Chicago Board of Education, 1964.

Herrick, Mary. *The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1971.

Hess, Jr. G. Alfred. *School Restructuring, Chicago Style.* Newberry Park, CA: Corwin Press, 1990.

Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks. *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Hine, Darlene Clark. *Hine Sight: Black Women adn the Reconstruction of American History.* New York: Carlson Publishing, 1994.

Hirsch, Arnold. *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Hogan, David. *Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago, 1880-1930.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

Homel, Michael. *Down From Equality: Black Chicagoans and the Public Schools: 1920-1941.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984.

Hoy, Suellen. *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Irons, Peter. *Jim Crow's Children: The Broken Promise of the Brown Decision.* New York: Viking, 2002.

Irvine, Jacqueline Jordan, and Michèle Foster, eds. *Growing Up African-American in Catholic Schools.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1996.

Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Jeremiah Moses, William. *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Jones, Charles E., ed. *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered.* Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998.

Joseph, Peniel E., ed. *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era.* New York: Routledge, 2006.

---. *Waiting 'til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America.* New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006.

Kaestle, Carl F. *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.

Katnelson, Ira, and Margaret Weir. *Class, Race, and the Decline of the Democratic Ideal.* New York: Basic Books, 1985.

Kelley, Robin D.G. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2002.

---. *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

Kennally, James. *The History of American Catholic Women.* New York: Crossroad, 1990.

Kitagawa, Evelyn M., and Karl E. Taeuber. *Local Community Fact Book for Chicago, 1960.* Chicago: Chicago Community Inventory, University of Chicago, 1963.

Kleppner, Paul. *Chicago Divided: The Making of a Black Mayor.* Dekalb, IL: North Illinois University Press, 1985.

Kluger, Richard. *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality.* New York: Knopf, 1976.

Knecht, Sharon C. *Oblate Sisters of Providence: A Pictorial History.* Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Publishing Company, 2007.

Knupfer, Anne Meis. *The Chicago Black Renaissance and Women's Activism.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

---. *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago.* New York: New York University Press, 1996.

Koenig, Harry. S.T.D., ed. *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago Published in Observance of Centenary of the Archdiocese, 1980.* Chicago: Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1980.

Konadu, Kwasi. *A View from the East: Black Cultural Nationalism and Education in New York City*. 2nd ed. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009.

Kozol, Jonathan. *Shame of the Nation: The Restoration of Apartheid Schooling in America.* New York: Crown Publishers, 2005.

Lefkowitz, Mary. *Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History.* New York: Basic Books, 1996.

Lemann, Nicholas. *The Promised Land: The Great Migrationand How It Changed America.* New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Lincoln, C. Eric. *The Black Muslims in America.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1961.

Ling, Peter J., and Sharon Monteith. eds. *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement.* New York: Routledge, 1999.

Lyons, John F. *Teachers and Reform: Chicago Public Education, 1929-1970.* Urbana: IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Madhubuti, Haki. *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous? Afrikan American Families in Transition: Essays in Discovery, Solution and Hope.* Chicago: Third World Press, 1990.

---. *Enemies: The Clash of the Races.* Chicago: Third World Press, 1978.

---. *From Plan to Planet: Life Studies: The Need for Afrikan Minds and Institutions.* 10th ed. Chicago: Third World Press, 1992.

Madhubuti, Haki. ed. *Confusion By Any Other Name: Essays Exploring the Negative Impact of Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman.* Chicago: Third World Press, 1990.

McGreevy, John T. *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter With Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Meier, August, and Elliot M. Rudwick. *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1978.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Metcalf, George R. *From Little Rock to Boston: The History of School Desegregation.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983.

Mirel, Jeffrey. *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit, 1907-1981.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993.

Mohraz, Judy. *The Separate Problem: Case Studies of Black Education in the North, 1900-1930.* Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979.

Moore, Donald R. *The Bottom Line: Chicago's Failing Schools and How to Save Them.* Chicago: Designs for Change, 1985.

Morrow, Diane Batts. *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

Neckerman, Kathryn M. *Schools Betrayed: Roots of Failure in Inner-City Education.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Nickels, Marilyn. *Black Catholic Protest and the Federated Colored Catholics, 1917-1933: Three Perspectives on Racial Justice.* New York: Garland Publishing, 1988.

Nyerere, Julius. *Uhuru na Ujamaa.* Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968.

---. *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism.* London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Ogbar, Jeffrey O. *Black Power: Radical Politics and African-American Identity.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Orfield, Gary, and Susan E. Eaton. *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown vs. Board of Education.* New York: New Press, 1996.

Ottaway, Marina, and David Ottaway. *Afrocomunism*. 2nd ed. New York: Africana Publishing, 1981.

Pangle, Lorraine S., and Thomas L. Pangle. *The Educational Ideas of American Founders.* Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993.

Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Payne, Charles M. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

---. *So Much Reform, So Little Change: The Persistence of Failure in Public Schools.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2008.

Payne, Charles M., and Carol Sills Strickland. eds. *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African-American Tradition.* New York: Teachers College Press, 2008.

Perkins, Margo V. *Autobiography as Activism: Three Black Women of the Sixties.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000.

Perlstein, Daniel H. *Justice, Justice: School Politics and the Eclipse of Liberalism.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2004.

Peterson, Paul E. *School Politics, Chicago Style.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Philpott, Thomas. *Slum and the Ghetto: Neighborhood Deterioration and Middle-Class Reform, Chicago, 1880-1930.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Plummer, Brenda Gayle. *A Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affaris, 1935-1960.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Ravitch, Diane. *The Great School Wars: New York City, 1805-1973: A History of the Public Schools as Battlefield ofSocial Change.* New York: Basic Books, 1974.

---. *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980.* New York: Basis Books, 1983.

Reed, Christopher. *The Chicago NAACP and the Rise of Black Profesional Leadership, 1910-1966.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

Robnett, Belinda. *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Rofes, Eric., and Lisa M. Stulberg. eds. *The Emancipatory Promise of Charter Schools: Toward a Progressive Politics of School Choice.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004.

Sanders, James W. *The Education of an Urban Minority: Catholics in Chicago, 1833-1965.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Schlesinger Jr., Arthur. *The Disuniting of America.* New York: Basic Books, 1996.

Self, Robert. *American Babylon: Race and Struggle for Postwar Oakland.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Senghor, Leopold. *On African Socialism.* New York: Praeger Publishers, 1964.

Shujaa, Mwalimu J., ed. *Beyond Desegregation: The Politics of Quality in African-American Schooling.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 1996.

Siddle Walker, Vanessa. *Hello Professor: A Black Principal and Professional Leadership in the Segregated South.* Chapel Hill: Univeristy of North Carolina Press, 2009.

---. *Their Highest Potential: An African-American School Community in the Segregated South.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Singh, Nikhil Pal. *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Slaughter, Diana T., and Deborah J. Johnson, eds. *Visible Now: Blacks in Private Schools.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1988.

Spear, Allan. *Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

Springer, Kimberly. *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1969-1980.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005.

Street, Paul L. *Racial Oppression in the Global Metropolis: A Living Black Chicago History.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007.

Strickland, Arvarh E. *History of the Chicago Urban League.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1967.

Stulberg, Lisa M. *Race, Schools, and Hope: African Americans and School Choice After Brown.* New York: Teachers College Press, 2008.

Sugrue, Thomas. *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Theoharis, Jeanne F., and Komozi Woodard, eds. *Freedom North: Black Freedom Strugles Outside the South,1940-1980.* New York: Palgrave, 2003.

Turner, Richard Brent. *Islam in the African-American Experience.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

Tushnet, Mark V. *The NAACP's Legal Strategy Against Segregated Education, 1925-1950.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Tuttle, William. *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Sumer of 1919.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1970.

Tyack, David. *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Eduation.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Tyson, Timothy. *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Urban, Wayne J. *Gender, Race, and the National Education Association: Professionalism and its Limitations.* New York: Routledge, 2000.

Von Eschen, Penny M. *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Watkins, William H. *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954.* New York: Teachers College Press, 2001.

White, Deborah G. *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1999.

Wiliams, Rhonda Y. *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Williams, Yohuru. *Black Politics/White Power: Civil Rights, Black Power, and the Black Panthers in New Haven.* New York: Brandywine Press, 2000.

Wilson, James Q. *Negro Politics.* New York: Free Press, 1960.

Wilson, William Julius. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

---. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor.* New York: Knopf, 1996.

Wirth, Louis, and Margaret Furez. eds. *Local Community Fact Book*

Wolters, Raymond. *The Burden of Brown: Thirty Years of School Desegregation.* Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984.

Woodard, Komozi. *A Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Black Power Politics.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Wrigley, Julia. *Class Politics and Public Schools.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982.

Zilversmit, Arthur. *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930-1960.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Journal Articles

Carl, Jim. "Harold Washington and Chicago's Schools Between Civil Rights and the Decline of the New Deal Consensus, 1955-1987." *History of Education Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 311-343.

Collier-Thomas, Bettye. "The Impact of Black Women in Education: A Historical Overview." *Journal of Negro Education* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1982): 173-180.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (July 1991): 1241-1299.

Daniel, Philip T.K. "A History of Discrimination Against Black Students in Chicago Secondary Schools." *History of Education Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (Summe 1980): 147-162.

Foster, Michèle. "Constancy, Connectedness, and Constraints in the Lives of African-American Teachers." *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 5 (1991): 233-261.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005): 1233-1263.

Hess, Jr. G. Alfred. "Renegotiating a Multicultural Society: Participation in Desegregation Planning in Chicago." *Journal of Negro Education* 53, no.2 (1984), 132-146.

Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks. "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race." *Signs* 17, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 251-274.

Hoover, Mary Elanor Rhodes. "The Nairobi Day School: An African American Independent School, 1966-1984." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 201-210.

Hoy, Suellen. "No Color Line at Loretto Academy: Catholic Sisters and African Americans on Chicago'sSouth Side." *Journal of Women's History* 14, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 8-33.

King, Deborah K. "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology." *Signs* 14, no. 1 (1988): 42-72.

Knupfer, Anne Meis. "'Isolated Learning is Doubtful Learning': Howalton School, the First Private, Nonsectarian African-American School, 1947-1960." *Education and Culture*, 2005: 1-20.

Lee, Carol. "Profile of an Independent Black Institution: African-Centered Education at Work." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no.2. (Spring 1992): 160-177.

McGreevy, John T. "Racial Justice and the People of God: The Second Vatican Council, the Civil Rights Movement, and American Catholics." *Religion and American Culture* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 221-254.

Polite, Vernon C. "Getting the Job Done Well: African American Students and Catholic Schools." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 211-222.

Rashid, Hakim M., and Zakyyah Muhammad. "The Sister Clara Muhammad Schools: Pioneers in the Development of Islamic Education in America." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (1992): 178-185.

Ratteray, Joan Davis. "Independent Neighborhood Schools: A Framework for the Education of African-Americans." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (1992): 139-147.

Ravitch, Diane. "Multiculturalism: E Pluribus Plures." *American Scholar* 59, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 337-354.

Rector, Thomas A. "Black Nuns as Educators." *Jounral of Negro Education* 51, no. 3 (1982): 238-353.

Rury, John. "Race, Space, and the Politics of Chicago's Public Schools: Benjamin Willis and the Tragedy of Urban Education." *History of Education Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1999): 117-142.

Shujaa, Mwalimu J. "Afrocentric Transformation and Parental Choice in African American Independent Schools." *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 148-159.

White, E. Frances. "Africa on My Mind: Gender, Counter Discourse and African-American Nationalism." *Journal of Women's History* 2 (Spring 1990): 73-97.

Theses and Dissertations

Baptiste, Mary of Good Counsel, O.S.P. "A Study of the Foundation and Educational Objectives of the Congregation of the Oblate Sisters of Providence and of the Achievement of These Objectives as Seen in Their Schools." M.A. thesis, Villanova College, 1939.

Dennis, Mary Robert. "St. Elizabeth's Parish and the Negro." M.A. thesis, Loyola University of Chicago, 1940.

Ellis, Charlesetta M. "Robert S. Abbot's Response to Education for African-Americans via the Chicago Defender, 1909-1940." Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1994.

Faulk, Estella Anderson. "A Study of Catholic Education for Negroes in the Archdiocese of Chicago." M.A. thesis, Depaul University, 1948.

Fornero, George V. "The Expansion and Decline of Enrollment and Facilities of Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1955-1980: A Historical Study." Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1990.

Hadrick, Mary Emma, O.S.P. "Contributions of the Oblate Sisters of Providence to Catholic Education in the United States and Cuba, 1829-1962." M.A. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1964.

Marshall, William A. "Education in the Nation of Islam During the Leadership of Elijah Muhammad." Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1976.

McCarthy, Joseph J. "History of Black Catholic Education in Chicago, 1871-1971." Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1973.

Peck, Craig. " 'Educate to Liberate': The Black Panther Party and Political Education." Ph.D. diss. Stanford University, 2001.

Rice, Jon F. "Black Radicalism on Chicago's West Side: A History of the Illinois Black Panther Party." Ph.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1988.

Shalaby, Mahmond I. "The Role of the School in Cultural Renewal and Identity Development in the Nation of Islam." Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 1967.

Sobczyk, Mary Clarice. "A Survey of Catholic Education for the Negro of Five Parishes in Chicago." M.A. thesis, Depaul University, 1954.

Tarsitano, Janet Nancy. "The History of Integration and Integration Maintenance in the Beverly Hills/Morgan Park Community." M.A. thesis, Governors State University, 1982.

Vader, Anthony J. "Racial Segregation Within Catholic Institutions in Chicago: A Study in Behavior and Attitude." M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1962.