The Campus and the Street: Race, Migration, and the Origins of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, CA

Donna Murch

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The New Black Power History

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The great exodus of poor people out of the South during World War II sprang from the hope for a better life in the big cities of the North and West. In search of freedom, they left behind centuries of southern cruelty and repression. The futility of that search is now history. The Black communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Newark, Brownsville, Watts, Detroit, and many others stand as testament that racism is as oppressive in the North as in the South. Oakland is no different.

Huey Newton[1]

Introduction

In 1948 Harry Haywood wrote, "The Negro Question is agrarian in origin.... It presents the curious anomaly of a virtual serfdom in the very heart of the most highly industrialized country in the world."[2] World War II and the advent of the mechanical cotton picker resolved this contradiction by spurring the single largest Black population movement in U.S. history. In an ever-expanding tide, migrants poured out of the south in pursuit of rising wages and living standards promised by major metropolitan areas. In 1940, 77% of the total Black population lived in the south with over 49% in rural areas; two out of five worked as farmers, sharecroppers, or farm laborers. In the next ten years over 1.6 million Black people migrated north and westward, to be followed by another 1.5 million in the subsequent decade.[3]

The repercussions of this internal migration were felt throughout the United States leaving their deepest imprint on west coast cities that historically possessed small Black populations. California's lucrative defense industries made the state a prime destination

for southern migrants. By 1943, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce declared the Bay Area, "the largest shipbuilding center in the world."[4] Sociologist Charles Johnson explained, "To the romantic appeal of the west, has been added the real and actual opportunity for gainful employment, setting in motion a war-time migration of huge proportions."[5] Oakland's Black population mushroomed from 8,462 residents in 1940 (3%) to an impressive 47,562 in 1950 (12%).[6] A pattern of chain migration continued until 1980, when Oakland reached the racial tipping point with 157,484 Black residents, 51% of the city's total.[7] The resulting shift in demography secured Oakland's position as the largest Black metropolis in northern California.

In two decades after World War II, Oakland's recently settled African-American community produced one of the most influential local Black Power movements in the country.[8] First and second generation migrants who came of age in the late 1950s and early 1960s composed not only the leadership, but also the rank-and-file of large segments of the Black Panther Party (BPP) and other Black Power organizations.[9] In contrast to their parents who entered the San Francisco Bay in Area in a time of economic boom, postwar youth faced a rapidly disappearing industrial base along with increased school, neighborhood, and job segregation. However, socio-economic factors alone cannot explain the development of Bay Area radicalism. In response to the rapidly growing, and disproportionately young, migrant population, city and state government developed a program to combat "juvenile delinquency" that resulted in high rates of police harassment, arrest, and incarceration.[10] With its founding in October of 1966, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (BPPSD) mobilized against this new scale of repression by organizing young people throughout the Bay Area. Within a few short years, the Oakland based group dropped the words "Self Defense" from its name and expanded into an international force with chapters in over 61 U.S. cities and 26 states.[11]

Although the BPPSD is best known for its armed police patrols and embrace of "brothers off the block" as revolutionary vanguard, this essay argues that its origins lay in Black student and campus struggles at Merritt College and U.C. Berkeley. While we often think of Black Studies as the product rather than the catalyst of postwar social movements, in the Bay Area fights over curriculum and hiring in the early 1960s were integral to the emergence of Black Power after Watts. Radical groups like the Panthers reflected not only the problems, but the ambitions of California's migrant communities who saw schooling as "the primary vehicle for their children's upward mobility"[12] Oral testimony reveals that for many Black families greater educational access helped inspire western migration itself. Melvyn Newton, brother of the Panther co-founder Huey Newton, expressed this sentiment most clearly. "We were children of migrants that came here for social opportunity...families...came with the dream of sending their kids to school. I don't know if they necessarily knew what schools were like out here, but they knew what the conditions were like out there."[13] Given the postindustrial restructuring of Oakland's economy and penal system, the need for quality education took on a particular urgency.

Black Migration and World War II

Prior to World War II, the Black community of the San Francisco Bay Area was tiny. In the first quarter of the century, Black residents actively discouraged migration, because of limited economic opportunity. World War II ushered in a new era; national defense brought an unprecedented policy and capital investment in the state. The federal government invested over forty billion dollars in west coast factories, military bases, and other capital improvements. The resulting economic and demographic changes to the region were immense.[14] In 1943, the *San Francisco Chronicle* summed up this process
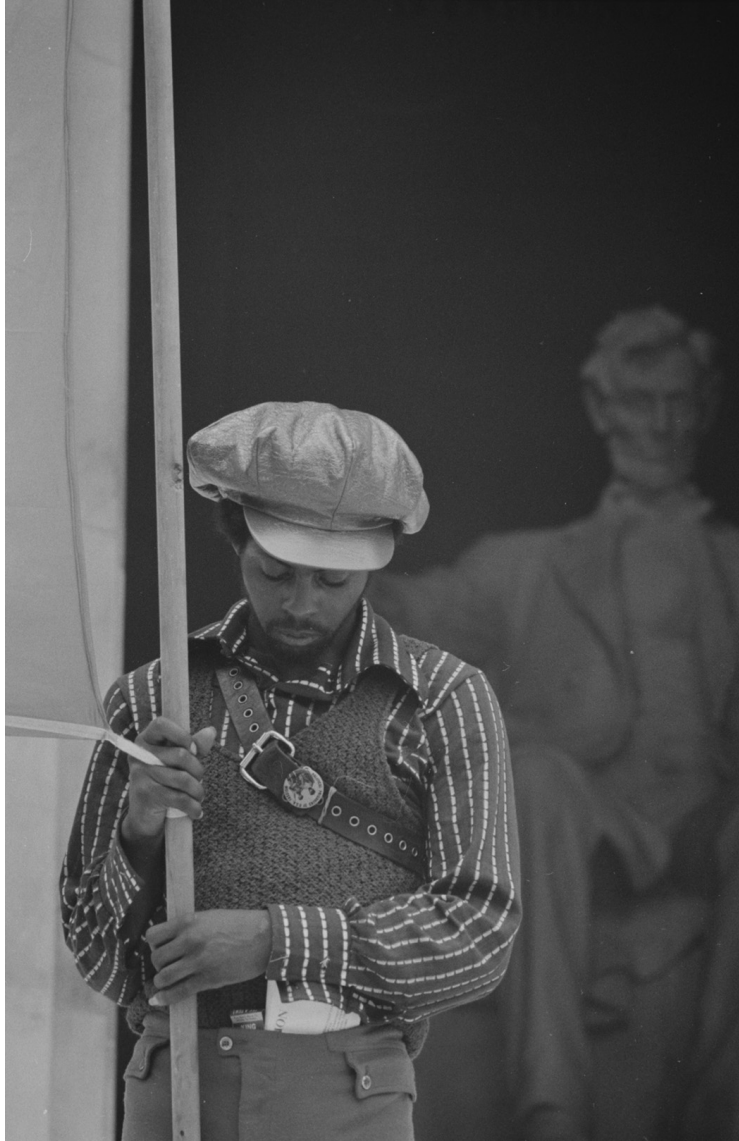
*"**Black Panther Convention, Lincoln Memorial**" 1970, Photographers: Thomas J. O'Halloran and Warren K. Leffler; Library of Congress [via PINGNEWS]*

by announcing, "the Second Gold Rush" had begun.[15] While people fled from regions throughout the south, and brought with them a diversity of experiences and backgrounds, Bay Area war migrants shared some particular characteristics. The majority came from Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma with Arkansas and Mississippi contributing lesser numbers.[16] With an average age between 22 and 23, they were younger than the resident population and disproportionately female.[17]

In addition to the obvious economic incentives, the San Francisco Bay Area held a special allure for these young migrants. Racial segregation functioned like a palimpsest whose layers grew denser with the passage of time. The recent migration of the East Bay's Black community meant that prior to the population influx spurred by World War II, formal systems of racial control had not yet been consolidated. Black rates of property ownership in California ranked among the highest in the nation, and in contrast to their places of origin, Black migrants suffered less physical repression, worked largely outside agriculture, and had greater access to public services.[18] Most importantly, the state's promise of

higher quality public education at all levels tapped a persistent, if understudied, motive for Black migration throughout the twentieth century.[19]

By 1945, national defense industries had produced more than 600,000 jobs for African Americans and drawn a million Black southerners to northern and western industrial centers. Although Bay Area shipyards resisted hiring Black workers at the outset of the War, systematic organizing efforts by C.L. Dellums, the local business agent for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), and other civil rights leaders forced both unions and local employers to hire African Americans.[20] Their campaign provided this newly settled population with unprecedented economic opportunity. In the Bay Area over 70% of Black migrants found work in the shipyards, and Black female employment tripled.[21] Southern migration combined with a changing job structure inaugurated the formation of a strong Black working-class movement. C.L. Dellums, a close friend of A. Philip Randolph and uncle to future Congressman Ronald Dellums, remained a touchstone of local Black politics in subsequent decades, and his union became one of the most powerful Black institutions in the East Bay. However, this era of abundance proved fleeting as postwar demobilization led to large scale unemployment and economic uncertainty.[22]

De-industrialization

As migrants sought to realize their new-found opportunity, a new and more repressive racial order emerged. African Americans who had fled the poverty and brutality of the south soon found new barriers erected in their wake. In 1946, the Final Report of the Fair Employment Practice Committee argued, "The entire West Coast Area is characterized by problems which in newness and intensity distinguish it from the rest of the country."[23] Black labor's remarkable gains quickly receded. The workforce employed by shipbuilders shrank from 250,000 at the War's height to 12,000 people in 1946.[24] In Oakland and south Berkeley, five short years of boom were followed by long decades of bust. Immediately after the War ended, Oakland entered a period of industrial decline and structural unemployment became a permanent feature of the local economy. By 1960, the federal government officially classified Oakland as a depressed area.[25] Despite California's thriving Cold War economy, Oakland limped along. De-industrialization had a devastating social impact on African-American residents. In 1959, one quarter of the total population in Oakland lived under the poverty line and roughly ten percent earned less than $2000 per year.[26] Union discrimination, concentration in temporary wartime industry like shipyards, and entrenched patterns of employer discrimination, relegated much of the growing Black population to secondary labor markets. Black youth remained most vulnerable to economic retrenchment, facing high rates of unemployment and repression from local law enforcement.[27]

Police Repression and "Juvenile Delinquency"

Among historians, it is well recognized that white residential and capital flight from cities was a direct reaction to Black migration. In Oakland and other metropolitan areas in California, however, city and state government's postwar preoccupation with "juvenile delinquency" was an equally important development. Racial anxieties about the city's rapidly changing demographics led to an increasing integration of school and recreational programs with police and penal authorities. In this context, the discourse of "juvenile delinquency" took on a clear racial caste, leading to wide-scale policing and criminalization

of Black youth. While extensive police harassment and arrest of Black migrants started during the population influx of World War II, it vastly intensified in the period of economic decline that ensued.[28]

In the 1950s, public service agencies fielded the cascade of disputes that followed from Black settlement in white enclaves. School grounds and recreation areas became volatile flashpoints of racial conflict. White neighborhoods undergoing swift racial transition sought to obtain funds from the city council to reorganize social service agencies. When city government refused to allocate money for specific areas, groups of residents banded together to form the Associated Agencies (AA) and District Community Councils (DCA).[29] In its final form, the Associated Agencies of Oakland encompassed three tiers of government responsible for youth and family services. At the local level, the AA integrated Oakland's public school system, recreation, and police departments with the county's probation, welfare, and health agencies. In turn, these local groups were linked up with the California Youth Authority, the state's largest penal authority for juvenile offenders.[30] Meetings with multiple family service and juvenile agencies allowed them to work together to identify and monitor "troublemakers."[31] The most disturbing aspects of this integration of recreational and police agencies, was the tracking of youths identified as delinquent. Police monitored, and even arrested, individuals that had been identified by school and recreational staff, despite the fact that they had no prior record. Increasingly, the category of Black youth itself became defined as a social problem at best, and as a criminal presence at worst.

Local politicians used Cold War metaphors of contagion and containment to describe Black residents with the greatest threat emanating from the youth. Oakland city manager Wayne Thompson, a self-professed liberal, explained the preventative logic behind introducing police and penal presence into the local school system to stem the tide of "delinquency." "If you didn't stop it, it would spread into the business sections and even infect the industrial community," Thompson warned. "We had eyes and ears in those areas to alert us in advance . . . . Before the Associated Agencies program, it was an admission of weakness on the part of the school official, or . . . failure if he even let a policeman in the door. . . . What a change now! The first man they call is the police.[32]

In the mid-1950s, a restructuring of the Oakland Police Department (OPD) exacerbated this situation. Changes in East Bay law enforcement reflected a national trend toward "legalistic policing," characterized by modern equipment, formalized systems, and greater emphasis on juvenile detention. Oakland's new police chief dissolved local precincts, concentrated the OPD into a single headquarters, and overhauled hiring practices in favor of better educated, more affluent candidates.[33] In practice, these policies created an almost exclusively white middle-class force that resided outside the city and had little understanding or connection to the neighborhoods they served.[34] Oakland's reinvigorated police force became a constant and intrusive presence in people's lives. Systematic arrests of young offenders linked them into the web of professional services, including probation officers, judges, and child guidance clinics, further blurring the line between "authoritative" police functions and family services.[35] Given the pervasive hostility towards Black migrants, this framework laid the basis for the simultaneous criminalization of Black youth and long-term neglect of Black families.

Black Students and the Roots of Black Power

While Black Power has often been treated as a post-Watts phenomenon, its roots in the East Bay stretch far back into the decade preceding the urban rebellions.[36] Public education became the most immediate arena in which migrant youth confronted a hostile white

establishment and mobilized against it.[37] Black students entered secondary schools and universities in large numbers at a time when the California system of higher education was undergoing a major restructuring. Faced with a mushrooming population and a conservative fiscal structure, state policy makers sought to contain costs while expanding capacity. Projections warned that student populations would increase nearly five fold in fifteen years. In 1960, 227,000 students were enrolled in higher education, by 1975 the total reached 1,000,000.[38] California's university system, with its integrated tiers of community colleges, state, and public universities, led the nation in superior levels of funding, infrastructure, and quality of instruction. In 1960, the state-wide Master Plan for Higher Education vastly increased the number and capacity of junior colleges and mandated that they admit all applicants with high school diplomas. Urban campuses greatly expanded Black working class college enrollment, and provided an institutional base for political organizing. By 1969, the San Francisco Bay Area boasted one of the highest rates of minority college completion in the nation.[39] Full access to community colleges became particularly important given racial segregation and inequalities in the city's primary and secondary schools.

The Oakland Unified School District consistently allocated resources to segregated white schools in wealthy areas of the city, while neglecting overcrowded schools in the "flatlands." In the early sixties, this issue came to a head with the building of Skyline High School in the Oakland hills. Black parents and civil rights leaders charged the school board with "gerrymandering" the district and draining resources from the rapidly integrating schools in the low lying areas of the city. Discrimination extended beyond issues of unfair financing to the racialized culture of the schools themselves. Starting in 1957, Black students and their families protested low standards and achievements in West Oakland's all Black McClymond's High School. They cited the low rate of college attendance among "Mack" graduates, and a recurring pattern of counselors and school officials discouraging students from continuing their education.[40] An FEPC report published several years later identified differential standards as a pervasive problem throughout the district. Principals and teachers in majority Black schools repeatedly emphasized the importance of discipline, comportment, and hygiene over academic achievement.[41] In the spring of 1966, the Ad Hoc Committee for Quality Education (AHCQUE) formed to protest the school board's unfair use of resources and the school's miseducation of their children.[42] Over the next decade, flatland parents and their supporters vigorously contested the increased police presence in the schools, the failure to hire Black faculty and staff, and the self-fulfilling prophecy of lowered expectations producing poor academic results.

Donald Warden and the Afro-American Association

In the San Francisco Bay Area, some of the most important battles over curriculum and social access took place at the university level. Within less than a decade, unprecedented numbers of Black students entered college for the first time, and urban campuses became major sites for political organizing. In the spring of 1961, Berkeley graduate students from a variety of disciplines and a sprinkling of undergraduates from UCB and San Francisco State began to meet regularly. Donald Warden, a second year student at UC Berkeley's Bolt School of Law, emerged as the "leader" of the study group. In early March, he wrote a series of editorials to the *Daily California*, denouncing Roy Wilkins, the NAACP, and the civil rights strategy of integration.[43] Students debated books of immediate political relevance and hosted weekly forums throughout the Bay Area. Charter members included Henry Ramsey, Donald Hopkins, Ann Cooke, Mary Lewis, and Maurice Dawson.[44] As the group cohered, they chose the name Afro-American Association and limited membership exclusively to people of African descent.[45] Ernest Allen, a Merritt student who later

joined, described the choice as containing a "revolutionary . . . .sense of rebirth" paralleling the Nation's repudiation of "slave names."[46] W.E.B. Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk*, Carter G. Woodson's *Miseducation of the Negro*, and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* numbered among their selections, however, E. Franklin Frazier's *Black Bourgeoisie* and Melville J. Herskovits' *The Myth of the Negro Past* elicited the most debate.[47] The discussion and the controversy these two volumes engendered had the greatest impact on the Association's evolving ideology. Ultimately, the Afro-American Association successfully fused Herskovits and Frazier's opposing views on African survivals to fashion its own anti-assimilationist ideology.[48]

Many of the ideas generated in the Association, including their debates about the nature of identity, African retention, and the integrationist sins of the Black middle class, anticipated cultural nationalist thought of subsequent years.[49] In May of 1961, Association members worked together with the UC Berkeley campus chapter of the NAACP to bring Malcolm X to speak. Soon after, a group of students began regularly attending the Nation's mosque, Temple 26B, in West Oakland. Although the Association remained secular, their rhetoric revealed the NOI's clear influence.[50] Opposition to integration, understood as forced assimilation, served as unifying theme; their public speeches, often reserved their greatest rancor not for the dominant white society, as for the compliant "Black Bourgeoisie." Warden and others in the Association argued that while civil rights leaders spoke of desegregation and compliance with Brown, what they truly advocated was assimilation. They encouraged their members to learn Arabic and Swahili, and in the mid-sixties began manufacturing an African inspired garment called the "Simba."[51] Ronald Everett, later known as Karenga, joined the Association in 1963, and helped establish a Los Angeles chapter. Historian Scot Brown notes that, "Warden, though not specifically defining the group as cultural nationalist, set in motion many of the cultural concepts and organizing principles that Karenga utilized in US."[52]

The Afro-American Association was not content to simply remain a study group, Warden and others moved to become integral to the East Bay's larger African-American community. Association members experimented with different forms of activism, including sponsoring the "Mind of the Ghetto" youth conference at McClymonds High in West Oakland. However, Harlem style street rallies remained the AAA's most consistent form of outreach.[53] Although street speaking had long been a staple of Black nationalist political culture, the Afro-American Association adapted it to the particularities of the Bay Area. A pattern developed in which the Association held rallies in San Francisco until early afternoon, before moving on to Oakland and to Richmond. The exile of Robert F. Williams prompted one of the first street speaking sessions. Association members traveled down to 7th street, the central Black business district in West Oakland, and held up the newspaper headlines, loudly proclaiming their support.[54] Looking back, Maurice Dawson remembered the uproar over Williams' exile as a turning point. The name Robert F. Williams was poised on everyone's lips. "[He] ain't scared of nothing or nobody," Dawson explained, "This was the talk of the Bay Area . . . . It was the genesis of the growth and evolution, frankly, of racial pride in the East Bay."[55]

In early 1963, the Afro-American Association reached the height of its powers and influence. The Association offered an effective mix of Black cultural nationalism and colorful display that helped mobilize a whole generation that passed through Bay Area schools. The support the Association received from different segments of the Black community reflected its profound appeal. Many participants in the Association later became prominent across a broad spectrum of Black politics. On the electoral front, Ronald Dellums briefly attended meetings along with future Oakland Mayor Elihu Harris, and local powerbrokers Ortho Green, Henry Ramsey, and Donald Hopkins. Charter member Ann Cooke went on to publish in the groundbreaking feminist anthology *The Black*

Woman; while political radicals Ernest Allen, Cedric Robinson, Huey Newton, and Bobby Seale socialized with nationalists Ronald Karenga, Fritz Pointer, and David Patterson.[56] In sum, the Association represented a foundational stage in the evolution of Black politics in California. While an older school of historiography has emphasized the divisions between civil rights and electoral politics on the one hand, and Black nationalist and Black Power thought on the other, the history of the Afro-American Association clearly demonstrates how the two were nurtured together in this early student movement.

Despite the Association's many accomplishments, this period of unity was short-lived. The AAA soon underwent a series of splits that alienated a core portion of its more radical membership. Students interested in socialism and direct community action became frustrated by Warden's recalcitrant anti-communism and his resistance to more concrete forms of political organizing. Others questioned his political integrity and personal motivation.[57] Nevertheless, the Afro-American Association helped launch a new era of Black activism and institution building that culminated in the founding of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.

Merritt College, Black Studies, and the Black Panther Party

While the Afro-American Association recruited throughout the East Bay, its largest following emerged at Merritt College, affectionately known to Black residents as "Grove Street." Ernest Allen explained, "The fact that it [Merritt College] was located right in the middle of a community was a historical accident, but what people made of it was something else."[58] The boundary between Merritt and North Oakland was completely porous. People passed on and off the campus, and many residents from the surrounding area hung out in the cafeteria, a major hub for debate.[59] By locating their headquarters adjacent to the school and regularly staging street rallies on campus grounds, the Association helped ignite a militant Black student movement.

Until the late fifties, African-American presence on California campuses was too small and diffuse to be called a community. Although the University of California did not collect statistics on the racial breakdown of the Berkeley student population until 1966, anecdotal evidence reveals that there were less than 100 Black students out of nearly 20,000. As the civil rights movement progressed these figures began to slowly increase, until by 1966, Black students, including both native born and African, breached the one percent barrier with 226 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in Berkeley.[60] Although these gains were significant, the expansion of the Black student body at community colleges dwarfed that of the comparatively elite University of California system. By 1965 Black students made up nearly ten percent of Merritt College's total enrollment, and within two short years, they formed over thirty percent of the student body. A mutually reinforcing dynamic took hold in which the increase in Black students fed political organizing and political organizing, in turn, attracted people who would never have considered attending college.[61]

Many of these students were not only the first members of their family to attend college, but they were also recent arrivals from the south who still retained strong cultural ties to their families' places of origin. Their intermediary status as migrants led them to look "backwards as much as forwards" and helped to provide additional motivation for seizing opportunities unimaginable to them and their families a decade before.[62] While Huey Newton was exceptional in many ways, his background typified that of the growing Black student body at Merritt College. He was the child of Louisiana migrants, raised in poverty in Oakland by parents who had come to California in search of better jobs and more educational opportunity. Similarly, Bobby Seale was a first-generation migrant from Dallas,

Texas.[63] In the late 1950 s, Seale began taking night classes at Merritt with hopes of earning a degree in engineering. As his interest in "American Black History" grew, he shifted his emphasis from technical training towards the humanities.[64] Attending community college was the single biggest influence on their radicalization, Newton later explained. "It was my studying and reading in college that led me to become a socialist. . . . The transformation from a nationalist to a socialist was a slow one, although I was around a lot of Marxists."[65]

In the mid-1960s, Merritt students began organizing to have Black Studies classes included in the regular curriculum. Between 1964 and 1966, Virtual Murrell, Alex Papillion, Isaac Moore, Kenny Freeman, Ernest Allen, and Douglas Allen formed the Soul Students Advisory Council (SSAC).[66] Leo Bazille, who became president of Soul Students in 1966, described the organization as a place where "youth met and devised political involvements." The same year they changed their name to "Black Student Union," a new term at the time. One of the Council's first accomplishments was a large rally at Merritt protesting the draft of Blacks into the military. However, their fight to implement Black history classes at Merritt and to increase the hiring of Black faculty and staff became their most sustained campaign.[67]

After a confrontation with white faculty member Rodney Carlisle over the content of his "Negro History" class, Huey Newton became involved in this protracted struggle.[68] He saw it as an important chance to implement a new type of organizing. Newton proposed sponsoring a rally in support of the Afro-American History Program in which SSAC members would invite the press, strap on guns, and march outside Merritt College on Malcolm X's birthday. This type of action would enable Soul Students to mobilize not only students, but the populations surrounding the school, including the "lumpen proletariat," the key constituency for social revolution.[69] A display of armed self defense would impress the community, call attention to police brutality, and intimidate Merritt's administrators into taking the students' demands more seriously.[70] Soul Students refused, and Newton refocused his attention on the world beyond the "the sandbox politics" of the community college.

While the Black Panther Party had its origins firmly in early student activism at Berkeley and Merritt College, Seale and Newton quickly distanced themselves from their campus roots and cultivated their image as "brothers off the block." Newton viewed the gun as a powerful "recruiting device" that would attract youth from the broader community; thereby, bridging the gap between students and the grassroots. This duality, merging different strata from "college and community," remained a hallmark of the Black Panther Party throughout its history. Given the sharp spike in local college attendance, this dynamic was strongest in Oakland, but it was true for other chapters as well. In describing the Chicago chapter, David Hilliard likened their strategy to Bunchy Carter's efforts in Los Angeles, "They [tried] to forge an alliance between the two largest concentrations of Black youth—the campus and the streets."[71]

While many Black nationalist and New Left groups hoped to do this, the Panthers set about achieving this broad coalition through spectacular displays challenging state violence. As Newton searched for a medium to "capture the imagination" of Oakland's Black community, he turned to the law library at the North Oakland Service Center, a poverty program that employed Bobby Seale. Drawing on his training from law school, Newton pored over the California penal code and resurrected an old statute that legalized carrying unconcealed weapons. After much discussion with peers over the right to bear arms, Newton and Seale decided that they needed a concrete political program before initiating police patrols. In October 1966, in less than twenty minutes, Seale and Newton drafted the "Black Panther Party Platform and Program" in the North Oakland Poverty Center.[72]

One of the Panthers' first community actions took place on 55th and Market near the anti-poverty program where Newton and Seale were working. Several pedestrians had been killed at the intersection, which had no stoplight. They attempted to get the city to put up a stop sign and made little progress with local bureaucracy. So they went out and started directing traffic; within weeks, the city installed a signal. This strategy of forcing the hand of local government through assuming some of its powers was repeated a number of times throughout the Party's history.[73] Policing the police, food give-aways, and public service actions like the one on Market, highlighted the simultaneously negligent and repressive role of government in Oakland's Black neighborhoods. The implicit message was clear—either improve state services or face an armed movement of local youth.

Conclusion

Ultimately, Oakland's Black Power Movement is best understood through the historical circumstances that produced it. Large-scale migration to California, impelled first by defense industry and the inertia of chain migration—and later by the death throes of agricultural tenancy—created a displaced population that remained shut out of the major avenues of decision making. For first generation migrants, shipyard and defense related employment promised a vast increase in living standards that quickly dissolved in the War's aftermath. As jobs and money flowed to the suburbs in coming decades, the core of the migrant population found itself trapped in the familiar cycles of poverty and debt. For the young, the situation was most difficult of all—they not only faced economic uncertainty, but the constant threat of police harassment and incarceration.

As they approached college age, federal funding and an expansive network of community colleges provided newfound access to integrated higher education. Black students seized this opportunity, and used it as an arena for addressing the most immediate circumstances of their lives. College campuses became major sites for political organizing, and first generation attendees articulated the grievances of the larger community. Black Studies and student union struggles created strong networks of activists that would later venture beyond the campus into grassroots and community organizing after 1965. The Afro-American Association, US Organization, and the Black Panther Party all had origins in these campus based struggles. Huey Newton said it best, "Everyone—from Warden and the Afro-American Association to Malcolm X and the Muslims to all the other groups active in the Bay Area at that time—believed strongly that the failure to include Black history in the college curriculum was a scandal. We all set out to do something about it."[74]

Notes

1. Huey Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide* (New York: Writers and Readers Publishing, Inc., 1973), p. 14.
2. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation* (Chicago: Liberator Press, 1976), p. 11.
3. Manning Marable, "Foreword" in Rod Bush's *The New Black Vote: Politics and Power in Four American Cities* (San Francisco: Synthesis Publications, 1984), p. 3; Nicolas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1991), p. 6.
4. Quoted by Albert S. Broussard, "In Search of the Promised Land: African American Migration to San Francisco, 1900–1945, " in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in Calfiornia*, Lawrence de Graafe et al., eds. (Los Angeles: Autry Museum of Western Heritage, 2001), p. 190.
5. Charles Johnson, *The Negro War Worker in San Francisco: A Local Self-Survey* (San Francisco, 1944), p. 1.
6. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population by Age, Race, and Sex in Oakland, Calif. by Census Tracts: 1940*.
7. U.S. Department of Labor, "Data from Census Bureau Estimates for Oakland, California," 1980 Census, Run No. 831120, p. 4.

8. For a sustained discussion of the complex relation of the Black Panther Party to the concept of Black Power, see Donna Murch, "When the Panther Travels: Race and the Southern Diaspora in the History of the BPP, 1964–1972," Conference Paper, Diaspora and the Difference Race Makes Symposium, Black Atlantic Seminar, Rutgers University, February 16, 2007.

9. Donna Murch, "The Urban Promise of Black Power: African American Political Mobilization in Oakland and the East Bay, 1961–1977" (UC Berkeley: Ph.D. Thesis, 2004).

10. After conducting extensive oral history interviews with activists in the Bay Area Black Power movement for my dissertation, I was struck by how many had served time in the California Youth Authority and other penal institutions. For representative sample, see Donna Murch, "Interview with Emory Douglas," March 7, 2002, "Leon White," August 9, 2002, "Fritz Pointer," March 12, 2002; Judith May, "Struggle for Authority: A Comparison of Four Social Change Programs in Oakland, California" (UC Berkeley: Ph.D. Thesis, 1973).

11. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, pp. 110–127; Murch, "Interview with Ernest Allen," February 3, 2002; Murch, "The Urban Promise," p. 147; Paul Alkebulan, "The Role of Ideology in the Growth, Establishment, and Decline of the Black Panther Party: 1966 to 1982" (UC Berkeley, Ph.D. Thesis, 2003), p. 104.

12. Quote taken from Jeanne Theoharis, "'Alabama on the Avalon': Rethinking the Watts Uprising and the Character of Black Protest in Los Angeles" in Peniel E. Joseph, ed., *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Tights-Black Power Era* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 33.

13. Murch, "Interview with Melvyn Newton," March 15, 2002.

14. Albert Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900–1945* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1993); Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), p. 17.

15. Marilynn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 30.

16. Broussard, p. 192; Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Abiding Courage: African American Women and the East Bay Community* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Johnson, *Negro War Worker*.

17. According to Charles Johnson, in the 19–24 age group, women outnumbered men by 2 to 1; Charles Johnson, *The Negro War Worker*, p. 6.

18. Lawrence B. De Graaf & Quintard Taylor, "Introduction" to *Seeking El Dorado*, p. 24; Murch, "Interview with Walter Bachemin," June 28, 1998, p. 1; William Henry Brown, *Class Aspects of Residential Development and Choice in Oakland Black Community* (UC Berkeley Ph.D. Thesis, 1970), p. 86; This dynamic was re-enacted inside the state itself. Large numbers of southern migrants who first settled in Los Angeles, which had a much older and larger African-American community, later chose to move north in search of a less hostile environment; Floyd Hunter, *Housing Discrimination in Oakland, California; A Study Prepared for the Oakland Mayor's Committee on Full Opportunity and the Council of Social Planning, Alameda County* (Berkeley, California: 1964), p. 14.

19. In my oral history interviews with migrants, this theme frequently emerged. See for example, Murch, "Newton," "Bachemin."

20. Donna Murch, "The Problem of the Occupational Color Line," unpublished paper, p. 15.

21. Charlers Wollenberg, *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito* (Berkeley: Western Heritage Press, 1990), p. 71.

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28. Johnson, *Second Gold Rush*, p. 167; OPD Report (6).

29. May, "Struggle for Authority," pp. 115–117.

30. May, "Struggle for Authority," pp. 115–117; Evelio Grillo, *Black Cuban, Black American: A Memoir* (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2000), p. 131; Laura Mihailoff, "Protecting Our Children: A History of the California Youth Authority and Juvenile Justice, 1938–1968" (UC Berkeley, 2005).

31. May, "Struggle for Authority," p. 24.

32. Ibid., p. 128.

33. May, "Struggle for Authority," p. 130; Oakland Police Department History 1941–1955, Part 6, 36–40.

34. May, "Struggle for Authority," pp. 130–135; Oakland Police Department History 1941–1955, Part 6, pp. 36–40.

35. May, "Struggle for Authority," p. 130.

36. Komozi Woodard, *A Nation within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) & Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Self, *American Babylon;* Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006). For new literature on the history of Black Studies see also Peniel E. Joseph, "Black Studies, Student Activism, and the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Movement*, pp. 251–277 and Noliwe Rooks, *White Money, Black Power: The Surprising History of African American Studies and the Crisis of Race in Higher Education* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006).

37. For a sustained discussion of the roots of the Bay Area Black Power movement in postwar struggles over California higher education see Murch, "Urban Promise of Black Power."

38. John Aubrey Douglas, "Brokering the 1960 Master Plan: Pat Brown and the Promise of California Higher Education," in *Responsible Liberalism: Edmund G. "Pat" Brown and Reform Government in California 1958–1967*, Martin Schiesl, ed. (Los Angeles: Edmund G. "Pat" Brown Institute of Public Affairs, 2003), p. 86; John Aubrey Douglas, *The California Idea and American Education;* Sidney W. Brossman and Myron Roberts, *The California Community Colleges* (Palo Alto, CA: Field Educational Publications, 1973).

39. "Completion Levels: Percentage of High School and College 'Completers' (Aged 25 and Over) in Selected Cities, 1969," *Historical Statistics of Black America*, Jessie Carney Smith and Carrell Peterson Horton, eds. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1995), p. 530.

40. Jonathan Spencer, *Caught in Crossfire: Marcus Foster and America's Urban Education Crisis, 1941–1973* (New York Univeristy: Ph.D. Thesis, 2002), pp. 361–363.

41. Jonathan Spencer quotes an article from 1952 in which the planners of the new McClymonds building described how their choice of design suited "the modified curriculum" meant to "fit the needs of the pupils in the area." Although, biology was still required, McClymonds possessed a different "set of contents and set of objectives . . . [with] a good deal of attention . . . to the care of the hair, skin and feet." Spencer, "Caught in Crossifre," p. 361.

42. Spencer, p. 363.

43. Warden, Letters to the Ice Box, *Daily California*, 1 March (1961), 22 March (1961)

44. Murch, "The Urban Promise," p. 99.

45. Lisa Rubens, "Interview with Donald Hopkins," unpublished transcript, Regional Oral History Office, UC Berkeley, September 29, 2000.

46. Murch, "Interview with Ernest Allen," July 3, 2001.

47. Murch, "Interview with Dawson," July 26, 2002; "Interview with Khalid Al Mansour," July 22, 2002.

48. Ibid.

49. Scot Brown, *Fighting for US: Maulana Karenga, The US Organization, and Black Cultural Nationalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), pp. 25–29.

50. Murch, "Dawson."

51. Murch, "Mansour"; Khalid Al Mansour, *Black Americans at the Crossroads–Where Do We Go From Here*? (New York: First African Arabian Press, 1990).

52. Brown, *Fighting for US*, p. 28.

53. James Edward Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960 s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), pp. 260–262.

54. Murch, "Dawson"; Timothy Tyson, "Introduction: Robert F. Williams, 'Black Power,' and the Roots of the African American Freedom Struggle," in Robert F. Williams, *Negroes With Guns* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), p. xxvii.

55. Murch, "Dawson."

56. Murch, "Mansour."

57. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, pp. 60–66; Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 21; Murch, "Interview with Mary Lewis," March 18, 2002.

58. Murch, "Allen."

59. Murch, "Melvyn Newton."

60. Gabrielle Morris, *Head of the Class: An Oral History of African-American Achievement in Higher Education and Beyond* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), pp. xvii–xviii.

61. "Special Report on Minority Group Relations Presented to the Trustees," *Peralta Colleges Bulletin*, 5(8) (January 12, 1968), p. 2.

62. Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1959), p. 108.

63. Seale, *Seize the Time*, pp. 3–6.

64. Ibid., pp. 3–12.

65. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, p. 69.

66. Seale, *Seize the Time*, pp. 26, 30.

67. Murch, "Interview with Leo Bazile," February 19, 2001.

68. Seale, *Seize the Time*, p. 20.

69. Ibid., pp. 30–31.

70. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, pp. 108–109.

71. David Hilliard and Lewis Cole, *This Side of Glory: The Autobiography of David Hilliard and the Story of the Black Panther Party* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), p. 228; Robyn Ceanne Spencer, *Repression Breeds Resistance: The Rise and Fall of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, CA, 1966–1982* (Columbia University: Ph.D. Thesis, 2001), p. 44.

72. Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, pp. 115–116.

73. Murch, "Newton."

74. Interestingly, Warden distanced himself from the successes at Merritt rather than claiming credit. He described the Merritt student movement with the following words, "…that leadership tended to be what the press would call more militant, more radical, and out of that grew the Black Panther movement." Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide*, p. 72; Murch, "Mansour."