BLACK LIVES AND SPATIAL MATTERS:
Race-making and Resistance in Suburban St. Louis

By

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ABSTRACT

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On August 9, 2014, the spectacle of an unarmed Black teenager lying facedown on the hot pavement for four and a half hours epitomized for Black residents of North St. Louis County the experience of de-humanization they had long endured. With the same power of a public lynching, the spectral terror publically inflicted on Michael Brown's body bore witness to the limits of the liberal state to deliver 'freedom for all.' The events of August 9 also reinforced a centuries-honed logic of differentiated rights that relies on the production of racialized space and bodies through physical, political, and economic violence.

The draconian practices and acute experiences of racialized space in North St. Louis County were operating long before Michael Brown's body lay on the pavement. However, the events that sparked ongoing protests and global debates following Brown's death illustrate why it is critical to study places like North St. Louis County, which is an extreme example of how both racist and liberatory projects operate in and through space. Here, subjugation and liberation are produced at the intersection of stigmatized Black space and the 'white spatial imaginary' of suburban normativity. These practices provide important insight into how black subjects are maintained as well as how blackness repudiates the claims of liberal humanism. While relationships between the 'work of space' and historical modalities of race-making are clearly operating in North St. Louis County, a radical form of resistance with the potential to challenge anti-Black paradigms was also birthed in this area.

This project asks: *What work does race do to produce differentiated sub/urban citizens, and with what effect?* The transdisciplinary approach used for this research is a project-based methodology that operates outside of traditional disciplinary norms to research intimately interconnected phenomena. Multiple qualitative and quantitative methods and analytics for the collection, analysis, and synthesis of data were used over a ten-year period. The research design expanded to adopt additional methods based on findings throughout the process. The combined dataset includes research carried out while I was a faculty member at Washington University, including eighteen in-depth interviews with residents and leaders of North St. Louis County prior to 2010 and twenty-five interviews with residents of the city of Pagedale between 2005 and 2010. The data were

also derived from more recent research, including 105 intercept interviews with residents of North St. Louis County between 2014 and 2015 and thirty-nine interviews with core members of the Ferguson Protest Movement. Participant observation was used at more than fifty meetings and events between 2003 and 2015 and throughout extensive time spent in this area. Historical data were collected from over forty archives, and a large amount of statistical and legal data were collected from public records, including an extensive data request from twenty-five municipal courts through the use of the Missouri Sunshine Law.

Spanning twelve years, this research investigates the degree to which race, municipal autonomy, and regional contestations over power, resources, and space, are intimately intertwined through formal policies and informal practices in North St. Louis County, often with devastating consequences. This work also considers how multiple forms of state violence are normalized for the purpose of legitimizing municipal governments, perpetuating hierarchies of power, and policing Black bodies for profit. North St. Louis County provides important evidence regarding how discursive space and lived experience are deeply interdependent and how definitions and expectations of space determine the opportunities and limitations of residents in metropolitan areas. While the evidence documented in this work reveals the dire circumstances Black residents of North St. Louis County live with every day, the dynamics of place and people converged on August 9, 2014, to spark a social movement that is uniquely connected to the particular history and experience of Black residents in this area. Leading the way were Black women and queer of color protesters who claimed the street and their bodies as locations of struggle. These protesters contribute to a new iteration of the fight for human liberation in fundamental ways that have not been fully recognized in the national discourse concerning social movements (like Black Lives Matter). As such, North St. Louis County can be viewed as both a location of devastating oppression and as an example of extreme practices of freedom.

For Gloria

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Action Council to Improve Opportunities for Negros (ACTION)

Association for Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)

Brown v. Board of Education (*Brown v. Board*)

Congress of Racial Equity (CORE)

Department of Justice (DOJ)

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Federal Housing Administration (FHA)

Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

Home Owners' Land Corporation (HOLC)

International Property Maintenance Standards (IPMS)

Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment (MORE)

Missouri State Board of Education (Board)

Mortgage Investment Companies (MICs)

Normandy School District (NSD)

Organization for Black Struggle (OBS)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

University of Missouri—St. Louis (UMSL)

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION:
THE CASE OF NORTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY

For those of us who write, it is necessary to scrutinize not only the truth of what we speak, but the truth of that language by which we speak it.
—Audre Lorde, *The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action*

1. RACE AND METROPOLITAN SPACE

Embodiment is always an emplaced condition; therefore, the racialization of bodies and the racialization of space are fundamentally connected. As such, cities are important locations in which to study processes of racialization at the intersection of people, culture, and space. The space of the city is racialized by the 'work of race' and through the raced bodies it contains, but metropolitan space also works to produce and maintain racial subjects. Cities, as contested sites of political and geographical struggle, locations of cultural exchange, places of production and commerce, executors of power and governance, and providers of basic services, can be read as palimpsests exposing larger currents of global conflict as well as localized histories of race-making and resistance. The work of race in and through space, which results in the violent production of differentiated subjects and disposable populations, continues to play out in the social, political, and physical configurations of cities across the globe.[1]

In the United States, legal obstacles to racial equality were largely dismantled following the mid-twentieth-century Civil Rights Movement, yet distinct and disparate racialized experiences continue to play out at all levels of metropolitan life. Statistics and analysis across research spectrums reveal widening gaps in quality-of-life issues among racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The implications of race, however, are increasingly downplayed in American society. These sentiments are echoed in decisions recently handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, which wrote in majority opinions that race is less significant today than it was during the era of civil rights legislation.[2] Recent polls and reports also show that many, mostly white, Americans believe that class, and not race, is the primary indicator of opportunity in the United States and that 'actually

[1] For non U.S.-centric studies of race and urban space, see, for example, Teresa Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Achille Mbembe, "Aesthetics of Superfluity," *Public Culture* 16, no. 3 (Duke University Press, 2004), 373–405; AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); Vyjayanthi Rao, "Post-Industrial Transitions," in *Cities of the South: Citizenship and Exclusion in the Twenty-first Century*, Barbara Drieskens, Franck Mermier and Heiko Wimmen, eds. (London: Saqi Books, 2007).

[2] In June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down key parts of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (VRA), allowing nine states (mostly in the South) to change election laws without answering to federal antidiscrimination guidelines. Critics of the VRA cited the election of Barack Obama as evidence that the law is no longer relevant, and Chief Justice John Roberts agreed that "the country has changed." In the same month the Supreme Court ruled that lower courts must take a skeptical look at affirmative action programs at colleges and universities, stating that institutions must first exhaust all race-neutral processes in order to achieve diversity on campuses.

occurring racism' is an exceptional event that requires proof of racist intent.[3] Within disciplinary fields that formally study space, such as geography and urban studies, much has been written concerning the social construction of space.[4] Even more has been written regarding constructions of race and processes of race-making within fields that study race.[5] A few scholars, particularly within cultural geography and urban studies, have more recently looked at processes of race-making in relationship to the production of racialized space;[6] however, this body of work is surprisingly small given the interdependencies between race and space.

This research studies the formal and informal 'work of race' as a set of social, political, and spatial practices in an area of metropolitan St. Louis known as North St. Louis County. The study contributes across disciplines to what is known regarding the racialization of people and places.[7] This work reveals institutional frameworks, policy regimes, discursive practices, and political struggles that Black residents of North St. Louis County experience every day, all of which defy the idea that race is becoming increasingly less important in the United States. Many people interviewed for this research also believe that the implications of race, as they experience it, are less about issues of skin color and personal prejudices—although those certainly exist—and more about the power to control in ways that establish and rationalize the dominance of one group over another, practices that have always constituted the fundamental purpose of race-making.

The 'race-making situation' in the suburbs of North St. Louis County challenges any prior notion that the United States entered a postracial era in the wake of a two-term Obama presidency.[8] In addition to producing highly visible tensions, as witnessed through

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[3] Philomena Essed conceptualizes "Everyday Racism" in *Race Critical Theories*, eds. Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg (Oxford: Blackwell Press, 2000); john a. powell and Caitlin Watt distinguish between everyday racialization and racism by decoupling outcome from intent in "Negotiating the New Political and Racial Environment," *The Journal of Law in Society* 11 (2009–2010): 31–69.

[4] Conceptualizations of types of space and the argument that space is not a given but is socially produced by and for different social outcomes is often credited to the work of Henri Lefebvre and later reconceptualizations of Lefebvre's theories of space by geographers such as David Harvey, Edward Soja, Andy Merrifield, and Setha Low. Urbanists within sociology, planning, and architecture began making connections between physical and social space around the end of the nineteen century as discussed in the literature review later in this chapter.

[5] The formal study of race as a social construction encompasses a huge body of work across multiple fields, which I address, in part, in a review of the literature later in this chapter.

[6] While this list is not exhaustive, for an example of scholars who consistently look at relationships between race and space, see the work of, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, George Lipsitz, AbdouMaliq Simone, Katherine McKittrick, Stephen Gregory, Kevin M. Cruse, Michael Keith, and Laura Pulido.

[7] Studying race in terms of the 'work' it does accepts John O. Calmore's description of race as "a fluctuating, decentered complex of social meanings that are formed and transformed under constant pressures of political struggle." "Critical Race Theory, Archie Shepp and Fire Music: Securing an Authentic Intellectual Life in a Multicultural World," *Southern California Law Review*, no. 64 (1992): 2129–2162.

[8] I discuss 'race-making situations' and the coinage of this term in Chapter Three. Debates regarding whether or not the United States has achieved a postracial society—one in which race no longer matters in significant ways—have been waged over the past twenty years. For example, see Bill Keller, "Profiling Obama," *New York Times,* July 28, 2013. Scholars such as David Theo Goldberg argue that "postracial" is yet another racist project that obscures racialized systems of power defined by the modern state; see David Theo Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). For further discussion of

unrest in Ferguson in 2014, race remains a surprisingly accurate predictor of interrelated issues facing the St. Louis region and beyond. These include location and condition of residence, quality of education, exposure to environmental hazards, earning capacity, access to comprehensive healthcare, and life expectancy.[9] Beyond these factors, Black residents of North St. Louis County must also pay for the economic losses suffered by these historically white suburbs due to the risk that is attached to Black bodies. As a result and as this work shows, racialized practices of policing-for-revenue have been developed at unimaginable scales and are justified and maintained through contradictory tropes of Black deviance, a desire for political autonomy, and the white spatial logic of suburban space.

The intersection of discursively produced 'urban' residents in historically produced suburban space in North St. Louis County, Missouri, results in specific practices and phenomena that offer unique insights into the nature and processes of racialized space in twenty-first century cities. This research project looks at this intersection and asks: ***What work does race do to produce differentiated sub/urban citizens, and with what effects?*** At the very core of this study is the interdependency between racialized bodies and racialized space—how do bodies code space and how does space codes bodies? The work that culture performs as a tool of racialization and as a proxy for racial difference—the cultural politics of race and racisms—is also an important analytic used in this research. Finally, the ways by which bodies reveal and resist racialized practices and reframe 'the praxis of being human' are critical to understanding how processes of oppression and liberation are mutually constitutive in North St. Louis County.

When the state can no longer justify itself or achieve the outcomes it desires, as Walter Benjamin observed, it must turn to policing in the name of security to maintain its existence and implement "a brutal encumbrance" upon citizens whose lives are regulated by ordinances.[10] This dissertation reveals the degree to which Black residents of North St. Louis County intimately experience the brutal encumbrance of a life regulated by ordinances. By documenting and examining the mechanisms and extreme practices of 'policing-blackness-for-profit' in North St. Louis County, this study exposes vast disparities between the experiences reported by residents and the narratives of leaders regarding what is occurring in this area and why. By asking how these practices came to be and what work they do, this project illustrates how contemporary forms of cultural politics continue to create (with devastating consequences) racialized subjects and racialized space in U.S.

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postracial questions, see also "Race in the Age of Obama," special issue, *Daedalus* 140, no. 1 (Winter 2011): entire issue.

[9] U.S. Census data, 2010. For examples of data analyses relative to race, see Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2011,* Current Population Reports, P60-243 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2012); Jeremy Pais, Scott J. South, and Kyle Crowder, "Metropolitan Heterogeneity and Minority Neighborhood Attainment: Spatial Assimilation or Place Stratification?" *Social Problems* 59, no. 2 (May 2012): 258–81; Michael McFarland and Cheryl A. Smith, "Segregation, Race, and Infant Well-Being," *Population Research and Policy Review* 30, no. 3 (June 2011): 467–93.

[10] Walter Benjamin, "Critique of Violence," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume 1, 1913-1926,* Marcus Bullock and Michael Jennings, eds. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

cities. This work also shows how local governance is a critical instrument in establishing differentiated rights of citizenship and personhood in and through space.

While this inquiry documents the dire circumstances that Black residents of North St. Louis County live with every day, the research also reveals distinctive and powerful practices of resistance at work in this area. On August 9, 2014, the dynamics of place and people converged to spark a social movement that is uniquely connected to the particular history and experience of residents here. The body of the slain teenager that lay in the street that day in North St. Louis County released another form of 'flesh in the street.' Unlike the victimized body of Michael Brown, Jr., this flesh insisted on the reconfiguration of how blackness is understood, demanded the right to live without fear, and revealed the radical work of Black women in the advancement of liberatory projects. Leading this resistance were young women and queer-of-color protesters who used physical and performative embodiment to disrupt racial and heteronormative constructions of bodies and space to launch a sustained critique of local, national, and global practices.

The case of North St. Louis County offers an extreme example of how propriety, risk, space, and power are entangled to produce contemporary forms of race and racisms, in addition to birthing a liberation movement with the potential to shift racial paradigms.

2. METHODOLOGY

Drawing on extensive multidisciplinary and longitudinal data, this project provides comprehensive evidence and analysis of social, political, and spatial practices in this area in contrast to reactive responses to events in Ferguson. The transdisciplinary approach used for this research is a project-based methodology that operates outside of traditional disciplinary norms to research intimately interconnected phenomena.

2.1 Disciplinary limitations

This work began unexpectedly through a series of interdisciplinary teaching and research projects I worked on between 2002 and 2010.[11] These projects focused on a concentration of predominately Black suburbs in North St. Louis County near Washington University, where I taught architecture and urban design for fifteen years. In the process of 'partnering' with municipal and institutional leadership in this area on research and design-build endeavors, I also developed a pedagogical approach to community engagement intended to challenge student assumptions and utilize local knowledge. Through this process I became aware over time of vast disparities between the stories told by residents and the consistently repeated narratives of people in leadership positions. I was also struck by what appeared to be a locally scaled yet fully functioning police state—the likes of which seemed implausible in twenty-first century America—that was justified

[11] For a description of the pedagogical approach I developed for teaching, see Jodi Rios, "Reconsidering the Margin: Relationships of Difference and Transformative Education," in *Service-Learning in Design and Planning: Educating at the Boundaries*, eds. Tom Agnotti, Cheryl Doble and Paula Horrigan, (Oakland: New Village Press, 2011). For an example of the interdisciplinary research I conducted in this area, see, Christine Hoehner and Jodi Rios, et al., "Page Avenue HIA: Building on Diverse Partnerships and Evidence to Promote a Healthy Community," *Health and Place* 18, n. 1 (January 2012): 85–95.

and seemingly naturalized by Black municipal leaders using a cultural politics rooted in well-honed tropes of suburban respectability and Black deviance, which I describe in Chapter Three. As I looked to scholarship within various disciplines to understand these phenomena, I found useful yet incomplete methodologies for studying places like North St. Louis County with few, if any, discussions of places specifically like this area.

For example, urban historians study how discrimination and urban policies produced modern-day U.S. suburbs, understood as predominantly white in contrast to minority-occupied urban ghettos, yet many urban scholars struggle to deal with deviations from their own codifications of space. Suburban scholarship, political scientists, and legal scholars study the formation and particular challenges faced by historically Black suburbs and unincorporated areas; however, this work does not address how to look at historically white suburbs that have become Black. Planning theory and sociology conceptualize 'suburban ghettos,' which are meant to explain white suburbs that have turned Black. This view relies heavily on the discursive frames of 'ghetto studies' and assumes (without considering the power of the white spatial imaginary to influence identity and practice) the ghetto will always trump the suburb in terms of character, politics, and pathologies. Within postcolonial discourses in the fields of anthropology, geography, and multidisciplinary studies—such as ethnic studies and Black studies—useful research looks dialectically at race-thinking and cultural politics. This approach can help to shed light on how cultural politics continue to operate in North St. Louis County, despite the limitations of these discourses with regard to understanding the work of space and spatial imaginaries within the cultural politics of race and racisms.

2.2 Design thinking and the undisciplining of research

As I tried to make sense of what I observed in North St. Louis County, it became apparent that the issues and factors impacting this area were too complex to be studied adequately through the lens of a single discipline. Architecture and urban design research and practice, in which I was trained, were especially insufficient for studying the work of race and racisms, which were clearly operating in this area yet were obscured in their specificity. What architecture and the design disciplines did offer, however, was a methodological approach to research intended to address and synthesize complex concepts and problem spaces. This form of problem solving began to be noticed by researchers outside of the design disciplines in the 1960s and was labeled 'design thinking.' More recently it has been utilized by business and technology sectors and marketed by design firms such as IDEO because it can be translated across disciplines and used to address multifaceted issues with multiple variables. My training and practice in design thinking indeed work in opposition to the convergent nature of social scientific research, which seeks to eliminate variables and works toward well-defined and unified conclusions. The divergent approach taken in design thinking, particularly when dealing with 'wicked problems,' investigates both known and ambiguous conditions in order to discover hidden parameters and open alternative paths of 'knowing.'[12] As a result, new relationships,

[12] The term "wicked problems" was borrowed by Horst Rittel from Karl Popper. In 1967, Rittel was the first to describe design thinking as a multifaceted approach to addressing "wicked problems," defined as a fundamental indeterminacy inherent within the problems faced by design. See C. West Churchman, "Wicked

variables, and questions often emerge as part of an iterative process. Design thinking seeks to tangibly identify and solve problems and therefore cannot remain ambiguous indefinitely. Rather, a space is opened up for the exploration of multiple variables that are subsequently evaluated relative to specific questions and their relationships to one another. These relationships establish a scaffold for findings. Graphic tools and conceptual mappings are often used in design- thinking processes to visualize relationships and to understand complex overlaps and intersections between findings.

While many aspects of this project fall within the definition of interdisciplinary research, and most of the research could be considered transdisciplinary, the work as a whole is closest to the definition of 'undisciplined' research, which is not to say it lacks rigor or is without underlying research structures. Interdisciplinary research is typically defined as setting different disciplinary methodologies in proximity to each other and allowing each to inform the others in terms of approach and findings.[13] Within interdisciplinary research, each discipline remains fully bounded by its disciplinary perspective. Transdisciplinary research goes further in the process of merging disciplines and includes knowledge and perspectives from civic society. Each disciplinary approach and methodology in transdisciplinary research is expected to engage in a transformative process with other disciplines and with local knowledges, resulting in one hybrid methodological approach to the research.[14] Transdisciplinary research often concludes with actionable recommendations for addressing the problem(s) in question. What has been termed 'undisciplined' research draws from the specific 'object of inquiry' in terms of methods used and paths taken. Rather than using a single or hybrid disciplinary methodology to study the research question, undisciplined research is process oriented

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Problems," *Management Science* 4, no. 14 (December 1967): B-141-42; J. Christopher Jones, *Design Methods: Seeds of Human Futures* (1970; rpt New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1981); Horst W. J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," working paper presented at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California, Berkeley, November 1972; Richard Buchanan, "Wicked Problems in Design Thinking," *Design Issues* 8, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 5–21; Panagiotis Louridas, "Design as Bricolage: Anthropology Meets Design Thinking," *Design Studies* 20, no. 6 (October 1999): 517–35; Anne Rylander, "Design Thinking as Knowledge Work: Epistemological Foundations and Practical Implications," *Design Management Journal* (Fall 2009): 7-19; V.P. Turnbull Hocking, "Designerly Ways of Knowing: What Does Design Have to Offer?" *Tackling Wicked Problems Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination*, eds, Valerie Brown, et al. (London: Earthscan, 2010) 242–50.

[13] Interdisciplinary research is a well-accepted approach in which individuals or teams of researchers collaborate on addressing a research question or project. The National Science Foundation defines interdisciplinary research as "a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice."
https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/additional_resources/interdisciplinary_research/definition.jsp

[14] For discussions of transdisciplinary research, see, for example, Christian Pohl and Gertrude Hirsch Hadorn, *Principles for Designing Transdisciplinary Research* (Munich: Oekom Publishers, 2007). R. H. Lawrence, "Beyond Disciplinary Confinement to Imaginative Transdisciplinarity," *Tackling Wicked Problems Through the Transdisciplinary Imagination*, eds. Valerie Brown et al. (London: Earthscan, 2010) 16–30; Georgina Cundill et al., "Nurturing Communities of Practice for Transdisciplinary Research," *Ecology and Society* 20, no. 2 (2015) 22–29.

and bases the domain of a particular study on encounters within the project at critical junctures.[15]

From the standpoint of process and data analysis, an undisciplined research methodology is similar to a grounded theory approach, which is data driven and allows new questions and theories to emerge from the research. The analysis of data for this project took an approach resembling a grounded theory methodology in that it used coding, categorizing, and patterns in the data to allow new theories and concepts to emerge through the findings. But the research diverged from a grounded theory approach by privileging events occurring in real time throughout the research process and by resisting disciplinary parameters to determine what would, or would not, count as important to the project. Disciplines by their very nature determine what is inside or outside of disciplinary knowledge, and each polices the boundaries of a discursive space. While a grounded theory approach typically employs an overarching disciplinary perspective, the undisciplining of research shifts decision-making and engagements regarding what is inside or outside of a study from established disciplinary limits to the opportunities and limitations of time, place, and particularities of the research focus.

Undisciplined research is well suited to the design-thinking research approach I naturally employ as a designer. Design thinking combines known and ambiguous conditions and is open to realigning quickly in order to address alternative paths of knowledge based on emergent or unexpected information and events. Using an 'undisciplined' approach to research and a design-thinking methodology for the synthesis of data and conceptual frameworks, this dissertation was driven by encounters with places, people, and events in North St. Louis County and the relationships that were subsequently revealed. This required a level of openness as to where the project would go, what forms of knowledge would count, and how research boundaries would be determined and, in some cases, expanded. This process was in fact more rigorous than one dictated by a single disciplinary or hybrid methodology because it required deep intellectual engagements across disciplines in order to see relationships between concepts and theories while resisting disciplinary limits.

2.3 A history of the present

Undisciplined research can also be understood in relationship to what is described

[15] See, for example, Michael Guggenheim, "Losing Discipline: Undisciplined Research," *Science and Public Policy* 33, no. 6 (July 2006) 411–21. There has been a growing interest in recognizing this methodology as evidenced by recent conferences and panels on this subject—for example, Deborah Thomas, "Undisciplining Research: Transcending Colonial and Academic Boundaries in Caribbean Studies," *Caribbean Studies Association Meetings*, Dominican Republic, 2 June 2005 (a roundtable co-organized with Karla Slocum, UNC). In March 2016, I attended the Undisciplined Environments Conference at the KTH in Stockholm. The conference proceedings stated, "Power and conflict are at the core of socio-environmental change, but existing knowledge and higher education structures are ill-equipped to address them. Most socially-relevant environmental research takes place within isolated disciplinary silos and has a disciplinary orientation. Questions are framed in relation to scholarly traditions, not in terms of the structure of the problems and the conflicts at hand, which transcend conventional departmentalization. The assumption of this conference is that as we live in undisciplined environments, we need undisciplined research." https://www.kth.se/en/abe/inst/philhist/historia/ehl/undisciplined-enviro

as a 'history of the present.' While Michel Foucault never offered a concise definition of a history of the present, he is credited with developing a genealogical approach by which the present must be understood as a contingent point between past and future power relations. One of Foucault's primary objectives was "to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects."[16] Subjectification as a historical process is the operative paradigm for Foucault. In contrast to the Kantian subject, who is self-reflexive and autonomous relative to his or her own self-formation and actions, the Foucauldian subject is contingently and unconsciously formed and can only be understood in relationship to external and operational modes of existence. The history of the present is intended to expose the gaps between various types of experiencing and knowing of the world as a means to destabilize assumed and constituted systems of knowledge. A history of the present is designed to "disturb what was previously thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined to be consistent with itself."[17] This project disrupts what local and regional administrators as well as disciplinary scholars hold to be true. It challenges unified discourses about North St. Louis County by foregrounding marginalized voices and researching alternative claims. In this way, processes of subject-making in North St. Louis County were important to this research.

Unified discourses that seek to gain recognition and legitimacy often disqualify, subjugate, and discipline forms of knowledge that do not conform to accepted narratives and valorized data. Alternatively, the fragmented, interconnected yet interrupted, and repetitive methodology that Foucault employs is an 'undisciplining' attempt to avoid the power trap of research and to bring into play disqualified knowledges and genealogical fragments rendered invisible by normative history and theory. This form of genealogical method couples "scholarly erudition and local memories (from below), which allows us to constitute a historical knowledge of struggles and make use of that knowledge in contemporary and future tactics."[18] Along these lines, Foucault praises certain poststructuralist 'insurrections of subjugated knowledge' that he claims are necessary for a true critique of institutional power and norms. However, he cautions that the unmasking of knowledge runs the risk that such knowledges may then be *recolonized* into unitary discourses; or, that the narratives themselves can have their own power-knowledge effects. Disciplines are also in the business of subject-making, and it is important to consider the various ways the researcher is a subject of disciplinary practices. It was therefore important for me to recognize how my twenty-year background in the design disciplines shaped this research and how the various disciplinary engagements I pursued determined what was visible or obscured in this project.

While the process and the parameters of this research were determined by what was needed in order to study specific phenomena, conditions, and relationships in North St. Louis County, this project drew extensively on disciplinary frameworks and fields of

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[16] Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 208.
[17] Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 147.
[18] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended, Lectures at The Collège de France, 1975-1976*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 1997), 8.

knowledge production. These include: urban history, to link contemporary space and policies to historical patterns of development and processes of racialization in space; law and urban planning, to link local policy, politics, policing, and judicial systems to regional governance formations, spatial and political fragmentation, and municipal autonomy; human geography, to link cultural, spatial, and legal practice to the production of real and imagined geographies and particular studies into the racialization of space; and cultural anthropology, to link lived experience and cultural formation to varying forms of subject-making. This project also draws heavily on: Black studies, which reveal larger currents of marginalized experience and histories of racialization; Black feminist theory, which foregrounds intersectional oppressions and has rightly observed that much of the work on racialized people and space omits the experiences and resistance of Black women and girls; queer-of-color critique, which provides a methodological framework for studying the fluidity of identities and pushes the limits of intersectionality beyond traditional boundaries; and critical race/race critical theory,[19] which insists on a rigorous study of race within all modern systems of power. Drawing from my design-thinking background, I also used graphing, diagraming, and mapping to represent information and to see proximities that were otherwise obscured, and to visualize and represent complex webs of relationships, both conceptually and across the research findings.

2.4 Minding the gaps

The departure point of this research was the gap I discovered in North St. Louis County between the experiences of residents and the narratives of leaders regarding what was happening in this area and why. While the prevailing and unified story that was largely accepted within the region for decades was dictated by leadership, administrators, and judges, who downplayed policing practices and blamed unruly residents when asked about complaints of racial profiling and racialized practices, the stories consistently told to me by residents portrayed an almost unimaginable landscape of surveillance and discipline. Furthermore, it became clear that absent policing-for-revenue practices, many cities would cease to exist, a fact that raised more questions regarding the rhetorical rationalizations promoted by leaders and the actual motivations for policing. The gaps that were revealed through 'insurrections of subjugated knowledge'—from residents—raised additional questions regarding seemingly unified discourses within scholarship about suburban and urban space, including an important question of how discursive frames of scholarship also produce and maintain differentiated space. It was clear that in order to study the conditions, struggles, and contested claims in North St. Louis County, I must make use of subjugated knowledges, disqualified histories, and genealogical fragments in order to disturb what was previously thought, or presented, as unified regarding this area. While I relied heavily on conventional methods and sources, including interviews, focus groups,

[19] Critical race theory emerged from critical legal studies in the late 1980's and, among other things, asserts that white privilege and racism are embedded within the legal structures and institutional practices of so-called 'color-blind' Western democracy. See for example, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Thomas Kendall, eds, *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement* (New York: The New Press, 1995). Race critical theory was introduced by Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg and challenges critical race theory to move beyond the disciplinary constraints of legal studies and U.S-centric readings of racialized practices. See for example, Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg, *Race Critical Theories* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Press, 2000).

participant observation, discourse analysis, archives and historical data, public records, and legal documents, the direction and end point of the research were determined by the relationships, variables, and questions that emerged at each step in the research process. The research analysis and writing also needed to foreground the voices, alternative forms of knowledge, and, at times, new gaps that emerged as a result of the study.

The primary challenge of departing from an established disciplinary methodology and adopting an iterative process, which is dependent upon the object of inquiry itself, is that I did not know what the final project would look like or what amount of inquiry was sufficient. This was especially evident when it appeared that I needed to suspend the writing phase of the dissertation and return to the field in 2014, as the heretofore anonymous geography I had struggled to explain to anyone outside of St. Louis literally exploded onto the front pages of newspapers around the world in the aftermath of a 'police-involved' shooting in Ferguson, Missouri. A good social scientist, I was told by some, would keep writing, ignore the noise and commotion, and regroup later. While I did not relish extending the time or the boundaries of the project, I was too deep in the methodological process to ignore the people and events that, once again, represented a forceful insurrection of subjugated knowledge. From the standpoint of allowing these voices to speak and be heard within the work, as well as disturbing new forms of 'unified discourses' arising in response to unrest in Ferguson, the project had to be expanded to include these events. A gap was again exposed between those on the ground and those narrating events and causes. As a result of my return to the field, very different chapters emerged than the ones I had originally planned to write, and I found it necessary to engage an entirely new body of literature including queer-or-color theory, which brought a different and rich dimension to the work.

Another gap that appeared early on in this work was that of my own subjectivity and experience relative to the subjectivities and experiences of residents and leaders in North St. Louis County. Having begun my work in this area as part of a pedagogical praxis to challenge the assumptions and subjectivities of my largely privileged and rarely Black university students regarding the issues and concerns of residents in North St. Louis County, I was prepared to navigate this gap in some respects but not in others. For instance, I found that middle-aged and older residents, regardless of gender or race, were more or less willing to talk to me at length about their experience and assessment of this area. I had the benefit of having invested much time in the area and had produced tangible work in the form of research linking health and the built environment, as well as physical amenities my students had built in this area. As a result, I was able to gain access to older residents through an established network. Young Black residents, however, were often not interested in speaking to a middle-aged white woman claiming to do research on 'the racialization of space.' Given what I already knew about the area, I didn't blame them. So as not to leave these important voices out of the research, I relied on paid research assistants—including three young Black women who were deeply rooted in North St. Louis County and were included in my human subjects approval process—to conduct interviews with younger residents. These same young women were critical to the process of checking me, and my assumptions, with regard to observations, analysis, and findings. Without their help the limitations of this work would be significantly greater. Social media, primarily Twitter and

Facebook, also proved useful to better understand the attitudes and experiences of younger residents; however, these platforms come with their own limitations and concerns for the research. For that reason, I limited my use of social media to look at specific factors already revealed through interviews and first-hand observations.

3. METHODS

Multiple qualitative and quantitative methods were used for the collection, analysis, and synthesis of data over a 10-year period. The combined dataset includes more than forty in-depth interviews of residents and leaders of North St. Louis County prior to 2010; more than twenty interviews with Pagedale residents between 2005 and 2015; more than 100 intercept interviews included within a field study of residents of North St. Louis County between 2013 and 2015; ten interviews with people who witnessed Michael Brown's body in the street; and more than thirty interviews with core members of the Ferguson Protest Movement. Participant observation was used throughout the research process, including a presence at more than fifty meetings and events between 2003 and 2015 and extensive time spent in this area. Historical data were collected from over forty archives, and a large amount of statistical and legal data were collected from public records—including extensive data requested from twenty-five municipal courts through the use of the Missouri Sunshine Law.

3.1 Interviews

Three different interview protocols were carried out over the course of this research in North St. Louis County:

1) Interviews with elected officials (N=18) and residents (N=25) regarding their perceptions and experiences. These occurred over a ten-year period when I was a faculty member at Washington University, between 2000 and 2010. Interviews most often occurred at the interviewee's place of work or as part of service-learning curricula. A few were recorded, but most often interviews were documented through note-taking.
2) Interviews with residents regarding their perceptions and experience of space in North St. Louis County (N=105). This set was subdivided into three additional datasets: Pagedale residents, Ferguson residents, and North St. Louis County residents. These interviews occurred throughout North St. Louis County at transportation hubs, grocery stores, farmer's markets and flea markets, and outside courthouses. These were non-identifying intercept interviews that were not recorded. Basic demographic information was collected at the end of each interview, and responses were documented through note-taking that included relevant information such as body language or circumstances that could be important for the analysis.
3) Interviews with self- or peer-identified leaders in the Ferguson Protest Movement (N=39). These interviews were recorded and respondents were asked if they wished to be named and cited in the research. Although the majority of respondents requested to be cited, the identifying information for several people was not provided to me. In the case of those that wished to remain anonymous or whose information was insufficient to use, pseudonyms were randomly assigned using a pseudonym software.

Additionally, I spoke informally with more than fifty residents over the course of ten years. While their impressions influenced my own assessments of the data, they were not

formally used in the research because they were not part of an interview protocol.

3.2 Participant Observation

Participant observation was used throughout the research process, including participation at more than fifty meetings, events, and protests between 2003 and 2015 and extensive time spent in this area. When possible, notes were taken during events and written up as field notes shortly after attendance. Field notes documented what was occurring at the events but also included all observations regarding people, affect, circumstances, histories, and anything that might be considered important for subsequent analysis. When notetaking would have been a distraction from participation, notes were not taken but field notes were written up later. Field notes were also written up regarding various informal encounters throughout the course of the research. These observations guided the general thoughts and theories I developed about North St. Louis County, which I set about to verify through interviews, public data, and archives. The field notes served as a reference source as well as a reminder of these experiences later in the research process. Field notes from 2002, for example, were invaluable when I was going back later to assess the stated positions of leadership in the area. Not only had my memory of the 2002 events become hazy but the rhetoric used in later years by municipal leadership dramatically changed after protesters had exposed policing practices. Similarly, I had spent much time attending and following events around the de-accreditation of the Normandy School District in 2013, although I was not sure how, or if, it would factor into the project. When I went back to my field notes on this issue in 2016, I saw new relationships and matters of importance that were not evident when these events were occurring.

3.3 Analysis of interviews and observations

Each recorded interview was transcribed and all notes from non-recorded interviews and observations were typed up as individual documents. Each interview and observation set was analyzed using a multi-tiered coding process. Initial themes that emerged from the interviews and observations were identified and coded using MAXQDA research software. Frequent themes were coded for sub-themes multiple times and cross-coded using demographic information in order to see patterns and determine basic findings. Using printouts of the coded interviews, the final analysis of the interview data involved physically engaging the text through a process of color-coding, tabbing, and highlighting excerpts most relevant to emergent themes. This process allowed me to see all of the data together. Since I am a visual thinker, this step was essential for identifying relationships and seeing the dataset as a whole. Non-identifying interviews and data collected from focus groups with residents of North St. Louis County during prior research studies were also recoded based on the questions identified in this project.

3.4 Public records and statistical analysis

Public data served as an important source of information for this project. Much time and a considerable amount of money were spent in obtaining and mining raw data from public records. Even more time was spent in the analysis and representation of findings. Court records were particularly important for understanding and verifying the stories of residents in contrast to the narratives of public officials. The data reported by municipalities to the Missouri Supreme Court was available online but needed to be

relationally disseminated and assembled as a dataset. Much of the information needed was not reported to the Missouri Supreme Court, either because it was not required or because cities were in violation of reporting requirements, as was often the case. In order to obtain important 'public' data, I invoked the Missouri Sunshine Law and made twenty-five requests by letter to municipalities asking for specific policing and court data. No municipalities complied immediately and all required compensation for time and copying services, ranging from twenty dollars to over five hundred dollars. Based on responses, I assessed which data were most important and paid for data from more than half of the twenty-five cities. Many cities simply refused to comply in spite of numerous complaints I submitted to the Missouri Attorney General's office. In spite of the difficulties and non-compliance, the data I did receive proved to be revealing and added to the depth of the project. Under the Missouri Sunshine Law, I also received several months of dockets from the Ferguson Municipal Court, which provided further evidence of oppressive policing practices in Ferguson, as well as revealing new and interesting information regarding which cases were pursued and which were dropped by the Ferguson prosecutor. Legal documents including recent class-action complaints, as well as numerous reports from public investigations, also provided important data.

3.5 Historical archives and oral histories

The archival research used in this project generally focused on the history and formation of North St. Louis County. Much of the primary historical data collected on slavery, litigation, and events in St. Louis City and the larger region did not end up in the dissertation as it fell outside of what were later determined to be the boundaries of the project. The primary historical data that were used in the dissertation largely came from two archives: The Normandy Historical Collection 1912–2005, (29 Boxes), located at the Missouri History Museum Library and Research Center; and Archives of the Normandy Area Historical Association 1923–1982, (42 Folders), in the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, located at the University of Missouri St. Louis. These archives include numerous oral histories from as early as the late 1700s through the 1980s, official municipal histories, maps, advertisements, photos, council meeting minutes and agendas, newspaper clippings, correspondences, journal entries, and scrapbooks. During the course of interviews with older residents, several oral histories were provided regarding the experience and recollections of long-time residents, which provided important first-hand insight into the history and experience of North St. Louis County.

3.6 Media articles and discourse analysis

Over the course of this project I collected and archived more than five hundred newspaper and online publications focused on North St. Louis County. The articles were uploaded to MAXQDA research software and organized by topic and events, which included: economic challenges and the foreclosure crisis, the Normandy School District crisis, events surrounding the death of Michael Brown, Jr., policing and the municipal courts debate, legislation on fines and fees, and legal challenges brought by and against municipalities. Initially, these articles provided basic accounts from secondary sources of events and issues occurring in North St. Louis County. From a research and analysis standpoint, these articles provided important insights into the discursive frames and rhetorical devices operating on a narrative and representational level. Using the research

software, I analyzed how often particular words and phrases were used, and in this way I was able to zero in on the passages within articles where topics of interest to this study were discussed in order to look more specifically at discursive patterns.

3.7 Social media

As a form of discursive and cultural production, and as an easily accessed 'window' into concerns, public personas, and networks of individuals and groups, social media offers both opportunities and limitations for research. Midway through this research, I set up a Twitter account specifically for the project. Over several years I 'followed' people and organizations with specific ties to North St. Louis County. I initially followed people I met or was already aware of but eventually follow others based on the various *networks* that became evident, while attempting to balance differing sides of issues. As mentioned previously with regard to the challenge of engaging young people in this research, Twitter was an important tool for observing opinions and concerns of younger residents. However, unlike interviews, which ask the same set of questions to multiple respondents and can be assessed by limiting variables, a Twitter feed—where issues are broached somewhat randomly, people state opinions they might not convey in conversation, discussions and hashtags often influence content, and the story behind the person posting is largely unknown—can produce incomplete or skewed data. For this reason, I used Twitter in two ways. One was to identify what appeared to be happening, what people seemed to care about, and the tensions that existed within social networks. These observations helped to determine the questions that I asked in the interviews in order to test my observations. The other was to bring issues and topics that were emerging from other datasets to the Twitter platform and search for how those concerns were being discussed among those I was following. I also used Facebook to gain a better understanding of specific individuals and events that surfaced in the research process. Overall, social media was used to broaden what I was learning from other sources but did not drive the specific findings of the project.

4. BLACKNESS-AS-RISK: THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF RACE AND SPACE

As a project that spans disciplines, *Black Lives and Spatial Matters* engages many different bodies of literature and draws from several fields of study. Chapters Three, Four, and Five each contain discussions of specific literatures and discursive spaces that are relied upon and to which the work potentially contributes. Throughout the entire work, the racialization of bodies and space and the cultural politics of race and metropolitan space are consistent themes. What follows is a discussion of some of the ways racialization operates in the urban context and how race and space have been studied over the past century, particularly in the United States. The ways that culture and degrees of citizenship are discursively used to racially mark bodies and space constitute a common thread that emerges in and through the work on race and space, as do the ways in which risk is attached to blackness, especially in the historically distinct era of 'urban insecurity' that appears after 1960.

Instead of arriving at definitions of cultural politics and the racialization of bodies and space, it is more productive here to consider how culture has permeated studies of race and urban space. The ways by which race and space are mutually constitutive are most visible when social, political, and spatial practices within contemporary urban space

are studied in relationship to global histories and mechanisms of colonization, imperial expansion, transatlantic slavery, and capitalist ideology as opposed to simply looking at localized relationships.[20] Both the larger histories and contemporary practices rely on the production of 'disposable populations' to shore up well-honed logics of institutional slavery, low-wage labor, degrees of citizenship, and the procurement and protection of private property. Metropolitan space reinforces and reflects abstract and specific politics of differentiation, all of which employ and conflate culture and race within the context of place and time. New racial logics follow the routes of people, institutions, and sovereign states; however, these logics manifest differently within the specificity of local environments and contestations over cultural norms.

4.1 Constructions of civilization and nature in Enlightenment thinking

Culture has always been a fundamental component of race-making. By the late seventeenth century, philosophers discursively established a racialized vocabulary in which 'reason' and 'civilization' were understood as synonymous with European culture, bodies, and geographies while unreason and savagery provided a culturally and territorially based counterpoint *embodied* in 'non-white' populations and places.[21] This was a critical part of Enlightenment thinking because it established Europe as the frame of reference and Western philosophy as the arbiter of truth. The binary conceptualization of Civilization and Nature was the consistent racializing device employed by Enlightenment philosophy to order the world for its own purposes. The territorialization of bodies mapped degrees of culture and savagery first to geography and national identity and then to physical features explained through climate—with many discussions seeking to reconcile aberrations of skin color, skeletal features, and ingenuity that did not follow the geographical logics within the 'temperate zone,' such as Asians, Native Americans, or displaced Africans.

Hegel, in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, wrote Africa out of history and linked civilization to geography and climate.[22] According to Hegel, Europeans, who were apparently fortunate enough to have been located in the temperate zone, "must furnish the theatre of world history" and had a responsibility, through slavery and colonization, to oversee and civilize 'unfortunate non-Europeans,' although Hegel held little hope for the education of Africans, stating,

> the condition in which they live is incapable of any development or culture….(with) the enormous energy of sensuous arbitrariness which dominates their lives, morality has no determinate influence upon them….We shall therefore leave Africa at his point, and it need not be mentioned again.[23]

Hegel acknowledged philosophically that slavery should not exist within humanity, since "humanity is Freedom" but, he argued, the Negro must be matured

[20] For non U.S-centric studies of race and urban space, see, for example, Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*; Rao, "Post-Industrial Transitions"; Caldeira, *City of Walls*.
[21] Emmanuel Chukwadi Eze, ed. *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1999).
[22] Ibid., 109-149.
[23] Ibid., 142.

into humanity. Thus he located Africans among those he considered less than human. Through a cultural logic linked to territory and humanity, Hegel helped to establish the tenets of many racisms to come. These include: slavery is an improved state of being for the African; Europeans have a responsibility to manage a race whose humanity is in question; Africans, through no fault of their own, are devoid of culture and possess only a sensuous arbitrariness that is morally deficient; and Africa itself is completely erased from any hierarchy of world order, with the exception of European and Asian conquests. These logics persist today including in North St. Louis County but are manifested differently. For example, some municipal leaders in North St. Louis County argue that any circumstance is an improved state from that of the 'urban ghetto,' that they have a responsibility to manage and teach an 'urban population,' and the cultural inferiorities of "people moving from the projects," are justification for extreme policing practices.[24]

The cultural politics of race in Enlightenment philosophy also included a foreshadowing of antiracist emancipatory discourses. Responding to David Hume's 1754 publication "Of National Characters," James Beattie takes exception to Hume's argument that all species of men are inferior to whites and to Hume's statement, "there never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white."[25] Beattie calls out the double-bind condition of the Black subject, stating,

> That a negro-slave, who can neither read nor write….and who has not a friend on earth, but is universally considered and treated as if he were a species inferior to the human – that such a creature should so distinguish himself among Europeans, as to be talked of throughout the world as a man of genius, is surely no reasonable expectation…. (It) is just as rational as to suppose a private European to be an inferior species because he has not raised himself to the condition of royalty.[26]

Beattie critiqued the Enlightenment maxim that anything outside of European culture was barbarous, pointing to numerous European practices of 'brute barbarity' and taking a position not unlike Aimé Césaire's argument that colonial violence illustrated the inhumanity of the colonizer.[27] Beattie's clear challenge to the institution of slavery while holding up the British Empire as "the bravest, most generous people on earth" whose love of liberty was beyond all nations ancient or modern, is ironic given what we know about British Imperialism.[28] Convenient oversights are typical, however, in the cultural politics and history of race, and white liberal politics today continues to miss the contradictions between thought and action.

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[24] This is discussed later in the chapter.
[25] In Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*, 36.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000 [1972]).
[28] In Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*, 37.

The debates between Kant and his former student Herder animate some of the important divergences within Enlightenment philosophy that, like Beattie's critique, allowed openings for antiracist thinking. Kant's emphasis on reason as the primary source of historical meaning was inverted by Herder, who believed that truth existed *a priori* of reason, leaving it up to the philosopher to discover rather than produce meaning. This difference was essential to Herder's position of cultural pluralism, which maintained that all cultures were equally endowed with meaning and truth (although, in practice, meaning and truth were differentially assigned). Physical race, through nature and climate, assigned bodily capabilities, but Herder released culture from nature, equating culture with nationhood. Herder's version of organic nationalism based on shared cultural histories invokes anticolonial projects of Pan Africanism (Du Bois) and Negritude (Césaire and Fanon) that rely on shared histories of diaspora to explain culture and the memory of a shared homeland (these projects will be discussed later in this section). However, unlike Black nationalists, Herder used the conception of 'nation,' which was dependent upon shared language and culture, as a means to obscure class divisions and promote empire.[29]

4.2 Race and space in U.S. cities

Roughly a century after the beginning of the French Revolution, which many scholars cite as the end of the Enlightenment era, a critical period emerged in the United States in which race, culture, and place were visibly reconfigured in metropolitan space. As the nineteenth century came to a close, the failed Reconstruction era denied the benefits of full citizenship and personhood to Black Americans, and white backlash to Reconstruction policy developed new and virulent forms of everyday racisms based on old tropes in order to reestablish racial hierarchies in a post-slavery society.[30] The city has always been a location of exclusion and assimilation; however, the shaping of twentieth-century U.S. cities reveals the specific work space performed as a tool of racial exclusion, on one hand, and ethnic assimilation on the other. This relegation of different races to different places occurred at a certain moment in history when formal racial codes were threatened and increasing numbers of European immigrants were entering the United States. Working in tandem with frames of culture and fitness for citizenship, metropolitan space and spatial practices sorted populations based on those that could be safely absorbed into white society and white space, those that must be contained in and through space, and those that occupied the marginal spaces in between. For example, the space of the ghetto, which was originally produced as a space of ethnic containment, was racialized according to evolving

[29] Cedric Robinson traces constructions of difference (such as of race and class) beyond the advent of slavery and challenges Eurocentric understandings of history and Enlightenment philosophy in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (London: Zed Press, 1983).

[30] Immediately following the Civil War, the federal government under a Republican-led congress helped to establish coalition governance in the South in order to amend state constitutions and pass legislation ensuring civil rights to all Black citizens as part of the terms of re-entry to the Union by southern states, known as Reconstruction. White backlash, including increasing activity and lynchings carried out by the Ku Klux Klan, led to legislative take-over by the Democratic Party and the passage of segregationist policy known as Jim Crow laws in the South. The removal of federal troops from the South through the Compromise of 1877 solidified the defeat of Abolition Democracy. Black migration to northern cities following the war also led to formal and informal policy and practices in the North that confined black residents in crowed and subpar urban spaces.

spatial logics aimed at undermining Black citizenship and came to be understood as the urban container of 'risk' posed by populations of color.[31]

At the same time that racial meanings were shifting within the space of the city, the boundaries of white citizenship were broadened to encompass ethnic Europeans through the occupation of equally racialized 'white space'—especially within the space and imagination of the suburbs in the late 1800s and into the first half of the twentieth century. The imagined space of the early twentieth-century suburbs developed in counter distinction to the dark space of city. While the ghetto was always viewed as a space of containment—an urban form of incarceration—the suburbs offered 'protection'—a space that could only be penetrated by those who posed no threat. The power of spatial imaginaries to link culture, race, and people through metropolitan space is easily understood when we consider the layers of meaning attached to simple codifications of metropolitan areas in the United States today, such as the suburbs, the ghetto, and 'the inner-city.'

4.3 Early anthropology and urban sociology

While culture has been fundamentally part of racial constructions of difference for as long as race has existed as a concept, new forms of cultural politics in the United States were necessary to maintain racial hierarchies when legal policies that relied on inherited markers were challenged. The fields of sociology and anthropology in the first half of the twentieth century did much of the work to locate racial difference more formally within the fluid realm of culture rather than as fixed biological difference, although the field of anthropology was in many ways founded on describing and sorting biologically defined groups. Scholars contributing to the early field of cultural anthropology developed logics of racial apologia, which in turn created new cultural hierarchies linked to race. Franz Boas, for example, categorically dismissed evolutionary hierarchies and, like Beattie, argued for a cultural relativism that did not qualify different cultures as necessarily better or worse. Boas, however, managed to provide the intellectual landscape of cultural hierarchy by which Native American culture was deemed worthy of preservation while African American culture was reinforced as disposable.[32] Similarly, Boas's student Ruth Benedict, who focused her career on debunking scientific racism and showing how race is constructed for the sake of power, would also state in 1940 that "great numbers of negroes were not ready for full citizenship."[33]

Some scholars working on antiracist projects from a sociological perspective also sought to debunk phenotypical markers by shifting discussions to that which could change—culture and rights of citizenship—as opposed to that which was represented as a given—biology. For example, W. E. B. Du Bois used the frame of fitness for citizenship in his

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[31] Loïc Wacquant discusses the emergence of the Black American ghetto of the Fordist United States in relationship to histories of 'the ghetto' as a space of ethnic containment, in "A Janus-Faced Institution of Ethnoracial Closure: A Sociological Specification of the Ghetto," *The Ghetto: Contemporary Global Issues and Controversies*, eds. Ray Hutchison and Bruce D. Haynes (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012), 1–32.
[32] An in-depth analysis of the influence and consequences of the work of Franz Boas can be found in Lee D. Baker, *Anthropology and the Racial Politics of Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
[33] Ruth Benedict, *Race: Science and Politics* (New York: Modern Age Books, 1940), 154.

early essay "The Conservation of Races," which argued against biological differentiation of the Negro while also suggesting that the Negro at the turn of the twentieth century was not ready for full citizenship.[34] In this early work Du Bois is still tied to Enlightenment concepts of civilization as he debates the degree to which the Negro race has contributed to civilized culture. From the standpoint of culture, nation, and citizenship, he discusses both the extent to which the Negro is American and the limits to that identity. Du Bois's conceptualization of double consciousness is important in that it operates at the level of a subjective self versus the objectified other, in addition to theorizing dual national identities—that of the American and, more importantly, the Pan-Negro. The emphasis Du Bois places in the second half of the essay on racial uplift and the sociological vices of the Negro also responded to popular iconography of cultural degeneracy in the late Victorian era.[35]

Du Bois's "The Conservation of the Races" closely coincided with his extensive sociological study of Negro settlement and experience in Philadelphia. This study looks at the specific problems facing Black residents of Philadelphia through multiple lenses.[36] *The Philadelphia Negro* is one of the earliest sociological studies to formally link race and space and to acknowledge that all Black people in the United States—indeed, even in one city—do not have the same experience. Using multiple datasets including household surveys, neighborhood audits and maps, and census data, Du Bois shows that differing experiences are tied to location, environment, class, education, and family, and he illustrates a multiplicity of social structures across the Black community in Philadelphia. As in Du Bois's other early work, racial uplift and moralizations based on class distinctions and behavior are evident throughout, with language concerning the "untutored race in whose hand lay an unfamiliar instrument of civilization."[37] While civilization is a prevailing frame, Du Bois links 'the problems of the Negro' to physical and social segregation within *the city*, which would establish the analytical tools for urban sociology several decades later.

As culture and civilization continued as dominant reference points in early twentieth-century discourse and analysis of race and space, these frames were also becoming increasingly important analytics in the emerging fields of urban studies and urban sociology. The fetishization of Cartesian mapping and quantitative analysis of physical urban space by Enlightenment thinkers intersected with the growing subfield of

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[34] W. E. B. Du Bois delivered his speech "The Conservation of Races" to the organizational meeting of the American Negro Academy on March 5, 1897. The speech reinforced his support of Alexander Crummell as the first president of the academy and was a refutation of Frederick Douglas's assimilationist discourse. The speech echoed Crummell's belief that a return to the culture of pre-slavery African civilization would uplift the entire race with the help of an elite group of leaders. Du Bois would formalize his notion of the 'talented tenth' in an essay of the same name in 1903. See Du Bois, "The Conservation of the Races," *Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois Reader*, Eric J. Sundquist, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996[1897]), 38–47; Du Bois, "The Talented Tenth," in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative America Negroes of To-day* (New York: J. Pott & Co., 1903), 33–75.

[35] See Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[36] Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996 [1899]).

[37] Ibid.

urban sociology in early twentieth-century scholarship. Clearly using yet not referencing DuBois's observations and methodology in his study of Philadelphia, scholars began to conceptualize the city as an 'urban ecology' of social interaction, assimilation, and exclusion. Most notably with regard to the early confluence of spatial and social studies, the Chicago School of Sociology under the direction of Robert E. Park and Earnest W. Burgess literally mapped race, culture, and ethnicity onto the physical space of Chicago as a way to analyze social relations in the city.[38] This method identified areas where clear physical and cultural boundaries contained distinct racial groups that, due to markers of blackness, 'naturally' defied assimilationist logics.[39] Burgess also diagramed areas (Figure 1.2) that formed concentric circles around the inner city where more porous boundaries allowed for the passage of ethnic Europeans out of the slums, which he describes as "the purgatory of 'lost souls,'" and toward the "Promised Land" of normative white society and space beyond the city center.[40]

[38] See Robert E. Park, Ernest W. Burgess, and Roderick D. McKenzie, *The City: Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1925).
[39] Scholars such as David Roediger and George Lipsitz have traced how ethnic European and Jewish immigrants to the United States became part of white society in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through spatial means and in contrast to the racialization of Black space. See, for example, David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1999); Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Benefit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005).
[40] Earnest W. Burgess, "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project," in *The City: Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1925), 56.

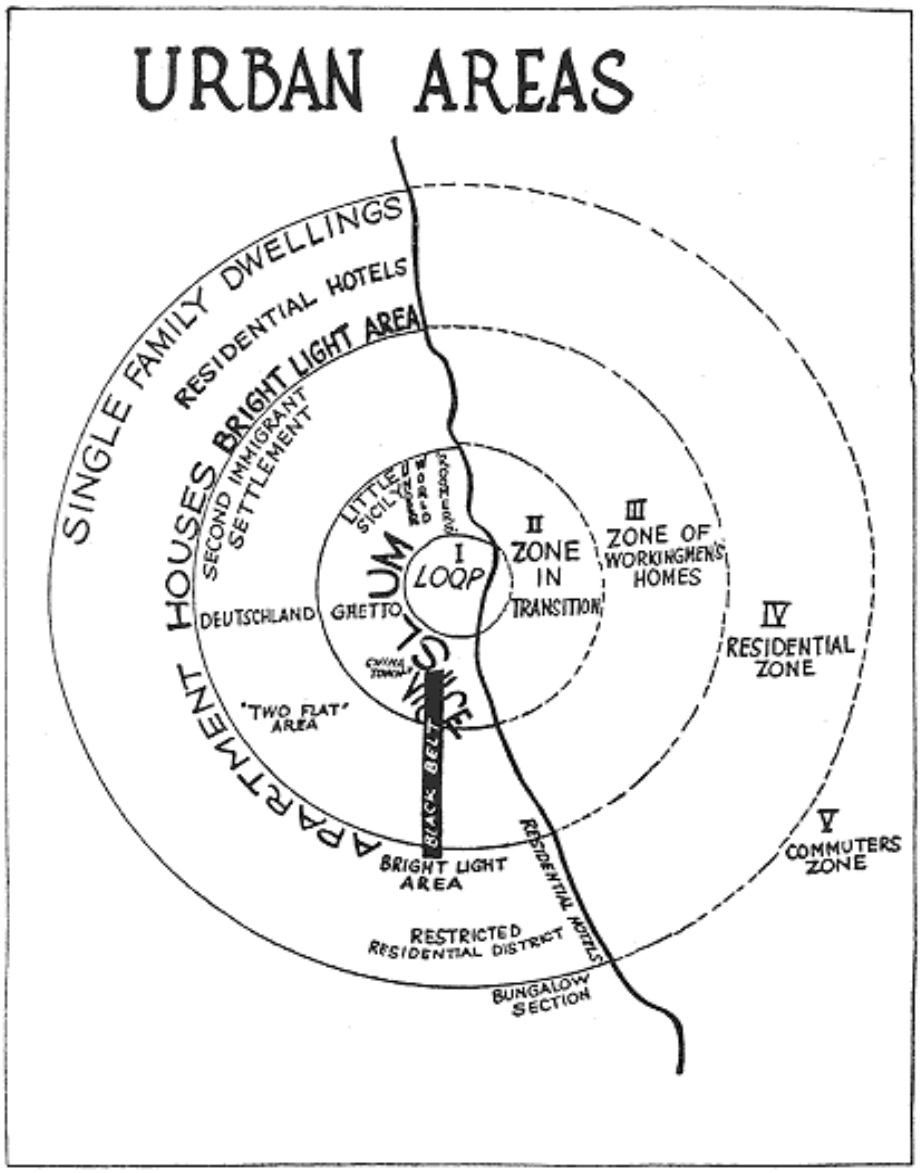

Figure **1.2**. Diagram of Chicago by Earnest W. Burgess (source: "The Growth of the City").[41]

In 1937, urban historian and sociologist Lewis Mumford published what would become an influential essay titled "What is a City?" This piece appeared to translate what had become the mantra of modernist architecture, "form follows function,"[42] into the urban scale.[43] Ironically, Mumford was a critic of modernism and believed modernist design brought about what he saw as the destruction of cohesive cultures and the dehumanization of urban space resulting in urban social ills. Instead, Mumford argued for the form of the city to respond to the social interactions and cultural requirements of its inhabitants at the

[41] Burgess, "The Growth of the City," 55.
[42] This is credited to the early modernist architect Louis Sullivan.
[43] Lewis Mumford, "What is a City?" in *The City Reader*, Richard T. LeGates and Frederick Stout, eds. (New York: Routledge, 1996[1937]), 183–96.

scale of the human. The success of Mumford's work and others who followed his lead as critics of modernist planning, such as Jane Jacobs, did much to discursively link social and physical space in urban studies and design disciplines. In another ironic twist, however, modernists would use arguments like Mumford's, linking social and physical space, to justify the clearing of 'non-white' areas they claimed were ridden with pathological behaviors to make way for infrastructure projects aimed at expanding the suburbs and to build urban housing projects that were supposed to solve urban social problems through design.[44]

A year after Mumford published "What is a City?," the Chicago School sociologist Louis Wirth published another urban critique titled "Urbanism as a Way of Life," which argued that space actively produces different types of social interactions and "personalities" within the city. Wirth believed that the modern city encourages individualism, anonymity, superficial relationships, and fictional kinships between people.[45] The analyses of both Mumford and Wirth drew upon the Garden City movement[46] and operated from an urban/rural binary, which tended to judge 'good space' as closer to nature, whereas 'bad space' existed outside of the natural or the human. The discursive power of the 'suburban spatial imaginary' that was developing at the same time used a similar frame and viewed the city as crowded, dirty, chaotic, and the container of questionable humanity. In contrast to the city, the spaces of garden developments and the new suburbs were celebrated for their lack of population density, their clean air, their orderly space, and the white 'humanity' found within them. In all of these examples, culture was used to signify race and to distinguish between good and bad space, while also reinforcing connections between 'more human' and 'less human' spaces and people. Paradoxical to Enlightenment constructions and contemporary tropes of race, where nature was equated with the uncivilized and closer to the 'less-than-human' races and cultures, discourses that emerged from the Garden City movement re-signified nature and theorized suburban space as the 'most human' environment in order to promote settlements outside of the urban core.[47]

Soon after Mumford and Wirth published essays on the city, E. Franklin Frazier (also a student of the Chicago School) published *The Negro Family in the United States* in 1939,

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[44] The urban planning policies carried out by Robert Moses in the tri-borough area of New York City are a good example of this approach. For discussions regarding the politics behind differing views of urban planning in New York City during the 'Moses era,' see *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*, eds. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson (New York: WW Norton, 2008).

[45] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 1 (1938): 1–24.

[46] By the end of the nineteenth century, overcrowding and poverty in industrializing cities around the world began to be blamed on urban space rather than on the processes of urbanization. This attitude intersected with the romanticization of landscape in art and social culture. As architects and city planners took to theorizing utopian cities, Sir Ebenezer Howard published *To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898 in the United Kingdom, which initiated his theory of the garden city—a cluster of low-density radiating plans that incorporated housing, industry, and agriculture. The Garden City movement that followed Howard's ideas influenced planning in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century and contributed to what was a growing disdain for urban space and people throughout the century to come.

[47] See Iyko Day, *Alien Capital*, for a discussion of how nature came to signify whiteness (against the urban setting and its dark-complected peoples) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

which, like DuBois's *The Philadelphia Negro*, more specifically linked race to space and culture and, unlike the work of Park and Burgess, went beyond viewing Black space in strictly pathological terms.[48] Frazier intended the book as a historical analysis of forces shaping the domestic cultures of Black families migrating from the rural South to northern cities, and he attributed these forces to social rather than racial factors. Contrary to Mumford and Wirth, Frazier did not romanticize rural space and equated 'rural' with slave culture, which had in his view made Black migrants from the South less civilized than Black people in the North. As he saw it, Southern Negros were detrimental to culturally advanced urban Black social structures. Like the early writings of DuBois, Frazier's work embraced the theme of racial uplift while also bringing nuance to understandings of Black identity and culture. Frazier's decoupling of all Black experience was still a needed counterpoint to the tendency by both white scholars and Black nationalist activists and scholars to lump blackness within a singular definition.[49] In a similar vein, St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton published an extensive ethnography in 1945 looking at the complex social structures and spaces of Black Chicago. Drake and Cayton looked with particular interest at class distinctions within the Black community, with specific attention paid to space. Although Frazier, Drake, and Cayton were sympathetic to the Black community and intended to add levels of complexity to views of Black culture and identity while holding white society accountable for the plight of Black citizens, these two publications would help establish the grounds on which social pathologies linked to Black people and Black space would be staked and reinterpreted by white policymakers for state purposes twenty years later.

In the same period that Chicago School sociologists were producing detailed descriptions of everyday life in Black communities with an emphasis on social patterns often linked to social pathologies, another student of the Chicago School, Oliver C. Cox, made different observations regarding social dynamics. Cox argued that racial disparities and antagonisms were caused by the forces of capitalism and by the "peculiar type of economic exploitation characteristic of capitalist society," rather than by social differences or cultural deficiencies.[50] While culture and urban space did not explicitly factor into Cox's work, culture was an important part of the discursive space of the Black Radical tradition, of which Cox was part. Around the same time, an older DuBois approached culture in a much different way than in his early work. Forty-three years after his work on racial uplift, DuBois shed his Enlightenment skin with respect to 'civilization' and returned to "The Concept of Race" in 1940, now situated within his own experience and through the prism of the racial narratives of his ancestors.[51] DuBois theorized a diasporic Pan-Africanism and held that the imaginative capacity of memory and struggle culturally links groups of people to specific geographies across time and space. According to this view, "the fact of race" emerges as a response to racialized struggle and is a product of shared histories, memories, and culture.

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[48] E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1939).
[49] For an in-depth discussion regarding the contributions of Frazier's work, see Anthony M. Platt, *E. Franklin Frazier Reconsidered* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991).
[50] Oliver C. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race: A Study in Social Dynamics* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1959), xxxi.
[51] Du Bois, "The Concept of Race," in *Dusk of Dawn* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2011[1940]).

Similar to DuBois's theorizing of a Pan-Africanism and embrace of blackness as experience, Aimé Césaire's incitement to discourse from an anticolonial perspective conceptualized Negritude as "a violent affirmation" of shared blackness and a culture of freedom.[52] Similarly, Frantz Fanon equated liberation with the emplaced and embodied cultural expression of the liberated—a creative culture of struggle and resistance in contrast to the repressive culture of an oppressor.[53] For Fanon, culture is constituted by the collective practices of a people to "describe, justify, and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence."[54] Cultural practice is therefore rooted in struggle—the struggle for or against freedom. Theorizing a national cultural consciousness, which he clearly stated is not nationalism, Fanon held that culture both transforms, and is transformed by, struggle within the context of group domination and subjugation. Understood in this way, racist and antiracist practices do not just employ or deny culture, they are in fact culture itself. For Fanon's project, this meant reconceptualizing what blackness was, in relationship to re-written histories and present and future possibilities for nationhood and collective identity. Indeed, throughout the first half of the twentieth century a Black Radical tradition rooted in memory, emplacement, cultural expression, and activism was nurtured by many, including numerous Black women, such as Ida B. Wells, Charlotta Bass, and Lorraine Hansberry, to name a few. In sum, these works challenged the orthodox dogma of the Chicago School and other disciplinary studies of race by shifting the discursive use of culture to embrace cultural difference and affirm blackness. Since racist practice tends to co-opt antiracist efforts, this also opened a space for liberal multiculturalism and forms of ethnic absolutism to enter, as will be discussed later in this chapter.[55]

4.4 The war on blackness: constructions of the neoliberal city

Daniel Patrick Moynihan did not appear to have much knowledge of the rich work Black Radical scholars had produced on Black culture and space when he selectively drew from the work of E. Franklin Frazier and used anthropologist Oscar Lewis's 1959 coinage 'the culture of poverty' (used in reference to Mexican villages)[56] to draft his 1965 report *The Negro Family—A Case for Action*.[57] Written in conjunction with the Johnson

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[52] Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, 89.
[53] Frantz Fanon, "On National Culture," in *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004 [1961]).
[54] Ibid. , 233.
[55] This idea has been addressed by many scholars interested in cultural racism. See, for example, Stuart Hall, "The Multicultural Question," *Pavis Papers in Social and Cultural Research* (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 2001); Paul Gilroy, "Nationalism, History and Ethnic Absolutism," *History Workshop Journal*, n. 30 (Autumn, 1990): 114–20.
[56] Oscar Lewis's ethnography, *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty*, was published in 1959 and argued that generations of poverty create cultural distinctions that preclude individuals and groups from escaping the underclass. Lewis later wrote on Puerto Rican culture in Puerto Rico and New York, arguing essentially the same point. See "The Culture of Poverty," *Scientific American* 215, no. 4 (October 1966): 19–25.
[57] Office of Policy, Planning, and Research, United States Department of Labor, "The Negro Family: The Case For National Action (March 1965)." A digital copy of the report can be found at https://web.stanford.edu/~mrosenfe/Moynihan's%20The%20Negro%20Family.pdf.

administration's 'war on poverty,'[58] the report illustrated how scholarship that seeks to ameliorate conditions of racial oppression can be strategically reinterpreted to aid and abet policy and rhetoric that absolve the state and blame victims. It also began what would become a long history of policy 'wars' discursively and literally aimed at discrediting and criminalizing blackness and Black citizens in and through urban space.

Although the report named slavery as the underlying evil and credited the Negro with "not dying out," it framed the Negro population rather than the color line for ongoing problems in American society due to what Moynihan identified as cultural inferiority. Claiming that Negro culture inherently deviates from heteronormative family structures, Moynihan placed the 'Negro matriarch' at the center of a 'tangled pathology' of social deviance.[59] The report emphasized and quoted Frazier's use of 'disorganization' to characterize both the 'Negro' family and the result of Black migration to the North:

> "The impact of hundreds of thousands of rural southern Negroes upon northern metropolitan communities presents a bewildering spectacle. Striking contrasts in levels of civilization and economic well-being among these newcomers to modern civilization seem to baffle any attempt to discover order and direction in their mode of life."[60]

Not coincidentally, the report appeared at a time when growing impatience within the Black community was pressuring lawmakers to pass and enforce Civil Rights legislation, and growing unrest in the United States was creating difficulties for the administration. Moynihan's re-presentation of Frazier's 'disorder' and the conclusions drawn regarding an inherently inferior Negro culture was read against a backdrop of media images portraying disorder in the streets of Black neighborhoods, Black people confronting authorities, increasing solidarity with the Black Power Movement, and visible public frustration over the war in Vietnam. Almost fifty years later, similar language, in some cases recalling verbatim the language and rhetoric of disorganization, has been used to single out the failure of Black mothers (matriarchs) and the absence of heteronormative families in Ferguson, Missouri. This has occurred against the backdrop of images depicting angry Black residents.[61]

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[58] In his state of the union address of 1964, President Lynden Johnson declared a 'war on poverty,' which was intended to introduce his platform for broad legislation aimed at "curing and preventing" the causes of poverty rather than responding to its effects.

[59] Moynihan lays out this argument in Chapter 4 of the report, entitled "The Tangle of Pathology," which begins with a section on the problems of Negro 'Matriarchy.'

[60] Office of Policy, Planning, and Research, United States Department of Labor, "The Negro Family," 18.

[61] In the analysis I did of a small sampling of representations of Michael Brown, Jr.'s mother, Lezley McSpadden, by commentators in media outlets that are not specifically identified as promoting 'right-wing' viewpoints, more than seventy-five percent of commentators blamed Ms. McSpadden for her son's death or implied that her lack of competency as a mother and in her own life contributed to his demise. Of that seventy-five percent, over one half of the comments used the language of respectability to indict Brown's mother, stating that, had McSpadden taught her son proper respect for authority, had she not been a pregnant teenager or a single mother who got married the month before his death, had she conducted herself properly without head-to-toe tattoos or suggestive clothing, and had she been properly employed and not milking welfare, then her son would not have exhibited animal-like behaviors and would be alive today. Although her son's father, Michael Brown, Sr., was interviewed as well and sat next to Ms. McSpadden in the interviews, the

The legislation credited to the Johnson administration's 'war on poverty' prior to 1970 included tangible poverty interventions;[62] however, the discourse promoted by the Moynihan report ushered in, and shored up, two decades of federal and state legislation that subsequently hollowed out new public programs and dealt a substantial blow to prior New Deal-era public policy. Shifting subsidies to the private sector and criminalizing non-conforming individuals and groups, the war on poverty quickly morphed into the 'war on drugs' under the Nixon administration in 1971. According to an interview given by one of Nixon's top advisors, John Ehrlichman, the 'war on drugs' targeted the two most visible opponents of the administration, hippies and Black people. Ehrlichman told Dan Baum of *Harper's Magazine* in 1994,

> We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities . . . arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about drugs? Of course we did."[63]

While the criminalization of Black citizens was not new, post-emancipation methods in the United States had operated primarily through overtly constructed Jim Crow segregation laws or through accepted forms of violence, such as lynching and intimidation by white mobs and individuals. These forms of criminalization and violence used the fear of contamination (racial mixing) and the fear of violation (of white women) as the primary rhetorical devices to maintain hierarchies. The 'war on poverty' and subsequent 'war on drugs' expanded the threat that Black bodies posed in the white imagination by framing the entire group as a threat to American ideals, exceptionalism, and economic success. Both initiatives placed Black citizens outside of heteronormative social structures. As the excerpt above reveals and geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore has shown, this rhetoric was not motivated merely by personal racist attitudes. It also served as an important political tactic for quelling resistance and bolstering the U.S. economy through prison expansion developed from surpluses of finance capital, labor, land, and state capacity.[64] Areas of cities

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comments regarding responsibility for Michael Brown's character aimed exclusively at his mother, whereas his father was a target for fomenting racial unrest.

[62] Four pieces of legislation are considered to be the major policies passed as part of the Johnson administration's war on poverty: 1) the Social Security Amendments of 1965, which created Medicare and Medicaid and expanded Social Security benefits for several vulnerable groups; 2) the Food Stamp Act of 1964, which formalized the temporary food stamp program already in place; 3) the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, establishing the Job Corps, VISTA program, and several other programs including federal work-study for college students and Head Start for pre-K ages; 4) the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which created Title I subsidies for school districts educating impoverished students and other education-focused programs.

[63] Dan Baum, "Legalize It All: How to win the war on drugs," *Harper's Magazine* (April 2016): 1. This article can be accessed at http://harpers.org/archive/2016/04/legalize-it-all/1/

[64] Ruth Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). See also, Jordan Camp, *Incarcerating the Crisis: Freedom Struggles and the Rise of the Neoliberal State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016); Naomi Murakawa, *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); and Elizabeth Hinton,

where Black residents were forced to live because of longstanding racist policies—such as exclusionary zoning, racial covenants, lending biases, and real estate practices—were also coded as places where cultures of poverty, drugs, and deviance coalesced.

The 'war on drugs' was picked up in earnest and expanded in 1981by the Reagan administration, which filled in the gaps to establish a full set of legislative teeth for the criminalization of the Black family. With the help of the "Just Say No" campaign spearheaded by the first lady, Black men were incarcerated at exponentially increasing rates for non-violent offenses throughout the 1980s and blamed for drug epidemics that hit Black communities especially hard, while a steady flow of illicit drugs made their way to white suburban communities with few consequences. The criminalization of space became an increasingly important factor in the criminalization of citizens-of-color, a process that went hand in hand with rhetorical representations of space and associations with chaos and dysfunction. At his 1981 address to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Ronald Reagan invoked the 'urban jungle' and 'dark impulses' of moral degeneracy, stating, "only our deep moral values and strong institutions can hold back that jungle and restrain the darker impulses of human nature."[65] People in entire areas of a city were associated with crime by virtue of where they lived while space itself was criminalized based on the predominant race of those who lived there. Zero tolerance policing policies in urban areas and pressure from local and state politicians to build more prisons meant that the prison industrial complex became a local enterprise.[66] The blocking of syringe access programs in inner-city neighborhoods at the same time coincided with the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS and added gay culture to criminalized bodies and urban space. Meanwhile, Black women were represented as the bane of the welfare system—accused of refusing to work, milking the system, emasculating their men, and pumping out deviant children in order to increase their status as 'welfare queens.'[67]

As rationales for diverting federal and state funding away from social programs were honed, federal and state funds to cities—especially older urban cores—were also substantially cut throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Government spending on subsidized housing, community development, and tax incentives for urban revitalization was highly contested at both the federal and state levels. Many programs that did exist contained loopholes by which funds were funneled to, and through, private investment or came with significant strings attached aimed at social conformity. Associating public housing with

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From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

[65] Cited in Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 308.

[66] The term 'prison industrial complex' is derived from, and related to, the earlier term 'military industrial complex,' famously used by President Eisenhower to describe the link between corporate interests and government policy in expanding military presence and spending. Angela Davis states, "taking into account the structural similarities of business-government linkages in the realms of military production and public punishment, the expanding penal system can now be characterized as a 'prison industrial complex.'" See Angela Davis, "Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex," *Color Lines* (September 10, 1998).

[67] For an in-depth discussion of the criminalization of Black women and welfare reform discourse, see Ange-Marie Hancock, *The Politics of Disgust: The Public Identity of the Welfare Queen* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

crime and people of color, while also vastly underfunding basic maintenance of housing projects, made it possible to blame highly publicized failures of subsidized housing on residents. One of the iconic images used to illustrate the failure of the public housing program featured the demolition of thirty-three high rise buildings in the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis between 1972 and 1976 (which increased Black relocation into North St. Louis County).[68] As projects were demolished, President Nixon declared a moratorium on all new construction of public housing in 1973. In spite of continued underfunding of housing policy following the Nixon era, it is important to note that grass roots community initiatives partially filled the housing gap by creatively taking advantage of policy that encouraged public/private partnerships and by forming non-profit corporations that took on large-scale projects.[69]

By the 1980s, government funding to cities was increasingly directed toward policing and surveillance activities that protected private property and capitalist enterprise. This mirrored global trends toward militarizing public space—increasing surveillance of citizens while suppressing democratic dissent—under a banner of stamping out threats to democratic ideals. The goal of ensuring unfettered flows of global capital through racialized logics and cultural politics is what Cedric Robinson has dubbed "racial capitalism," which is dependent upon racialized narratives of difference developed over many centuries of world history to connect civilization, conquest, and exploitation in the interest of capital.[70] The culture of poverty thesis that relies on these racial narratives was reinforced within public discourse and academic scholarship, although it was highly critiqued by many antiracist projects, including Robinson's. The continued impact of Chicago School theory on the discipline of sociology, combined with the influence of some ideas from Marxist economics, contributed to a decoupling of race and class in explanations of cultural barriers and inequalities. A shift began away from racially based paradigms of anti-blackness toward paradigms focused on class difference and structures of the state. The dominance of white male scholars in mid-century sociological studies was also called out by Black feminist scholars and Black sociologists. Some or the work of Black sociologists also linked 'pathologies of culture' to class, with race appearing as secondary, such as in the work of William Julius Wilson and Elijah Anderson.[71]

When race *was* discussed in earnest within the field of sociology and proximate fields, the discourse was often framed by the highly influential 1986 publication *Racial*

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[68] See Mary C. Comerio, "Pruitt-Igoe and Other Stories," *Journal of Architectural Education* 34, no. 4 (1981): 26–31; Katharine G. Bristol, "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth," *Journal of Architectural Education* 44, no. 3 (1991): 163–171.

[69] The most important funding sources that community development agencies could tap were the Community Development Block Grant (1974), the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (1986), and HOME funds from the National Affordable Housing Act (1990). These and other tools were also misused to aid developers with little impact on low income communities. The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) incentive is one example of a tool that can easily be redirected away from its intended use.

[70] Robinson, *Black Marxism*.

[71] See, for example, William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, Underclass, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Elijah Anderson, *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City* (New York: Norton, 1999).

Formation in the United States, by Michael Omi and Howard Winant.[72] Taking a Gramscian approach to hegemony—defined as the power (of the state) to naturalize the values and norms of a dominant group in order to maintain dominance—Omi and Winant argue that race is a manifestation of specific 'racial projects' that use particularized notions—racial formations—of ethnicity, class, and citizenship to reinforce white racial hegemony. While Omi and Winant contribute important conceptual framings regarding the flexibility and political motivations of racial construction, some argue their work did much to decouple race from racism and deemphasizes global histories regarding the 'fungibility' of specifically 'black life.'[73] Critiques of Omi and Winant's 'racial formation theory' argue that, while it explains formations, it does not sufficiently explain why they are formed, it problematically deemphasizes the work of whiteness, and it overemphasizes certain racial projects;[74] that it is overdetermined by state politics;[75] that it lacks the tools to look at deep foundations and layered complexities by simplifying the formation process, and, the role of white actors is not sufficiently addressed;[76] that it does not attend to "affective-cultural assemblages"—the everydayness of racial experience and essentializes identity;[77] and that it requires additive measures in order to address the gaps.[78]

More recently, critiques of racial formation theory have come from Black studies and queer-of-color theory that argue against the concept of 'racial democracy' embraced by Omi and Winant and insist that race cannot exist independently from racism.[79] P. Khalil Saucier and Tyron P. Woods also argue against the concept of 'racial optimism,' stating, "Omi and Winant are racial optimists because they insist on the general progressive trajectory of racial politics, despite evidence to the contrary."[80] Using the example of impunity that police officer Darren Wilson had when he shot and killed a Black unarmed teenager, Michael Brown, in Ferguson, Missouri, Saucier and Woods argue that,

> the structure and method of fungible blackness exceeds the grasp of racial formation theory; it lies in the shadows cast by liberalism's conceptual aphasia in black. Whereas liberalism presumes that subjects experience

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[72] Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Third Edition (New York: Routledge, 2014).
[73] P. Khalil Saucier and Tyron P. Woods, "Racial Optimism and the Drag of Thymotics," in *Conceptual Aphasia in Black: Displacing Racial Formation*, eds. Saucier and Woods (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 1-34.
[74] Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "More Than Prejudice: Restatement, Reflections, and New Directions in Critical Race Theory," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1, no. 1 (2015): 75-89; Bonilla-Silva, "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation," *American Sociological Review* 63, no. 3 (1997): 465-480.
[75] E. San Juan, *Racial Formations/Critical Transformations: Articulations of Power in Ethnic and Racial Studies in the United States* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1994).
[76] Joe Feagin and Sean Elias, "Rethinking Racial Formation Theory: A Systemic Racism Critique," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 6 (2013): 931-960.
[77] James Thomas, "Affect and the Sociology of Race: a Program for Critical Inquiry," *Ethnicities* 14, no. 1 (February 2014): 72-90:74.
[78] Daniel HoSang, Oneka LaBennett, Laura Pulido, eds., *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).
[79] See for example, Barnor Hesse, "Counter-Racial Formation Theory," Greg Thomas, "No Reprieve: The 'Racial Formation' of the United States as a Settler-Colonial Empire (Black Power, White-Sociology and Omi and Winant, Revisited)," and Tamara K. Nopper, "Strangers to the Economy: Black Work and the Wages of Non-Blackness," in *Conceptual Aphasia in Black*, eds. Saucier and Woods.
[80] Saucier and Woods, *Conceptual Aphasia in Black*.

> violence only contingently or instrumentally, not to mention individually, the Ferguson case stands as a recent iteration of a structure of gratuitous violence in which black people find themselves violated not for what they have or have not done, or for the failures of social movement or tis absorption into the racial state, but simply for existing as such. . . we are explicitly situating racial formation theory as a discourse in which the acceptable limits of civil society's ethical debates are constituted; this is what we mean by the theory's speechlessness about black positionality.[81]

This view rejects the idea that racial formation occurs through similar processes with different inflections for all 'non-white' groups and insists on the historical recognition of blackness as "*the* originary racial project."[82]

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, there was also a push to study race within the context of a larger global project consistently deployed for the purpose of securing non-rights-bearing subjects and disposable populations in the service of production. These studies increasingly focused on the conditions of 'late capitalism' and a growing concern regarding neoliberal policy under Reagan and Thatcher (which eschewed state regulation but required state enforcement),[83] and led to rigorous Marxist critiques of the links between militarized action, cultural production, and global markets.[84] Many of these critiques focused on urban space in the United States and the United Kingdom.[85] While all of this work considers the work of race, albeit differently, Stephen Small, in his work on Black experience in the United States and England in the 1980's, points out that it is important to make a distinction between the 'racialization' problematic and theories of

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[81] Ibid., 12.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Kim Moody aptly describes neoliberalism as "a mixture of neoclassical economic fundamentalism, market regulation in place of state guidance, economic redistribution in favor of capital (known as supply-side economics), moral authoritarianism with an idealized family at its center, international free trade principles (sometimes inconsistently applied), and a thorough intolerance of trade unionism." Kim Moody, *Workers in a Lean World* (New York: Verso, 1997), 119–20; the spatiality of the neoliberal state is discussed in James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, "Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist* 29, no. 4 (November 2002): 981–1002; David Harvey traces the development of neoliberal politics in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[84] See, for example, David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1990); Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism Or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Labor of Dionysus: A Critique of the State-Form* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1994).
[85] See for example, Neil Smith, *The Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Manuel Castells and Alan Sheridan, *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); David Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Human Geography* 71, no. 1 (1989): 3-17; Mike Davis, *Beyond Blade Runner: Urban Control and the Ecology of Fear* (Vancouver: Open Media, 1992); Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso Press, 1989); Stuart Hall, et al, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Palgrave, 1978); Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

attribution within the context of 'racialization.'[86] The first provides a framework of analysis within which competing theories can be assessed while the latter uncritically assigns causations that focus on those who are 'racialized.' The 'culture of poverty' thesis is a good example of a theory of attribution whereas critiques of processes of racialization mentioned above, while sometimes in disagreement, exemplify the range of the racialization problematic and a framework of analysis.

4.5 Critiques of ethnic absolutism, cultural politics, and neoliberal ideology

Between 1975 and 1995, the fields of literature and cultural anthropology also produced work that drew lines between histories, experiences, and practices of colonial and imperial oppression across time, space, and economies. Much of this work was by non-Western authors and helped expand the discourse to Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.[87] Feminist sociologists also took on the male-dominated discipline of sociology and the race/class paradigm by theorizing intersectional oppressions as a sociological concept.[88] In keeping with this shift, new fields emerged, such as gender studies, ethnic studies, and Black studies, which were intended as specific critiques within the larger discourse of postcolonial analysis and often emphasized a Foucauldian understanding of power—as a productive force that is reproduced at every scale of public and private life.

Specific projects that were intended as critiques of neoliberal ideology revealed systems that consistently privilege self-interest, protect private property, and promote unrestricted global markets.[89] These critiques also highlight how neoliberal ideology explains growing economic disparities by way of failures of individual responsibility and moral fortitude, which attach risk to 'non-white' and otherwise 'non-normative' individuals and groups. Neoliberal logics dismiss race, both historically and operatively, as significant to success or failure in contemporary society because individual attributes or deficiencies are viewed as solely responsible for circumstances; yet, neoliberalism also deploys race relentlessly as a justification and excuse for the failures of capitalist logics to produce equitable conditions. Various forms and consequences of colorblind and cultural racisms that result from this thinking are addressed in the recent work of scholars writing across disciplines, some of which are discussed above.[90] These scholars benefit from, and continue,

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[86] Stephen Small, *Racialised Barriers: The Black Experience in the United States and England in the 1980's* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

[87] See for example Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (York, UK: Methuen Books, 1987);Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Press, 1987); Achille Mbembe, "Provisional Notes on the Postcolony," *Journal of the International African Institute* 62, no. 1 (1992): 3-37;

[88] For example, Patricia Hill Collins conceptualized the 'matrix of domination'—comprised of race, class, and gender—as interlocking systems of oppression. See Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

[89] See note 84.

[90] The postracial critique emerged in the past thirty years in response to neoliberal practices and policies that seek to mask, devalue, or dismiss the existence of systemic racism and its effects. See, for example, scholars that take on questions of color-blind racism: Michael Brown, et al., *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Howard Winant, *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); Goldberg, *The Threat of*

a long tradition of race scholarship committed to revealing, linking, and challenging ever-evolving forms of racial construction across space and time.

As mentioned above, attempts by antiracist projects to shift culture away from culture of poverty critiques and to affirm 'non-white,' and specifically Black, cultural production were met with new forms of racist practice. As Paul Gilroy argued, "(t)he goals of antiracism have been defeated, or perhaps undone, by strong theories of culture and identity and other race-friendly ideas . . . . . [They] function as a common sense or default for theoretical discussions of race."[91] More and more race was framed as a "cultural issue," not because culture had not previously operated in fundamental ways to construct racial hierarchies, but rather because the political project to establish a new ethnic absolutism attempted to fix culture as mutually impermeable expressions of racial and national identity that *recognized* culture and ethnicity while simultaneously defining the limits of agency.[92] Writing in 1987, Paul Gilroy is among the first to call out the work of race in neoliberal projects in terms of renewed conflations of nation, culture, and belonging in conjunction with the new order of capitalist imperialism. Defined through this prism, multiculturalism works within the context of national belonging to "recognize" different cultures so as to actually not have to recognize them at all. David Theo Goldberg later argues that when cultural difference is placed between two poles of celebration and risk, bodies are neutralized, on the one hand, and disciplined, on the other.[93]

In consideration of what a genuinely multicultural society might look like, Stuart Hall conceptualized a politics of recognition that builds upon Charles Taylor's assertion that "Non recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression imprisoning someone in a false distorted and reduced mode of being."[94] Hall theorizes an alternative view of multiculturalism that is not necessarily antagonistic to antiracism. Rather, identities are understood as radically insufficient unto themselves because they require the existence of the other. "In acknowledging their own radical insufficiency they don't desert what makes them particular, but they recognize that this relativizes the degree to which they can, as it were, affirm difference."[95]

In spite of the multivalent critiques of neoliberal practices, multiculturalism, and new frameworks of intersectional oppression across academic disciplines, the 1990s saw continued growth in both the military and prison industrial complexes. Public discourse continued to blame individuals and culture for 'unfortunate' outcomes, and cities were

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Race; Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and Racial Inequality in Contemporary America*, Third Edition (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Press, 2010); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

[91] Paul Gilroy, *Darker than Blue: On the Moral Economies of Black Atlantic Culture* (London: Belknap Press, 2011), 162.

[92] Gilroy, *'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack,' The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 61.

[93] Goldberg, *The Threat of Race*.

[94] Stuart Hall, "The Multicultural Question," *The Political Economy Research Centre* (Annual Lecture May 4, 2000), 2.

[95] Hall, "The Multicultural Question," 11.

increasingly run as private corporations. Legal theory arguing for public choice described cities as businesses competing for 'customers' in an environment of governmental austerity. Defenders of localism echoed neoliberal arguments that private markets logically sort people and space and operate at the highest level of democratic practice.[96] Conversely, proponents of regionalism object to the idea that localism supports spatial inequality and argue that cities with geographic and economic advantages will poach taxes and resources from areas with fewer advantages, thus funding services for their own citizens on the backs of poorer cities.[97] This is in fact the case in North St. Louis County, as the following chapters show.

As cities were encouraged to compete for resources, the economic consequences of blackness (as risk) posed much anxiety for mayors, city and county administrators, and urban planners. Using and amplifying an already robust public discourse regarding Black deviance, municipal leaders passed laws and ordinances aimed at minor offenses common in poverty-stricken areas, and these measures in turn routed youth-of-color and individuals into zero tolerance court systems that fed the pipeline to incarceration. By the 1990s, policing policies such as 'broken windows,'[98] the passing of nuisance laws aimed at

[96] Charles Tiebout has been cited as theorizing the far end of the spectrum of localism in the 1950s. He first laid out his public choice model in "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures," *The Journal of Political Economy* 64, no. 5 (October 1956): 416-424, in which he argues that citizens are actually consumers who vote with their feet and force municipalities into a healthy competition for ideal residents who choose among various packages of taxes and services. By the early 1990s, a new strain of localism had emerged that utilized Tiebout's theory of public choice but attempted to address issues of inequality waged by a growing body of work advocating for regional government in U.S. cities. Legal scholar Gerald Frug is largely credited with reframing the localism debate in the 1990s, arguing that increased democratic participation, community-building, and efficiency occur when local governments are given more, rather than less, power.

[97] The loudest and most consistent argument against localism and for regionalism is local selfishness—that self-interest will preclude cities from working together to create a vibrant region. Even proponents of localism have acknowledged that cities need to be prompted to play fair and to see the value of working together to create an overall healthy region. Richard Briffault is viewed as one of the major framers of the regionalist argument in the mid-1990s when he waged some of the most searing critiques of localism. Briffault claims that the reason proponents of localism refuse to consider the possibility of a regional scale is purely in order to protect special interests and maintain the status quo for the privileged few at the expense of the many; see Briffault, "Localism and Regionalism," *Columbia Law School, Public Law and Legal Theory*, Working Paper No. 1. Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=198822 orhttp://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.198822. Sheryll Cashin also takes this angle in "Localism, Self-Interest, and the Tyranny of the Favored Quarter: Addressing the Barriers to New Regionalism," *Georgetown Law Review* 88 (2000): 842-859, in which she attacks the arguments for localism point by point and argues through data that roughly twenty-five percent of the wealthiest municipalities benefit from, and have power in, fragmented governance, while the other seventy-five percent is milked of their resources.

[98] In 1982, George Kelling and James Q. Wilson published an article in *The Atlantic* that supported local policing policy aimed at cleaning up the city. See "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic* (March 1982): 29-38. The article directly linked space to crime and claimed that lower order markers of disorder, such as broken windows and trash in vacant lots, lead to more serious crime. This led to an increase in the passing of local ordinances and 'zero tolerance policing,' which aggressively ticketed or arrested people for creating spatial disorder.

poverty and homelessness,[99] and later 'stop and frisk'[100] provided the tools for police to harass and arrest individuals viewed as a threat to private property on any level. Clinton-era legislation that effectively ended the welfare state, dramatically increased police funding, and mandated the courts to follow extreme sentencing guidelines[101] ensured that the prison pipeline would increase the number of people incarcerated in the United States from roughly 500,000 in 1980 to over 2.3 million by 2008.[102] As Elizabeth Hinton states as a seeming retort to Michelle Alexander,[103] "The long mobilization of the War on Crime was not a return to an old racial caste system in a new guise—a 'New Jim Crow.' Rather, the effort to control and contain troublesome groups with patrol, surveillance, and penal strategies produced a new and historically distinct phenomenon in the post-civil rights era: the criminalization of urban social programs."[104] I would add another 'historically distinct phenomenon' to Hinton's assessment: the criminalization of urban space.

As the twenty-first century ushered in the 'war on terror,' cities gained even more tools to surveil and criminalize residents in the form of discursive practices centered on risk and increased funding for police and military-style equipment. Throughout the first decade, many scholars and activists continued to reveal, document, and challenge the cultural politics of criminalization of individuals in and through the space of the modern city. For example, similar to the work critical of developmentalist agendas in poorer countries of the world, Ruth Wilson Gilmore shows how decreased government involvement in urban and spatial planning resulted in intentional and de facto planning by corporate and banking interests that accelerated uneven and unequitable development as well as incarceration rates in California and the United States.[105] At a different scale of

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[99] The convergence of 'broken windows' policy, federal and state government retrenchment, and disinvestment have resulted in cities passing laws making it illegal to do some of the most basic things, like sleep, eat, or play in public. Many laws are aimed at particular groups and cultures.

[100] Using George Kelling's extension of the 'broken windows' theory, New York City police chief William Bratton in conjunction with mayor Rudy Giuliani, formalized the most famous example of 'stop and frisk' policing policy. The policy took a broad interpretation of *Terry v. Ohio* (1968), in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that individuals' Fourth Amendment rights are not violated when a police officer stops them without probable cause but suspects them of past, present, or future criminal activity. While most associated with post 1990s New York City, the practice was not new and became common across the United States, resulting in well-known adages regarding the criminalization of basic activities carried out by people-of-color, such as 'driving while black' or 'walking while brown.'

[101] The 1994 Crime Bill, or Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, reinforced the popular 'tough on crime' idea that the solution to crime is stricter policing and harsher punishments. Two years later, the Clinton administration passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which, as its title suggests, promoted the idea that poverty is caused by lack of personal responsibility. The bipartisan rhetoric around the legislation used tropes of the Black welfare queen to build support for the bill and represented thirty years of discourse around the culture of poverty thesis.

[102] This is according to the NAACP Criminal Justice Fact Sheet, http://www.naacp.org/pages/criminal-justice-fact-sheet.

[103] Michelle Alexander recently published a highly acclaimed book entitled *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012). Elizabeth Hinton's following quote challenges Alexander's claim that the current era of mass incarceration in a colorblind society is a 'new' form of old an old Jim Crow era. Rather, Hinton claims that a new era of 'urban insecurity' has entered the global stage and that despite its historical background, this era must be understood in its own terms.

[104] Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 25.

[105] Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*.

analysis, Elaine Brown takes an in-depth look at how a thirteen-year-old Black boy was condemned to life in prison and analyzes the difference between rhetorical representations of suburban white boys who kill versus urban Black youth accused of killing. While the white youths who were studied were witnessed killing multiple people, Black youths from the 'inner city' were not seen but alleged to have killed a single individual. Brown's findings show that the murders committed by white boys were rationalized as acts of alienation and teenage angst whereas the allegations against Black boys were more often described as evil and punished to the full extent of the law.[106] From the level of the institution, Victor Rios studies the disciplining of Black and Latino boys in Oakland and points out how community institutions territorialize the marking and policing of specific individuals by creating geographies of control that boys of color must navigate on a daily basis.[107] These examples are part of a growing scholarship linking race, cultural politics, degrees of citizenship, and formal and informal spatial practices.

4.6 Race and space in recent sub/urban scholarship

Some urban and suburban scholars have recently argued that historians and social scientists working in the 1970s and 1980s, who sought to re-write mid-century urban narratives to include Black experience, placed too much emphasis on race and painted literal "Black and white" pictures of American cities. These arguments assert that other aspects of society, such as class, public choice, and economic rationalism, were too often ignored in many of the 'corrective' histories that sought to include race.[108] This scholarship also cites recent metropolitan examples, such as increased diversity in the suburbs, new forms of cosmopolitanism in city life, and 'non-white' representation in urban governments, as evidence that race is becoming less of an issue in American society and cites at large.[109] Sub/urban scholarship increasingly re-casts difference along the lines of ethnicity, class, culture, sexual preference, and so on, with little or no mention of how historical modes of race-making inform differential space. In response to arguments that race will disappear if one accounts for neighborhood, wealth, education, family history, and so on, john powell has asked *"What do you think race is?"*[110] This is an important question for those who study metropolitan space and practices, especially as diversity has become a central discursive topic for sub/urban scholars. For example, the editors of the recent special section of the *Journal of Urban History* on diverse suburbs argue that diversity has always existed in the suburbs and assert the importance of cross disciplinary urban research to reveal actual,

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[106] Elaine Brown, *The Condemnation of Little B* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003).
[107] Victor Rios, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).
[108] Matthew Lassiter and Christopher Niedt, "Suburban Diversity in Postwar America," *Journal of Urban History* 39, no. 1 (January 2013): 3-14.
[109] Some scholars downplay race and emphasize behavior and class. See, for example, Lawrence C. Levy's Op Ed "Race and the Suburbs," *The New York Times* (October 30, 2008); Elijah Anderson, *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life* (New York: Norton, 2009). Some scholars argue that the election of Barack Obama has led to a backlash against race from those previously denying race, especially with regard to black urban leaders that gained power in the past twenty years. See, for example, Manning Marable, "Racializing Obama: The Enigma of Post-Black Politics and Leadership," *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics*, Culture, and Society 11, no. 1 (2009): 1–15.
[110] As cited in john powell and Caitlin Watt, "Negotiating the New Political and Racial Environment."

rather than assumed, realities of urban growth patterns in the United States.[111] While this is an extremely important point that dispels the long-held trope (across disciplines) claiming lily-white suburbs in contrast to minority-occupied urban cores, such arguments can quickly swing to the other end of the pendulum and dismiss or misinterpret historical and contemporary workings of race across scales of geographies and polities.

Scholars who study race and race-making generally acknowledge that the United States is not moving in a race-neutral direction. New discourses, subjectivities, and legalities that create seemingly common-sense racialized logics are ever-emergent, as evidenced by the recent rhetoric surrounding the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[112] However, the experience of racialization—as institutional policy, spatial practice, and everyday social customs—for residents living in places like North St. Louis County, which do not fit neatly into normative and codified designations of metropolitan space, remains understudied and undertheorized. This research is intended to address this gap and studies the work of race by looking at specific modes of cultural politics including blackness-as-risk, rhetorical constructions of invisibility and disposability, and antiracist practice.

5. DISCUSSION OF CHAPTERS

There are three thematic arcs spanning this dissertation. The first is an engagement with lived experience. While statistical data provides the so-called 'hard evidence' of patterns and practices in North St. Louis County, and abstract theory is useful for conceptualizing data and findings, a phenomenological interest in the lived experiences of bodies in space pulls this critique away from abstractions of numbers and text and locates the project in modes of life and the material substance of place. The Black body is critical to this study. The specifically Black body—whether suffering the physical violence and "indirect murder"[113] depicted in Chapter Three, discursively racialized through space as discussed in Chapter Four, or made visible and reoriented toward the full spectrum of freedom and affirmation of blackness witnessed in Chapter Five—reveals its relationship to power through lived experience of violence and freedom in ways that cannot otherwise be known.

Another arc of this work is a concern with the various ways (both positive and negative) subjectivities are produced through embodied and emplaced practices. The corporal and spatial nature of subjectivity is described by Frantz Fanon when he considers the experience of being fixed by the racializing gaze of 'the other.'[114] After overhearing, "Look a Negro" on a train, Fanon writes of the conscious emplacement of his body that he cannot escape:

> A slow construction of myself as a body in a spatial and temporal world—
> such seems to be the schema. It is not imposed on me; it is rather a definitive

[111] Lassiter and Niedt, "Suburban Diversity in Postwar America.
[112] The 2016 U.S. presidential election showcased anti-immigrant, anti-Obama, anti-Muslim, and anti-women rhetoric and appealed to the return to a time when the logics of the racial state were allowed to operate visibly and without question.
[113] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 256.
[114] Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008[1952]): 91.

> structuring of myself and the world—definitive because it creates a genuine dialectic between my body and the world.[115]

This description of a constant corporal awareness of one's body in the world is consistently expressed in all three empirical chapters through the voices of those who speak within this research. The subjectivities of anxiety, hyperawareness, and differentiated sub/urban citizenship conferred through extreme policing practices are expressed in Chapter Three. The tensions and contradictions regarding questions of urban versus suburban subjectivities amongst residents themselves are revealed in Chapter Four. The subjectivities produced through the corporal resistance of performative bodies in protest are forcefully articulated in Chapter Five. These are some of the ways the production of subjectivity emerges and is studied across this work.

The third important arc tracking across this work concerns the dialectics of biopolitical production—of disposable life on one hand and the power of life on the other. From this standpoint, my argument asserts that the profound nature of unrest in Ferguson, the modes of life and resistance, the types and tactics of leadership, and the potency of a movement that subsequently informed the direction of national resistance, were all shaped in relationship to specific localized histories and extreme contemporary experiences of racialized violence in this particular place. The manifestation of resistance witnessed in Ferguson did not just happen to occur in this location. It could not have occurred anywhere else. The dialectical nature of power over life and the power of life to resist—the biopolitical production of those who *should live* and those who *could die*[116]—is also conceptualized in this project through Foucault's delineations of conduct and counter-conduct. The techniques of governance, of sovereign power, to create differentiated sub/urban citizens are evidenced in the descriptions of policing and court practices in Chapter Three; however, governmentality—the conduct of conduct—is the instrumental technology of power in Chapters Three and Four, as a pastoral form of disciplining behavior (conduct) and the rationalizing of consequences through rhetorical devices, spatial codifications, and discursive practices.

From this standpoint, the Ferguson Protest Movement led by Black women and queer-of-color activists can be viewed as a "revolt of conduct," a counter-conduct, which, as Foucault describes, is a movement of specificity linked to other conflicts and problems. According to Foucault, the objective of those who constitute 'the movement' is to have the freedom to conduct themselves differently, with different leaders, different objectives, and different outcomes; and, he correctly observes, counter-conduct is most often linked to issues of women and their status in society.[117] This project is intended as a continuation and affirmation of the practices of counter-conduct.

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[115] Ibid., 91.

[116] The theorization of biopolitics and biopower, as power over life and death, is discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

[117] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2007) 194–196.

5.1 The case of North St. Louis County

Black residents who moved to historically white suburbs in North St. Louis County between 1970 and today experience extreme forms of racialized violence carried out by the state that, until recently, operated out of view of scholars as well as almost everybody that does not live in this geography. The everyday experiences of Black individuals in these communities largely consist of navigating geographies where their every action and sheer physical presence are subject to discipline for the purpose of funding municipal governments and managing political economies of risk that rely on a perpetual state of exception at the local level.[118] Over a period of many years, systems emerged by which residents themselves pay for the very tools that deny them full rights of personhood and citizenship by placing them under the constant threat of state violence and extracting resources based on a false pretense that Black residents "refuse to learn how to act in the suburbs."[119] While there are many examples of how residents push back against these practices, the hopelessness of a double-bind that many residents expressed in interviews over the past ten years can be viewed in relationship to the concept of bare life—one who is technically alive but unable to pursue a flourishing life.[120]

North St. Louis County illustrates how bare life is produced across multiple scales of governance as well as at the level of everyday practice, or governmentality.[121] Here, both macro and micro practices work within larger histories and scales of racialized violence, including transatlantic slavery and colonial/imperial expansion, which rely on the management and profitability of marginalized groups. In keeping with these histories, Black bodies are treated as less-than-human, revenue-generating reservoirs that legitimize and fund the very structures oppressing them—in this case, municipal entities that fail to provide basic public services except for ever-expanding police forces. As many have argued, no system of domination is totalizing and resistance operates in response, and in counter-distinction, to hegemonic forces.[122] Nevertheless, the difficulty in breaking the cycle by which residents are blamed and made to pay for circumstances beyond their control—indeed such circumstances are part of the cycle—approaches the conceptual understanding of bare life and its production.

While biopower—power *over* life—produces bare life and limits the possibilities for residents in North County, the resistance witnessed in Ferguson following the death of

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[118] I am using the term 'state of exception' to represent the state's power to suspend the rule of law. See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[119] Based on interviews with municipal leaders between 2005 and 2015. Over the course of ten years, I carried out interviews with municipal leaders in North St. Louis County, focusing on formal and informal policing practices in their communities.

[120] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[121] Whereas governance denotes direct sovereign power, Michel Foucault defines governmentality as 'the conduct of conduct.' He states, "by 'governmentality' I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument." Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 108.

[122] See, for example, Robinson *Black Marxism*.

Michael Brown represents the corollary power of biopolitics—power *of* life—which produces alternative subjectivities rooted in freedom. As Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt point out, "The biopolitical event is always a queer event—a subversive process of subjectivization that, shattering ruling identities and norms, reveals the link between power and freedom."[123] Ferguson resistance reveals the link between power and freedom, which not only exposed intersecting oppressions practiced at multiple scales of governance in North St. Louis County, but also interrogated "how intersecting racial, gender, and sexual practices" within the culture of resistance "antagonize and/or conspire with the normative investments of nation-states and capital."[124] The actions and conversations practiced by Ferguson resistance in response to the killing and treatment of Michael Brown's body offer a critique that names intersectional oppression as violence executed by the state. This intervention made decades of state violence in North St. Louis County visible. It also made visible the implications of gender, generation, and sexuality in material terms.

As this study shows, the example of North St. Louis County offers important insight into the power of spatial imaginaries to both produce and obscure racial oppression and the critical roles that space, culture, and local forms of governance and governmentality play in processes of race-making. North St. Louis County also exposes the various ways bodies are racialized through discursive codifications of space for very specific purposes. In addition to documenting and exposing racializing processes in this area, this research most importantly shows the ways by which bodies can and do profoundly disrupt racist practice.

5.2 Legacies of social, political, and geographical fragmentation

The physical, political, and social landscapes of the St. Louis region are fundamentally shaped by a history of contested land claims, inherited policies, residual boundaries, and a cultural politics rooted in questions of nation, race, and ethnicity. Held as a colony and territory by three different nation-states in the first fifty years of its existence, St. Louis sits at the imagined, if not actual, intersection of the North/South and East/West axes of what would become the United States, along which people, customs, trade, and ideas flowed. Early residents in the region promoted and embraced the popular imagination of St. Louis as both the gateway and the gatekeeper along both axes, and the city played a major role in well-known historical events in U.S. history. Lesser-known histories particular to the specificity of the development, geography, politics, and cultural influences in the region left lasting legacies imprinted on the city, both seen and unseen. Conflicts between culture, legal customs, constructions of personhood and citizenship, and definitions of a 'moral order' were variously repeated, as if in a loop, over the more than 250 years of the city's existence, resulting in what remains a highly fragmented physical, political, and social space today.

Chapter Two provides a historical narrative of the St. Louis region that pays particular attention to entanglements of race, space, and culture and to the social, political, and geographic fragmentation of the region. This chapter pauses on events that connect

[123] Negri and Hardt, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011) 63.
[124] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 4.

through time with present-day conditions and events in North St. Louis County. This account is not exhaustive and, while several primary sources are used and noted, it relies heavily on the comparison and compilation of multiple secondary sources. The narrative is intended to highlight historical events that are relevant to emergent issues in the research and to provide a contextual understanding of this area for the chapters that follow. Current demographics, maps, and other information regarding the St. Louis region today are also provided at the end of Chapter Two.

5.3 The racial state of municipal governance

Across the area locally known as 'North County,'[125] city ordinances and policing practices specifically target the cultural norms and economic vulnerabilities of poor Black residents. In addition to traffic stops for every possible vehicular and driving infraction, residents are policed for the number of people around their barbeque, the types of music they listen to, the color coordination of their curtains, the way they wear their pants, where they play basketball, how they paint their back door, where their children leave their toys, who may spend the night at their house, and how they use their front porch.[126] Since many residents cannot pay the high fines and fees for the inordinate number of citations handed out across this geography, tens of thousands of residents face warrants for their arrest and jail time, which imposes even more fines and fees, not to mention numerous other impacts on their lives.[127] In some municipalities, residents justifiably fear the city will take their property and demolish their homes if they are unable to fix unbecoming yet non-safety-related issues with their dwellings.[128] Cumulatively, this has led to what many residents express as a lifetime of indebtedness and fear and a feeling of being trapped in a place they do not have the economic means to leave. The double bind of the Black body means Black residents suffer from, and pay for, the loss of economic and political viability brought about by their very presence. In fact, the fear residents expressed over carrying out basic daily activities and the double bind that I consistently observed when working with people in this area is what initially led me to look further into what was happening in North County.

North County offers an important example of how municipal governments have become critical instruments in the remaking of the modern racial state, which is in the business of making racial subjects in and through everyday life.[129] As discussed above,

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[125] This geography is described in Chapter Two. I use 'North St. Louis County' and 'North County' throughout this chapter, depending on whether I am referring to the location or using the colloquial name for the area.
[126] Based on a review of municipal ordinances in the cities that occupy St. Louis County.
[127] Resident interviews. Additionally, over fifty media articles have also recently been written on this subject. See, for example, Radley Balko, "Why we need to fix St. Louis County," *The Washington Post*, October 16, 2014; Campbell Robertson et al., "Ferguson Became Symbol, But Bias Knows No Borders," *New York Times*, March 7, 2015; Jennifer Mann, "Municipalities Ticket for Trees and Toys as Traffic Revenue Declines," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 24, 2015.
[128] This is based on interviews with residents, documents obtained from the city of Pagedale, MO, and recent media attention documenting practices in Pagedale. See, for example, Jennifer Mann, "After Code Violation Crackdown, Pagedale Officials Now Threaten to Demolish Homes," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 10, 2015.
[129] David Theo Goldberg describes the engagements of the racial state as defining, regulating, governing, managing, and mediating racial matters, all of which describe municipal practices found in North St. Louis County at a local scale. See Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 109. James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta have highlighted how academic discourse tends to situate 'the state' above the

cities have increasingly assumed the role of administering urban austerity policy and acting as gatekeepers of citizens' rights in what Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore describe as geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism."[130] Using formal and informal means of coercion and real and perceived forms of discipline and surveillance to construct hierarchies of power that appear rational and routine,[131] small cities use narratives of propriety, risk, and property to discipline residents, extract resources, and create new forms of statecraft under the banner of maintaining municipal autonomy.[132] Recently, this area is also illustrative of how militarized local police forces are used to quell resistance to state practices through 'rational violence' enacted on residents, as witnessed in Ferguson, which sits within this geography.[133] Recent attention to shockingly racialized practices in North County occurred when sustained protests and militarized police responses were publically witnessed following the death of a Black teenager at the hands of a white police officer in Ferguson.[134] Prior to this unrest, however, cities across North County had been practicing various forms of policing for revenue that went seemingly unnoticed for decades by all except those who either lived in the area or studied it.

The case of North County is not a simple matter of white actors exploiting Black citizens, although its history supports that theme. Black leaders in numerous majority-Black cities in this area have adopted the white spatial logics of the racial state for their very survival. In fact, cities with the most per capita predatory policing statistics are cities with the largest ratios of Black residents with all-Black leadership.[135] The leaders in these cities have turned to the last means available—policing and the courts—to fund municipal budgets, avoid insolvency, and hold onto the coveted (yet in this case, hollow) prize of

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everyday life of 'civic society' and North St. Louis County illustrates how local scales of governance operate at the scale of the everyday; see Ferguson and Gupta, "Spatializing States: Towards an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist* 29, no. 4 (2002): 981-1002.

[130] Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore, "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism,'" *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (July 2002): 349–79.

[131] Kimberle Crenshaw, "Color Blindness, History and the Law," in *The House that Race Built*, Wahneema Lubiano, ed. (New York: Vintage Press, 1998), 280–289. Crenshaw, among others, has shown how formal and informal practices rooted in racialized distinctions coalesce in the public and private spheres, resulting in both blatant and obscured forms of racial discrimination. The routinization of racialized difference is a fundamental component of race-making. See, for example, John Comaroff, "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions," *Social Identities* 4, no. 3 (Fall 1998): 321-361; Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960's to the 1980's* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Barnor Hesse, "Reviewing the Western Spectacle: Reflexive Globalization through the Black Diaspora," in Avtar Brah, Mary J. Hickman, and Mairtin Mac an Ghaill, eds., *Global Futures: Migration, Environment and Globalization* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 122–43.

[132] In addition to formal policies, the rhetorical shaming of residents by leaders and some property owners based on racialized stereotypes that stand in contrast to the "suburban ideal" does much work toward certain forms of what Michel Foucault identified as governmentality—the regulation of the self and others or the conduct of conduct. See Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 777–95; Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982-1983*, Frederic Gros, ed., Graham Burchell, trans. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

[133] I am referring to the tanks, body armor, and gas used against protests in Ferguson in 2014.

[134] This is discussed in the chapters that follow.

[135] Based on a review of the data regarding demographics and municipal court citations between 2004 and 2014.

Black leadership.[136] Using narratives of good suburban citizenship in contrast to Black criminality and 'subpar black space,' vicious cycles of taxation by citation prey on the most vulnerable residents in an area given the contradictory label of 'suburban ghetto' by scholars, policy makers, and the media. The same tropes of Black deviance have also rendered blatantly unconstitutional practices invisible in North County for decades because they mirror normative perceptions about types of people and types of space. Using cultural politics, micro policing, and false perceptions regarding the benefits of political autonomy, small local governments developed and administer new forms of physical and political violence that reinforce old logics of the racial state—differentiating groups and diminishing personal rights for the purpose of extracting resources from marginalized people. There is a twist, however, in this model of oppression since the extraction of resources does not directly turn the wheels of conventional or visible capitalist markets, but rather, is deployed as a means to make up for vast amounts of capital previously extracted from cities through years of racialized processes and to provide unseen subsidies to wealthier communities.

Chapter Three takes a legal geography perspective to look at how municipal governments in North St. Louis County are both victim and administrator of the contemporary racial state in the United States. The chapter provides an account of the racialized means and extreme measures cities in the area known as North County currently employ to extract money and resources from citizens in response to wholesale disinvestment in their jurisdictions linked to the race and socioeconomic status of their residents. The chapter also considers the ethical arguments around municipal consolidation, as well as the implications of municipal dissolution, with particular emphasis on the relationship between predatory policing and metropolitan race-making. The chapter concludes by considering current reform measures and asks what new 'race-making situations' will arise if no shift is made in racial paradigms. The work relies on interviews with residents and leaders, data analysis of public records, and information gained through public reports and investigations. While the focus of this work is on North St. Louis County, the implications are relevant to the experiences of sub/urban residents in the United States and beyond.

5.4 Discursive regimes and everyday practices

Borrowing from Hortense Spillers's conceptualization of the pornotrope,[137] I argue that North St. Louis County can be understood as a porno*topology*.[138] In the same way that

[136] Mayors interviewed for this work and quoted in the local media consistently refer to local autonomy as the most important issue surrounding court reform. One could question what has been gained through local autonomy given recent reports of vast violations of rights driving current reform measures. The concept of minority mayors winning a "hollow prize" comes from the study "Black Control of Central Cities: The Hollow Prize," published in the American Institute of Planners Journal (March 1969), by Paul Friesema. Friesema observed that by the time a minority finally rises to the position of mayor, that city is very likely to be in decline—and legislatures are unlikely to assist minority municipalities.

[137] Hortense Spillers conceptualizes the expectation of suffering as the basis of exploitation of the Black body, which she describes as *pornotroping*. The pornotrope is that which is exploited based on the expectation, normalization, tolerance, and desire of sustained suffering. For Spillers, the black body, like the object of pornographic desire, occupies a unique position between subjectification and objectification, between revulsion and desire, in ways that assume deviance yet also create unspoken and illicit desire through the

Black flesh is dehumanized, subjugated, denied, and rendered deviant, yet possesses an eroticism and limited agency through its very subjugation, pornotopologies represent deviant yet fetishized space where suffering is expected and desire is commodified and consumed. Pornotroping is integral to the perpetual tolerance of Black suffering and the acceptance of pre-mature BBlack death as normative. Likewise, pornotopologies are spaces where suffering is not only tolerated but expected and where occurrences like the death of Michael Brown, Jr. are considered routine. The white spatial logic[139] of the suburban imagination provides the basis for racialized violence discussed in Chapter Three. Understanding North St. Louis County as an area where suffering is not only tolerated but expected explains how legal systems that blatantly violate constitutional rights on multiple levels, which categorically exploit poor Black residents and differentiate people through life chances, can be carried out seemingly unnoticed for more than twenty-five years. It also explains the fetishization of Black local autonomy, which obscures the violence taking place in this area.

The cultural politics of space deploys culture as a regulatory discourse to produce spatial imaginaries and social meanings that explain disparity as a "natural consequence" of inferior Black culture through spatial logics. The white spatial imaginary is an instrument of biopower that 'logically' manages the threat posed to white space by Black bodies. It is a logic that divides people and space through racial and cultural signification—black/white, consumable/non-consumable, civilized/ non-civilized—in order that space can be managed and controlled.[140] By combining a cultural politics of suburban citizenship while also capitalizing on the expectation of suffering in space qualified as 'urban,' residents of North St. Louis County are culturally, spatially, and bodily policed without any measure of accountability placed on policing practices. Furthermore, seemingly contradictory identities—suburban versus urban—are both claimed and deployed, sometimes interchangeably, in and about North St. Louis County, depending on the work they perform, the identities they mobilize, and the distinctions they are intended to make.

Chapter Four argues that the case of North St. Louis County illustrates how degrees of citizenship and belonging are indeed determined in the realm of localized discursive and spatial practices. As an important part of the governance of self and other, discursive delineations that differentiate the rights of citizenship reveal how subjectivity and identity are closely linked. Cultural politics is central to both governance (from above) and

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process of subjectification. Historically, the representational power of the 'selected' white male subject was critically dependent on the dysselected slave subject represented as powerless. This mutually dependent binary of subjection and freedom occupies the core of constructions of whiteness in contrast to blackness in subsequent historical and contemporary iterations. See Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (Summer, 1987) 65-81: 67.

[138] In the field of geography, topology has come to be understood as abstract, non-representational, and relational space, whereas topography represents and/or refers to actual physical space. I use topology (pornotopology) as opposed to topography very intentionally to signify the abstracted and relational nature of black space.

[139] George Lipsitz discusses the work of white and black spatial imaginaries in *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia: Temple, 2011).

[140] Hannah Arendt links the construction of race to recognizing the human in those that are shockingly different. *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harvest, 1966).

governmentality (from below) in North St. Louis County, and it uses discursive practices and imaginations of urban and suburban norms. These distinctions reveal how space—as imagined, represented, and lived—is highly political and carries out specific types of work. Space can be recodified over time or overnight, depending on the intended work spatial distinctions perform and the processes used to attach social and cultural practices (as well as people) to space. At the same time, these cultural politics also rely on expectations of suffering such that practices that would not be tolerated in most places are commonplace here.

Using discourse analysis, personal experience, and interviews with more than one hundred residents of North St. Louis County, Chapter Four reveals how discourses shape space in North St Louis County. The rhetorics adopted to produce respectable citizens, protect private property, and uphold the norms of suburban space illustrate how Black and white leaders invest mightily in the white spatial logics of the suburbs in contradistinction to perceptions and significations of urban space. This is a critical component of the racial state of municipal governance, discussed in Chapter Three, which relies on the tolerance of suffering and the production of differentiated 'suburban citizenship.' The discursive regimes at work in this area also determine what is known and what remains unknown about it, as well as what can and cannot happen within seemingly fluid boundaries. As such, North St. Louis County provides important evidence of how discursive space and lived experience are deeply interdependent; it also illustrates how struggles over meaning and identity determine the opportunities and limitations of residents in metropolitan space.

5.5 The queering of protest in North St. Louis County

The people interviewed for this research stated over and over that Black women and queer people of color were the unequivocal leaders of resistance in St. Louis following the events in Ferguson. Through action, debate, and the narration of their own lives *and flesh,* the women- and queer-of-color protestors that make up the core leadership of Ferguson resistance offered unwavering critiques of intersectional domination and racialized practices in North St. Louis County, as well as across the country and world, and within the community itself.[141] The essential yet often overlooked work of Black women and queer-of-color activists, scholars, and everyday people, who have deeply felt both the suffering and liberatory capacities of marginalization, reveal the contradictory logics of freedom and oppression embedded in the ideals of municipal autonomy in North St. Louis County.

Interviews before and after the events of August 9, 2014, [142] also reveal that a shift occurred in residents' thinking regarding the meaning and means of Black struggle—from

[141] These observations are based specifically on interviews with women of the Ferguson Protest Movement between September 2015 and January 2016 and with people involved with the movement between August of 2014 and September 2015, as well as discourse analysis of several thousand statements made by protestors via Twitter during the same time periods.

[142] The protesters interviewed for this research were chosen either because they were perceived as leaders within the movement or because they had been consistently present and part of the movement for more than a year following Brown's death. They came from many different backgrounds and experiences that cut across race, age, and gender. The majority of interviews were set up and conducted by Angel Carter, who is also

one that demanded equal rights through and under juridical law and social recognition to one that emphasizes unapologetic blackness and the Black body as a force capable of liberating society *from itself*. Echoing Aimé Césaire's recalibration of who is 'uncivilized' in the colonial equation,[143] one young woman recalled, "It's clear who the animals were that day," and several people reiterated her observation in various ways.[144] This shift is similar to what scholars of queer-of-color theory argue is a new iteration of politics capable of challenging the persistent and sometimes invisible heteronormative and racist practices embedded in modern social structures.[145]

Queer, in this sense, moves beyond an identity linked to sexual orientations and subcultures and refers to a utopian imagination of what could or should be in the world, while revealing what actually is. A 'queered' politics mobilizes utopian longings and reveals everyday failures in society in order to challenge patterned visions of the world and taken-for-granted approaches to familiar conflicts. The shift that mobilized radical imaginaries of what should be, in the face of what was, in North St. Louis County occurred in the public sphere and resonated "because of the implausibility of the modern state's representational claims."[146] In this case, it was the implausibility that the liberal state would deliver justice and equality under, and through, the law. This, according to Roderick Ferguson, is a critical component of queer-ofcolor critique: to reveal the inherent contradictions that exist in the idea that the liberal nation-state and capital are sites of resolution, perfection, and progress.[147]

Chapter Five uses queer-of-color critique to look at how contradictions inherent within the claims of local, state, and national actors were made visible through Ferguson resistance and to analyze what unique interventions were mobilized through this resistance. This chapter is based on extensive interviews with protesters, protest leaders, and local residents. The factors surrounding the death of Michael Brown converged with the dynamics of place and people in North St. Louis County to spark a social movement that is uniquely connected to the particular history and experience of this area and to the unwavering yet often overlooked work of Black women and nonconforming individuals. Rooted in larger histories and currents of Black struggle and to the specific conditions in North St. Louis County, women and queer-of-color protesters claimed the street and

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viewed as a leader in the movement and is an accomplished writer and researcher in her own right. Many protesters already held college degrees when Michael Brown was killed and many more were in the midst of higher education while holding down jobs. Some were struggling with numerous challenges and just trying to make ends meet. Many had always lived in St. Louis, but a few had specifically come to St. Louis in order to participate in the movement. Every person interviewed stated that participating in the movement had changed their outlook and the course of their lives in ways big and small. Some lost their jobs or put their education on hold because of the movement. Many lost relationships with family members and friends. Several said they were dealing with serious anxiety and most spoke about trauma they experienced through protest. Virtually all stated that they had gained a new community. Some had found love, and at least two—Brittany Ferrell and Alexis Templeton—were married as a result of meeting through the Ferguson resistance.

[143] Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*.

[144] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

[145] Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*.

[146] Michael Warner, *Publics and Counter Publics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 215.

[147] Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*.

contributed to a new iteration of the fight for human liberation in fundamental ways that have not been fully recognized in the national discourse concerning Black Lives Matter. Indeed, this chapter, among other things, highlights the various ways by which Ferguson protesters and Black Lives Matter activists collide and diverge. This chapter is an important addition to the original conceptualization of this project in that it offers a counterpoint of freedom and resistance to the bleak picture painted by the subsequent chapters.

Overall, this dissertation intervenes in three important areas. First, this work illustrates the role of local governance in the production and maintenance of racialized populations and space and the complex motivations, historical factors, and tactics of local political actors in enforcing a racial state of municipal governance. Second, this project reveals the power of spatial imaginaries to discursively shape experience, perception, and identity and the interdependence of bodies and space as racializing processes. Third, this research shows how bodies disrupt racist and racializing practices through evanescent counter-conduct through performativity and the claiming of alternative identities, objectives, and outcomes.

CHAPTER TWO
A HISTORY OF FRAGMENTATION IN METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS

I look for her shape and his hand.

—Patricia Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*

The physical, political, and social landscapes of the St. Louis region are fundamentally shaped by histories of contested claims, inherited boundaries, and a cultural politics rooted in questions of nation, race, and ethnicity. Held as a territory by three different nation-states in the first fifty years of its existence, the region exhibits spatial practices, cultural traditions, and current policies connected to legacies of Spanish, French, and British colonialism as well as early U.S. expansion policy and imperial logics. St. Louis also sits at the imagined if not actual intersection of the North/South and East/West axes of what would become the United States and at the confluences of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois Rivers—along which people, customs, trade, and ideas flow. Early residents in the region promoted and embraced the popular imagination of St. Louis as both the gateway and the gatekeeper along these axes and the city played a major role in well-know historical events in U.S. history. Lesser-known histories particular to the specificity of development, geography, politics, and cultural influences in the region also left lasting traces in the city today although many are obscured.

Today, these histories result in highly fragmented space where the racialization of bodies and space relies on associations of risk and a moral ordering of the city. A continuous thread through time is the use of the state, and in many cases the courts, to establish spatial, social, and political hierarchies in space. However, a blatant disregard for state oversight and a persistent desire for political autonomy are constant yet often contradictory themes throughout these histories. These include ignoring Spanish emancipation laws under Spanish rule, using Spanish land claims and administrators to secure property, using the U.S. territorial courts to take property and maintain the slaveholding of Native Americans, capitalizing on a catastrophic act of nature to amass land, walking a line between Union and Confederate politics, securing the ideals of aristocratic society while espousing liberal democracy, using state law to separate city from county, establishing homogenous neighborhoods under the perception of home rule, and ensuring that integrated neighborhoods were set up to fail (to name just a few). These histories illustrate that current practices in North St. Louis County are simply a continuation of the cultural politics of race and racism that have long existed.

What follows is a historical narrative of the St. Louis region that is especially concerned with the entanglements of race, space, and culture. The chapter pays particular attention to the period of demographic inversion—from majority white to majority Black—experienced in North County between 1965 and 1985. Several archives and primary sources are used and noted, but the overall narrative relies on comparing and contrasting

multiple secondary sources.[1] The chapter is intended to provide a context for the chapters that follow.

1. COLONIAL LEGACIES

1.1 A French city in Spanish territory

> On the fifteenth of February AD seventeen hundred and Sixty four, they landed at a place which they thought convenient for the purposes of the Company, and immediately proceeded to Cut down Trees, draw the lines of a Town, and build the house where this Deponent at present resides—Mr. Laclede on his arrival named the Town Saint Louis, in Honour of the King of France. . . . .The Illinois Indians claimed the land where S'Louis now stands

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[1] Some of these secondary sources are more reliable and respected than others; nevertheless, a comparative use of these histories, taking into account when they were written and how they were framed, proved helpful to this narrative. The sources I consulted for this chapter include the following: Adam Arenson, *The Great Heart of the Republic: St. Louis and the Cultural Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Thomas Barclay, *The St. Louis Home Rule Charter of 1876: Its Framing and Adoption* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1962); Henry W. Berger, *St. Louis and Empire: 250 Years of Imperial Quest and Urban Crisis* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2015); Shirley Christian, *Before Lewis and Clark: The Story of the Chouteaus, the French Dynasty That Ruled America's Frontier* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004); Cyprian Clamorgan, *The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis*, ed. Julie Winch (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999); Patricia Cleary, *The World, the Flesh, and the Devil: A History of Colonial St. Louis* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2011); Robert A. Cohn, *The History and Growth of St. Louis County*, Sixth Edition (St. Louis: St. Louis County Office of Public Information, 1974); J. Frederick Fausz, *Founding St. Louis: First City of the New West* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2011); McCune Gill, *The St. Louis Story* (St. Louis: Historical Record Association, 1952); Louis S. Gerteis, *Civil War St. Louis* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2001); Colin Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2008); Nini Harris, *A Most Unsettled State: First-Person Accounts of St. Louis During the Civil War* (St. Louis: Reedy Press, 2013); Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); E. Terrence Jones, *Fragmented by Design: Why St. Louis Has So Many Governments* (St. Louis: Palmerston and Reed Publishing, 2000); Elizabeth Keckley, *Behind the Scenes: Or, Thirty Years a Slave and Four Years in the White House* (Rockville, MD: Wildside Press, 2015); Gary R. Kremer, *Race and Meaning: The African American Experience in Missouri* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2014); Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Back Freedom Struggle in St. Louis 1936–1975* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009); George Lipsitz, *The Sidewalks of St. Louis: Places, People, and Politics in an American City* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 1991); John Francis McDermott, ed., *The Early Histories of St. Louis* (St. Louis: St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation, 1952); McDermott, ed., *The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762-1804* (Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974); Charles E. Peterson, *Colonial St. Louis: Building A Creole Capital* (Tucson, AZ: The Patrice Press, 1993); James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis Missouri* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing, 1981); Eric Sandweiss, *St. Louis: The Evolution of An American Urban Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Lee Ann Sandweiss, ed. *Seeking St. Louis: Voices From A River City, 1670–2000* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2000); Thomas M. Spencer, ed., *The Other Missouri History: Populists, Prostitutes, and Regular Folk* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2004); Amos Stoddard, *Sketches of Louisiana: Historical and Descriptive* (Carlisle, MA: Applewood Books, 2010[1812]); Solomon Sutker and Sara Smith Sutker, *Racial Transition in the Inner Suburb: Studies of the St. Louis Area* (New York: Praeger Press, 1974); William L. Thomas, *The History of St. Louis County Missouri: The Story Told 100 Years Ago* (Clayton, MO: County Living Publications, 2011[1812]); Jo Ann Trogdon, *The Unknown Travels and Dubious Pursuits of William Clark* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 2015); Julie Winch, *The Clamorgans: One Family's History of Race in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011); John A. Wright, Sr., *St. Louis: Disappearing Black Communities* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2004); Wright, *Kinloch: Missouri's First Black City* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000).

when this Deponent first came here.—[This Deponent] Auguste Chouteau, April 18, 1825, as recorded by Thomas Hunt.[2]

French fur traders, including Pierre Laclede and Auguste Chouteau, founded the original settlement of St. Louis in1764 within the centuries-old territories of the Illinois and Osage tribes of North America. Naming it in honor of King Louis IX, the location they chose on the western bank of Mississippi River was just below the confluences of the Missouri and Illinois Rivers. Although the fur trading company believed they had established the settlement for France, they had in fact added to the colonial settlements of Spain as France had secretly ceded the Louisiana Territory to Spain one year earlier at the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763. It took four years for residents of the settlement to learn of the transfer and six years before the Spanish arrived to govern the region. Around the same time, a large number French merchants and fur traders, choosing Spain over Great Britain, moved to St. Louis from settlements on the other side of the Mississippi River, which was also lost by France to Great Britain in the Seven Years' War. The Spanish had planned to remove settlements on the upper Mississippi and install a series of forts; however, they reassessed their plans after observing the geography, size, and culture of St. Louis, choosing instead to build a fort near the settlement.[3]

By 1773, roughly 400 French-speaking people and 200 people noted as enslaved Africans and 'Indians' lived in the Spanish colony.[4] Although the Spanish outlawed indigenous slavery in the Louisiana Territory in 1769, they were ambivalent regarding people already held in captivity, and the French were not prone to follow Spanish law. Lieutenant Governor Pedro Piernas reported backlash in St. Louis to the ban on 'Indian' slavery, and Spanish authorities allowed residents there to retain, as well as to take, both African and indigenous peoples into slavery, presumably to avoid French revolt.[5] St. Louisans and settler-planters in the Upper Louisiana Territory had a reputation for being 'especially' cruel to Africans held as slaves. Amos Stoddard reflected later that from its inception, St. Louis developed a culture of particular brutality toward African and indigenous peoples, and he claimed that enslaved people in Upper Louisiana had it much worse than those in Lower Louisiana.[6] Stoddard also noted that St. Louisans justified their actions by claiming their 'slaves' were especially lazy and required punishment to work; however, he attributed the particular brutality of the white settlers of Upper Louisiana to their own laziness and ignorance, and he argued that incompetence and turnover in leadership had led the settlers to focus on the accumulation of personal wealth rather than on governance. Writing about the state of slavery in St. Louis, Stoddard observed,

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[2] Auguste Chouteau, "Testimony before the Recorder of Land Titles, St. Louis, 1825," in *The Early Histories of St. Louis*, ed. John Francis McDermott (St. Louis: St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation, 1952), 91–93.
[3] In John Francis McDermott, "The Myth of the 'Imbecile Governor': Captain Fernando de Leyba and the Defense of St. Louis in 1780," in McDermott, ed. *The Spanish in the Mississippi, 1762–1804* (Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974), 328.
[4] St. Louis Genealogical Society, St. Louis Census Data, http://stlgs.org/research-2/government/census.
[5] Luis de Unzaga to Pedro Piernas, 1770, in Lawrence Kinnaird, ed., *Spain in the Mississippi Valley*, *1765–1794, Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1945* (Washington, DC: 1946), 190.
[6] Amos Stoddard, "State of Slavery in St. Louis," in *Sketches of Louisiana* (Carlisle, MA: Applewood Books, 2010[1812]), 331–343.

> Good God! Why sleeps thy vengeance! Why permit those, who call themselves Christians, to trample on all the rights of humanity, to enslave and to degrade, the sons and daughters of Africa! The evils of the slave system in Louisiana may, in a great measure, be attributed either to the want of energy or intelligence among the governors of that province. As their appointments were limited to short periods, seldom extending beyond five years, the accumulation of wealth was the predominant motive of their actions, and some of them did not hesitate at the means.[7]

Attitudes toward slavery and disputes over the rights of non-European groups in the Upper Louisiana Territory, including the varied and, as Stoddard observed, 'especially brutal' enforcement of regulatory laws, would shape conflicts in St. Louis and the surrounding territory, as well as politics in the U.S. and abroad, for many years to come. The fact that Upper Louisiana was noted for its particularly extreme brutality and indifference toward people of non-European heritage foreshadowed the extreme practices of 'policing blackness for profit' that we see in this region today, as discussed in subsequent chapters.

Early St. Louis settlers developed a local culture steeped in French Creole tradition and French colonialism, with inflections of Canadian, British, and indigenous cultures. The Spanish found it difficult to govern the newly transitioned 'Spanish subjects' who had no interest in living off of the land and did not easily conform to the Spanish colonial model of planned self-sufficiency. Rather, pursuing the chase, trade, speculation, and the accumulation of property were at the center of civic life and shaped social and political relationships in the first several decades of existence.[8] According to early French and Spanish documents, the small Spanish contingents sent from New Orleans to govern the French settlement were relegated to record keeping and resolving internal disputes—usually over property.[9] During this time, between 1769 and 1800, St. Louis grew as a strategic trading post with direct access to the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois rivers. As J. Frederick Fausz's research shows, St. Louis fur traders built a trading capital with Native American tribes that occupied the center of North America. The traders viewed this collaboration as essential to both commerce and the elaborate financial system they developed, through which trade licenses were issued and shares were calculated for each tribe.[10] Tribes were disciplined through trade embargoes, enslaving captives of non-compliant tribes, and raping and marrying Native women. Tribes that produced the most pelts and protected white fur traders by turning on other tribes were given substantial trading privileges. The Osage tribe developed a strong alliance with white traders in the Upper Louisiana Territory and, while they initially profited, the tribe ultimately suffered the biggest losses brought about by disease, retaliation from other tribes, division of their

[7] Stoddard, *Sketches of Louisiana*, 333.
[8] Amos Stoddard wrote of the early French inhabitants of St. Louis, "[they] had hitherto contented themselves with house-lots, and had no disposition to resort to agriculture, at least so long as they were able to navigate the rivers, pursue the chase, or the Indian trade." In Stoddard, *Sketches of Louisiana*, 254.
[9] McDermott, ed., *The Early Histories of St. Louis*.
[10] Fausz, *Founding St. Louis*, 148–150.

own tribe into two branches, and, ultimately, the disregard and destruction of their territory and people by the U.S. government.[11]

Also between 1769 and 1800, much of the land surrounding the settlement of St. Louis was carved up and claimed by a few founding French and French Creole families; however, agriculture was limited to common fields shared by residents. Compared to Spanish colonial settlements elsewhere and in contrast to the ethos of late-nineteenth-century puritanism, both of which were structured around working the land and religious activities, St. Louis residents were often described as lazy heathens focused on individual pleasure. A staunch individualism combined with a penchant for aristocratic social hierarchies would, however, shape the future of St. Louis and remains evident today in the form of familial social hierarchies, a long tradition of private and corporate patronage, and an peculiar level of importance placed on political autonomy.

1.2 Threats to the institution of slavery

Following the Haitian Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century and revolts in what was considered the West Indies, France secretly took back control of the Louisiana Territory from Spain in 1800. Napoleon Bonaparte, however, having lost control of Haiti, believed that without trade secured in the West Indies, the vast and unwieldy territory would be more valuable as a tool of negotiation than as a part of the French Empire. As both the prize and the pawn of conflict in Europe for over a century, the Louisiana Territory was increasingly difficult to control from Europe in the face of U.S. independence, westward expansion, and new forces impacting global trade policy, particularly the transatlantic slave trade. President Jefferson believed American settlers pushing westward would gradually acquire the Louisiana Territory through non-military means. When French troops arrived in New Orleans in 1801 to take possession and secure the city, however, panic set in amongst residents of the southern states and territories of the United States. Southerners in the United States feared that Napoleon would abolish slavery in the territory and that uprisings of enslaved people would follow across the South, devastating plantation economies and the transatlantic slave trade. The Federalists, as the opposition to Jefferson, capitalized on the threat to slavery by calling for military intervention against France and efforts designed to secure slavery as an institution on the entire North American continent. Jefferson responded by setting his sights on acquiring the complete territory through negotiation. In 1801, Jefferson sent Robert Livingston to Paris and J. B. C. Lucas to New Orleans and St. Louis on fact-finding missions intended to facilitate covert negotiations with France over the Louisiana Territory. In a secretly negotiated deal, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803. Shortly thereafter, St. Louis was designated as the seat of the Upper Louisiana Territory.

When J. B. C. Lucas visited St. Louis in 1801, he found a town of about 2,500 people and noted that the town had a remarkably advantageous geographical location but lacked civic and political organization.[12] As Eric Sandweiss observes in his highly researched account of early St. Louis, “by the time that formal Spanish rule [in St. Louis] came to an end

[11] Fausz, *Founding St. Louis*, 188.
[12] E. Sandweiss, *St. Louis*, 30.

in 1800, a widening gap had opened between the clearly delimited social and physical order that the government struggled to maintain, and the centrifugal force of diversified personal interests among the townspeople."[13] Composed of individual actors seeking opportunity, fortune, and property, the city embodied the values of westward expansion grounded in private enterprise, the accumulation of private property, and all forms of speculation. These values were overseen, however, by a few elite French Creole families; many of which either were, or had direct ties to, the original residents of St. Louis. As a result, a culture that walked a line between U.S. notions of individual freedom and the traditions and hierarchies of bourgeois society became deeply rooted in the region.

By the time Amos Stoddard, representing the United States, oversaw the transfer of the Upper Louisiana Territory in 1804, there were 2,780 mostly French-speaking residents in the St. Louis region and approximately 500 people held in slavery.[14] At the transfer ceremony, the Spanish and French flags were ceremoniously raised and lowered before the American flag was permanently installed. Assuring St. Louisans that their customs would be respected, Stoddard stated, "you are divested of the character of Subjects, and clothed with that of citizen—You now form an integral part of a great community," a distinction that, as Stoddard reminded them, came with many responsibilities.[15] Slavery was formally expanded at the time of the transfer by nullifying all Spanish conditions that had been placed on the institution. As a result, the benefits of citizenship Stoddard spoke of were even more out of reach to the many mixed-race residents of the territory, who were clearly outside of 'the community.' The Osage tribe, which had invested greatly in the promises of their white trading partners and alliances with the United States, also found that they were expendable. As Peter S. Onuf observes, "the history of Jeffersonian statecraft was one of ruthlessly exploiting regional power imbalances based on the convenient self-delusion that republicans operated on a higher moral plane than their corrupt European counterparts." In fact, the transfer of the territory from Spain and France to the United States would mean a steady increase in the destruction of native peoples. The first to go were those who had embraced capitalist pursuits and formed alliances with European and U.S. interests because they were most easily controlled by the U.S. government, which cast native inhabitants as 'savage' and all those who sympathized with tribal interests as 'dangerous.' Consequently, the French elite in St. Louis who had long viewed themselves as 'Indian diplomats' quickly severed ties with the Osage and turned their energies toward securing land claims and establishing power in the new administration.

1.3 Juridical interpretations of law, property, and identity

Upon transfer to U.S. authorities, property claims in St. Louis were in disarray after a forty-year history of contested methods of documentation, multiple Spanish administrations, and disorganized records, which were sometimes written in Spanish and sometimes in French. This troubled newly appointed administrators of the U.S. government

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[13] Ibid., 31.

[14] *St. Louis County, Missouri Fact Book, St. Louis County Research and Statistics Division* (Clayton, MO: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2012), ii.

[15] Amos Stoddard, "Address to the People of Upper Louisiana: March 10, 1804," ed. Lee Anne Sandweiss, *Seeking St. Louis*, 36–40, 36.

charged with implementing the geographical grid of westward expansion through the distribution of small tracts of land to white landowners. President Jefferson quickly appointed French-speaking J. B. C. Lucas as Commissioner of Land Claims and Territorial Judge in 1805 with the hope of denying prior land claims and returning most of the land to government control, from which new claims could be made according to divisions of forty acre parcels on a North/South, East/West grid. Opposing these changes were the ruling *junto* of St. Louis—made up of elite French Creole landowners who had gradually acquired and developed the settlement footprint and held claims to large tracts of land inside and outside of the city proper.

In spite of Stoddard's promise that, "in the final adjustment of claims, no Settler or Land holder will have just cause to complain,"[16] the U.S. government succeeded in blocking confirmation of most land claims made under Spanish rule, much to the frustration of the *junto* leaders. In the seven years the Upper Louisiana commission operated, prior to the formation of the Missouri Territory, only one third of original Spanish land claims were confirmed.[17] J. B. C. Lucas, however, amassed a substantial amount of property for himself in those seven years, including large tracts in what would later become North St. Louis County. Many cases involving business practices and the status of enslaved people were also brought before the territorial court between 1805 and 1812, while Lucas was a judge. Legal documents, including Lucas's court notes, reveal much confusion regarding the laws governing property—land, goods, and people—as leaders sorted out French, Spanish, and U.S. law and policy.[18] The ambiguous Spanish policies regarding indigenous slavery and the French tendency to equate color with hierarchies of servitude complicated many of the freedom cases brought to the court following the transfer to U.S. governance.

Officials from the Indiana Territory, where slavery had been abolished by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, were also placed in leadership roles in the newly acquired Upper Louisiana Territory, prompting rumors that slavery would soon be outlawed in St. Louis as well. As a result, wealthy *junto* landowners in St. Louis pressured Stoddard to formally enact federal slave codes, which, unlike most state and territorial laws, were ambiguous and did not specify what persons should be considered slaves. Soon after, U.S. administrators officially adopted federal slave codes, resulting in numerous questions regarding circumstances of slavery, prior laws, and the timing of enslavement. Questions regarding racial mixing, unknown parentage, and physical appearance also had to be individually decided on a case-by-case basis. These issues were further complicated by contradictory legal cultures and policies at the intersection of French, Spanish, and U.S. law.

The thirty-year fight of the Scypion women to gain their freedom from the Chouteau family—the self-proclaimed and celebrated 'first family' of St. Louis—and their relatives is a good example of how these questions played out over many years. When Judges J. B. C. Lucas and Rufus Easton, both of whom held African people in slavery, granted freedom in 1805 to two of the daughters of Marie-Jean Scypion (a half Natchez, half African woman

[16] Stoddard, "Address to the People of Upper Louisiana," 39.
[17] E Sandweiss, *St. Louis*, 34.
[18] J. B. C Lucas Papers, Missouri Historical Society Library, Notes, Box 3.

whose Natchez mother was held illegally in slavery during Spanish rule), they were acting on the precedent of indigenous rights and the Spanish slave code that dictated slavery was passed through maternal routes. Testimony in that trial focused on the physical features of the deceased Marie-Jean who, by the accounts of several white women who had testified years earlier in Spanish court, "looked Indian."[19] When their sister sought a writ of *habeas corpus* to gain her freedom from a different Chouteau family member, her owner argued that the appearance of the sisters (who reportedly "looked Negro") and not their mother should be the determining factor regarding their African identity. He also cited gender considerations, arguing that the testimony of the white women in Spanish court be dismissed since U.S. law did not permit women to testify in a case brought by a man. Lucas and Easton again ruled in favor of the enslaved women based on new and old testimony that their mother had received consistent benefits throughout her life due to her known Indian mother and heritage, as opposed to her appearance.[20]

Foreshadowing local politics in St. Louis today, the Chouteau family used their position and standing with the police and the animosity between neighboring jurisdictions to secure warrants for the entire Scypion family after the St. Louis court ruling granted freedom to the women and their children. Relying on the disregard St. Charles area officials had for St. Louis governance, the Chouteau family convinced police in the county to arrest the Scypion family on the grounds that they were escaped African slaves once they left the settlement of St. Louis. Pressured to revisit the case, Lucas and Easton acquiesced but required that a $4000 bond be pledged until the family's legal status could be sorted out again, which Pierre Chouteau supplied. The Tayon/Chouteau families were given a month to file suit establishing their legal rights, and they immediately filed petitions demanding a jury trial and custody of all three sisters and all of their children.[21]

J. B. C. Lucas presided over the trial in 1806, and testimony relied on white male members of the community since in a U.S. court, unlike in a Spanish court, 'non-white' people and women could not testify against a white male citizen. When Pierre Chouteau's brother-in-law was elected as jury foreman, there was little chance the jury of all white men would rule in favor of the enslaved women. Based on the jury's findings, Lucas denied all further motions for freedom and placed the entire family back into bondage. The debate that played out in court centered on whether or not the illegal enslavement of the original family matriarch, Marie-Jean, superseded the plaintiff's property rights and found that the rights of property supersede any rights of non-white persons. This would be a central argument in municipal courts in the St. Louis region throughout its history and continues today regarding whether or not the rights of Black residents in North St. Louis County outweigh the rights of cities to protect public and private property from the 'risk' attached to Black bodies.

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[19] This discussion is based on William E. Foley, "Slave Freedom Suites Before Dred Scott: The Case of Marie Jean Scypion's Descendants," *Missouri Historical Review* 79, no. 1 (October 1984) and J. B. C. Lucas 1806 Notes, Box 3, Lucas Papers, Missouri Historical Society.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

Twenty years after Lucas and Easton gave their final ruling, the Missouri General Assembly enacted a statute by which people held as slaves could sue for their freedom and the surviving members of the Scypion family again brought legal action. After ten years of appeals, the Missouri Supreme Court eventually upheld a lower courts ruling to free them in 1836, almost seventy-five years after Jean-Marie was illegally enslaved.[22]

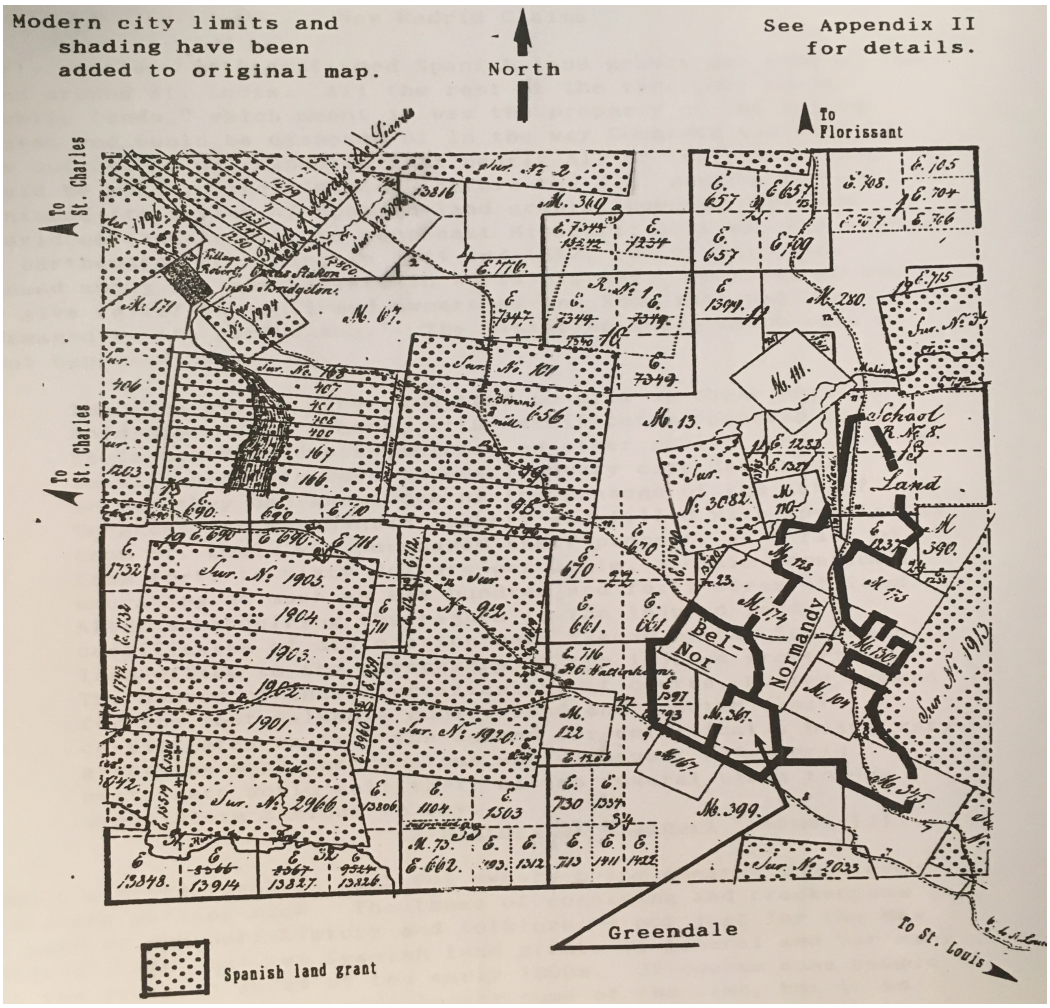

Figure **2.1**. Land claims circa 1850 in an area of N. St. Louis County. The boundaries of Bel-Nor, Normandy, and Greendale are marked. Parcels marked with 'Sur' (shaded area) are original Spanish land grants. Parcels marked with 'M' were taken in exchange for property damaged in the New Madrid earthquake. (source: Missouri Historical Society Library).

The formation of the Missouri Territory in 1812 brought another shift in power in St. Louis when *junto* leaders were elected onto the new territorial council, which reversed the prohibitions and policies on prior land claims and put a large portion of the region back into the hands of the French Creole elite. Immediately following this change, a mad rush for land claims by both French Creole and St. Louis businessmen from the East coast of the United States commenced in the wake of the New Madrid earthquake of 1812. Under the New Madrid Act of Congress in 1815, all landowners who suffered damage in the largest

[22] Ibid.

earthquake recorded in U.S. history, which changed the course of the Mississippi River and damaged or flooded undeveloped land, were granted the option to land in St. Louis County. Corruption regarding land deeds was already rampant in St. Louis culture, and three-quarters of the new claims under the New Madrid Act were granted to people residing in St. Louis rather than to residents in areas affected by the earthquake. Investors in St. Louis bought up the damaged land immediately after the act was passed and before rural landowners learned of the opportunity afforded them. As a result, land claims stemming from the New Madrid Act would shape the boundaries of tiny municipalities in North St. Louis County more than a century later (Figure 2.1).

2. MISSOURI STATEHOOD

Sixteen years after St. Louis was transferred to U.S. control and eight years after Missouri became a territory, the Missouri Compromise was signed as a precursor for Missouri to enter the Union in 1820. The compromise made slavery illegal in the larger Louisiana Territory; however, in a congressional compromise to maintain the delicate balance in the federal government between free and slave states, it was agreed that Missouri would be admitted to the Union as a slave state while Maine would enter the Union as a free state. The fight in Congress over the slave status of the territory versus the new state of Missouri prefigured the impending threat to the integrity of the Union and the eventual secession of the southern states. Writing in response to the debate that resulted in the compromise, Jefferson lamented,

> This momentous question, like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed indeed for the moment, but this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper.[23]

Although Jefferson is speaking of a literal geographical line dividing the nation, these words haunt the physical geographical lines that divide the spaces of white and Black bodies today and the philosophical line that marks the principle, moral and political division in the United States that, as Jefferson predicted, is marked deeper and deeper with each new iteration.

2.1 Civic versus private interests: divisions between St. Louis City and County

Missouri's entrance into the Union coincided with the collapse of an inflated real estate market in St. Louis in 1821. Taking advantage of adjusted power dynamics that decreased the influence of private interests, civic government in St. Louis gained traction under a new constitutional charter establishing formally the City of St. Louis. Multiple city ordinances aimed at improving much-needed infrastructure, regulating growth, and cleaning up public eyesores were passed soon after the city was chartered.[24] But the strain of a rapidly growing and scattered population, disparate patterns of development, and a

[23] Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, April 22, 1820. Library of Congress, online, https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/159.html.
[24] E. Sandweiss, *St. Louis*, 37.

self-interested business culture proved a formidable foe to civic-minded endeavors and planning throughout the 1820s and 30s. New municipal oversight prompted many land speculators to invest outside of the legally defined city and capitalize on alternative economic opportunities beyond municipal jurisdiction. Within a few years after incorporation, over fifty subdivisions had been established outside of the city limits of St. Louis while the city itself had failed to improve significantly any city streets or provide adequate services. This led the city to expand its boundaries through state legislative means and pressure state legislators to raise state-wide taxes to help fund infrastructure needs in St. Louis City, creating further rifts between St. Louisans and residents beyond the city limits.

While the establishment of city and state governments changed the channels through which control flowed, the intersection of government, patronage, and private interest quickly realigned to form what Sandweiss terms a "legal and ideological framework for the authoritarian, theocratic glue that had held together the landscape of early-colonial Saint Louis."[25] A small group of individuals and families continued to control the land and determine public policy, passing power along familial lines, the legacies of which are still evident in the region today. Not unlike the histories of liberalism and neoliberalism in the United States more generally, St. Louis maintained two steadfast trends—the strengthening of local control held by historically powerful systems of patronage, and the persistent resolve of private capital to exploit loopholes, form alliances, and co-opt resources within those systems. As with many American cities, the metropolitan landscape of St. Louis today can be read according to the struggle between public and private interests, although the case of St. Louis resulted in a particularly fragmented physical and political landscape where local autonomy emerged as an inalienable right and, as a result, private development has capitalized on the fierce competition between small governmental entities.

2.2 The shaping of North St. Louis County

Prior to Missouri statehood, landowners of French heritage (including the family of Auguste Chouteau and Jefferson's appointed land commissioner, J. B. C. Lucas) claimed large tracts of originally tribal land outside the settlement in what would become North St. Louis County. J. B. C. Lucas and his oldest son, Charles, allegedly gained many of these tracts by falsifying dates of claims under the New Madrid Act. J.B.C. Lucas acquired 640 acres in North St. Louis County near the mouth of the Missouri River. The property was comprised of densely wooded rolling hills with many spring-fed streams running through prairie-like valleys, which were said to have been traditional hunting grounds for several Native American tribes in the area. Lucas named the property Normandy because it allegedly reminded him of the province in France from which he came. There were several cities already established in the nearby area, including Florissant, which was founded in the late 1700s.[26]

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[25] Ibid., 45.

[26] Based on historical narratives in the Normandy Area Historical Association Archives, Box 14, Folders 1–18, including "A History of Normandy"; "A History of Greendale"; "Capsules of Normandy History"; Pine Lawn (History)"; "A Tribute to Bellerive Acres"; Robert Hereford, "History of Normandy," February 23, 1946; Ward

J. B. C Lucas's oldest son, Charles Lucas, built his law firm on the New Madrid Land Claims Act and added another 1150 acres to "Normandy" using the 1815 Act, even though he had not owned land damaged by the earthquake prior to 1815. Charles Lucas built a home on the property but died two years later in a duel with Senator Thomas Hart Benton over remarks made in a courtroom. Charles's land was willed to his sister Ann Lucas Hunt, whose influence shaped much of what are known as the Normandy Suburbs in North St. Louis County today. The area was later referred to as 'The Little Rome of the West' due to the numerous religious orders and institutions to which Ann Lucas Hunt sold and gifted land.[27] Consequently, the patterns of development in this area—as pockets of independently planned residential streets located between sprawling religious institutions, cemeteries, and country clubs—contributed to the physically fragmented nature of this area.

Figure **2.2**. Home of James Lucas in North St. Louis County, built circa 1830 (source: Missouri History Museum).

Widowed twice by 1842, Hunt managed the large estate she inherited, giving land in North St. Louis County to nine Catholic institutions.[28] Charles and Anne Lucas's brother

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Barnes, "The Story of Normandy," and "Normandy History Has Colorful Background," *Community Journal*, August 3, 1966.

[27] Ibid.

[28] These include St. Anne's Church and School, Loretto Sisters Monastery, the Convent of the Immaculate Heart and Good Shepherd's Home, The Cenacle, St. Vincent's Orphans Home and Sanitorium, Incarnate Word

James, who built an estate in Normandy but maintained a residence in St. Louis City, was highly successful in business and involved in politics as a state senator from 1834 to 1845, running unsuccessfully as the Whig candidate for mayor of St. Louis in 1847. While J. B. C. Lucas is recognized as someone who shaped St. Louis City history and geography, Ann Lucas Hunt and James Lucas are considered patrons of North St. Louis County. Hunt, in particular, continues to be a celebrated philanthropist in the commonly told histories of the St. Louis region, credited for her vast generosity.[29] The fact that the 1850 U.S. census reveals that Ann Lucas Hunt held eight 'Negroes' in slavery and James H. Lucas held twenty-three at their residences in North St. Louis County does not seem to impact their status as the benevolent patrons of North St. Louis County.[30]

North St. Louis County was shaped by another well-known figure in American history. When William Clark returned to St. Louis from his expedition with Meriwether Lewis, he was appointed Superintendent of Indian affairs in 1807 and settled in St. Louis. He would later be named governor of the Missouri Territory in 1812. Clark's primary duty was to negotiate treaties with native tribes and relocate them from their land in the Louisiana Territory to reservations throughout the United States. To this end, Clark needed camping and hunting grounds for the Indian delegations numbering in the hundreds in order to "make them comfortable and open to negotiation."[31] He purchased 1,231 acres from Auguste Chouteau just south of Lucas's 'Normandy' in North St. Louis County, which included springs, groves, and ponds with excellent hunting in order to accommodate large delegations of Native American tribes. When Clark acquired the land, the middle of which is present-day Pine Lawn, he is said to have called the area Minoma—the name given by local tribes because of its many sweet water streams and springs.[32] Clark built a colonial style farmhouse on the site for his family, and it was on the hilltop called Counsel Grove, a name still used in the area, that many Indian tribes ceded their land to the United States government. Upon his death in 1838, William Clark's land passed to his son Meriwether Lewis Clark, who later subdivided the land for private development, golf courses, and country clubs. William Clark, like many prominent St. Louisans, had at least one documented child with a Native American woman (Figures 2.3 and 2. 4), although that son did not benefit from his father's estate.

Convent, Marillac Provincial House, The Mother House for the Sisters of Charity, and the Oblate Sisters of Providence.

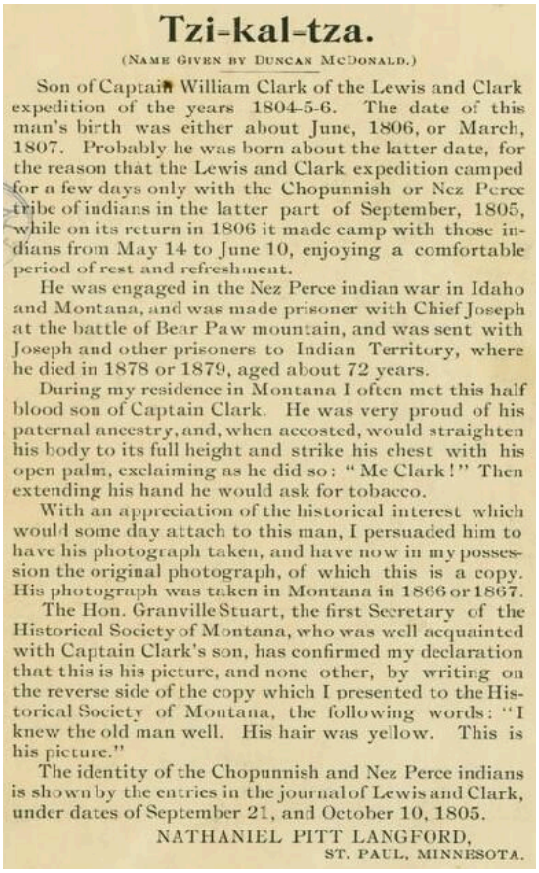
[29] See, for example, the Lucas-Hunt Story.

[30] "United States Census (Slave Schedule), 1850 ." Database with images. *FamilySearch.* NARA microfilm publication M432. Washington, DC: National Archives, n.d.

[31] Based on historical narratives in the Normandy Area Historical Association Archives, Box 14, Folders 1–18, including "A History of Normandy"; "A History of Greendale"; "Capsules of Normandy History"; "Pine Lawn (History)"; "A Tribute to Bellerive Acres," Robert Hereford, "History of Normandy," February 23, 1946; Ward Barnes, "The Story of Normandy," and "Normandy History Has Colorful Background," *Community Journal*, August 3, 1966.

[32] Ibid.

Figure **2.3**. Tzi-kal-tza, recognized as the son of William Clark. (source: Missouri Historical Society).



Tzi-kal-tza.

(NAME GIVEN BY DUNCAN McDONALD.)

Son of Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition of the years 1804-5-6. The date of this man's birth was either about June, 1806, or March, 1807. Probably he was born about the latter date, for the reason that the Lewis and Clark expedition camped for a few days only with the Chopunnish or Nez Perce tribe of indians in the latter part of September, 1805, while on its return in 1806 it made camp with those indians from May 14 to June 10, enjoying a comfortable period of rest and refreshment.

He was engaged in the Nez Perce indian war in Idaho and Montana, and was made prisoner with Chief Joseph at the battle of Bear Paw mountain, and was sent with Joseph and other prisoners to Indian Territory, where he died in 1878 or 1879, aged about 72 years.

During my residence in Montana I often met this half blood son of Captain Clark. He was very proud of his paternal ancestry, and, when accosted, would straighten his body to its full height and strike his chest with his open palm, exclaiming as he did so: "Me Clark!" Then extending his hand he would ask for tobacco.

With an appreciation of the historical interest which would some day attach to this man, I persuaded him to have his photograph taken, and have now in my possession the original photograph, of which this is a copy. His photograph was taken in Montana in 1866 or 1867.

The Hon. Granville Stuart, the first Secretary of the Historical Society of Montana, who was well acquainted with Captain Clark's son, has confirmed my declaration that this is his picture, and none other, by writing on the reverse side of the copy which I presented to the Historical Society of Montana, the following words: "I knew the old man well. His hair was yellow. This is his picture."

The identity of the Chopunnish and Nez Perce indians is shown by the entries in the journal of Lewis and Clark, under dates of September 21, and October 10, 1805.

NATHANIEL PITT LANGFORD,
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA.

Figure **2.4**. Description written by photographer located on the back of the photo (source: Missouri Historical Society).

2.3 Race and histories of mid-nineteenth-century St. Louis

As Jefferson had predicted, compromise would be brief, and Missouri would again figure large in the debate over slavery and events precipitating the American Civil War. When Dred Scott, an enslaved person residing in St. Louis, sued for his freedom in a case eventually heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1847, the court ruled that 'slaves' and their descendants were not protected by the U.S. Constitution and could never be granted citizenship.[33] The decision essentially prohibited free states from granting privileges of citizenship to all Blacks and added fuel to the fire in the U.S. Congress, which was divided on the issue of slavery. Legal scholars attribute the legacy of the Dred Scott decision to the court's ruling fifty years later in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896, which legalized racial segregation and established the policy of 'separate but equal' in order to mediate the granting of limited African-American citizenship and the violent pushback by white citizens that ended post-Civil War Reconstruction.[34] Located at the geographical and cultural intersections between North/South and East/West, St. Louis walked the line on the issue of slavery for over a century based largely on self-interest.

[33] Judgment in the U.S. Supreme Court Case *Dred Scott v. John F.A. Sanford*, March 6, 1857; Case Files 1792–1995; Record Group 267; Records of the Supreme Court of the United States; National Archives.

[34] *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, Judgement, Decided May 18, 1896; Records of the Supreme Court of the United States; Record Group 267; *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163, #15248, National Archives.

The years between Missouri's entrance into the Union and the Supreme Court decision on the Dred Scott case saw the expansion of the slavocracy in the South, a development that grew the economy of the entire Mississippi Valley. Sitting at an important crossroads of industrialization, transportation, and commerce up and down the Mississippi River, St. Louis played an important role in western development (particularly after the discovery of gold in California in 1848) and as an important market for all things, including Black bodies. More than two dozen 'slave dealers' operated out of St. Louis, and people held as slaves brought a high price to work the fields in north-central and western Missouri. The *New York Tribune* remarked in 1855, "In no part of the Union is slavery more profitable than in Missouri and in no part of the Union do slaves bring more in the market, either to sell or hire."[35] Many prominent as well as average St. Louis families owned slaves and 'hired' them out to companies and individuals who then paid wages back to the families. This included many of the men 'working' on the riverboats up and down the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

A large influx of European immigrants in the mid-nineteenth-century added to rising tensions between pro- and anti-slavery movements in Missouri. These immigrants, including many German and Irish, who at least in theory were largely against slavery, would later turn the political tide against Black rights following the Civil War, when free Blacks were pitted against whites and considered as a threat to low-wage laborers. Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, announced in 1862, enslaved Blacks in St. Louis were allowed to buy their freedom for a high price. Some were freed by slaveholders who had parented children by enslaved people, or through the wills of people holding enslaved people. Some also escaped bondage through freedom suits, which allowed 'slaves' to sue for their freedom if they believed they were held illegally. In 1850, the population of St. Louis was 77,860, with 2,656 enslaved people and 1,398 who were counted as 'free Negros.' While countless passed across the auction block on the steps of the St. Louis courthouse and were sent down the Mississippi River, and thousands more worked the fields of rural Missouri, the experience of urban slavery in St. Louis was varied, and the mixing of unfree and free persons occurred in public spaces as well as in church and other settings. A small but established Black aristocracy lived among white slaveholding society in St. Louis, albeit with significantly limited opportunities. A few were said to be among the wealthiest people in St. Louis due to business success and through inheritance, and many had known familial ties to elite white St. Louis families.

In 1848, Cyprian Clamorgan, who was of mixed race, published a small book called *The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis*, in which he argued that all people with African blood are not alike. As part of his argument, Clamorgan asserts that in St. Louis in particular, the long history of mixing along multiple transit routes amounts to the possibility that any St. Louisan might be traced back to Africa. He writes,

> The free colored people of St. Louis are surrounded by peculiar circumstances. Many of them are separated from the white race by a line of division so faint that it can be traced only by the keen eye of prejudice—a

[35] Quoted in Henry W. Berger, *St. Louis and Empire: 250 Years of Imperial Quest and Urban Crisis* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University, 2015), 29.

> line so dim indeed that, in many instances that might be named, the stream of African blood has been so diluted by mixture with Caucasian, that the most critical observer cannot detect it. We, who know the history of all the old families of St. Louis, might readily point to the scions of some of our "first families," and trace their genealogy back to the swarthy tribes of Congo or Guinea. Such, however, is not our present purpose. Our business is with those who have the mark unmistakably fixed upon their brows.[36]

Clamorgan goes on to address the findings of the U.S. Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case just one year prior to the time of his writing:

> According to the decision of Chief Justice Taney, a colored man is not a citizen of the United States, and consequently has no political rights under the Constitution. . . .We shall not, in this place, call in question the judgment of the learned Chief Justice, who has in this State kindred of a darker hue than himself; but we may be permitted to show in what manner the political influence of the colored man is felt, and how in every important election, his interest is exerted on behalf of his favorite candidate.[37]

Clamorgan uses the rest of the text to describe in detail the success and influence that various members of the colored community had within the social, economic, and political structure of St. Louis due to their wealth and social standing. While clearly not a fan of slavery, Clamorgan, and the people he highlights, did not generally view the 'Negro race' as equally deserving of rights or status. Physical appearance, social etiquette, and the ability to amass large amounts of money were the chief factors that determined who was worthy of equality. This theme of 'Negro uplift' would continue for over a century and arguably continues today through the cultural politics that Black leaders in North St. Louis County use to justify the denial of rights to other Black residents.

During the same period of which Clamorgan writes, William W. Brown was held in slavery in St. Louis. Brown was owned by an average St. Louis businessman and hired out to a slave-trader who amassed 'gangs' of enslaved Blacks, transporting and selling them up and down the Mississippi River between New Orleans and St. Louis.[38] In *Narrative of William W. Brown*, Brown's accounts of slavery in St. Louis match Stoddard's earlier observations that life under slaveholders in St. Louis was just as brutal as the Southern plantation experience (if not more so). Brown places particular emphasis on, and describes in detail, the extreme brutality directed toward Black women and the denigration of their bodies, including that of his mother. Brown also foregrounds how enslaved Blacks, free Blacks, and whites lived in close proximity in the city. He describes how white St. Louisans prided themselves on allowing their slaves to belong to the same church they themselves attended, offering them tea in the parlor one minute and viciously beating them the next. Regarding the 'raising of slave stock' and the use of religion, Brown writes,

> Who is it, I ask, that supplies them with the human beings that they are tearing asunder? I answer, as far as I have any knowledge of the State where I

[36] Clamorgan, *The Colored Aristocracy of St. Louis*, 45–46.
[37] Ibid., 47.
[38] William W. Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave* (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1847).

> came from, that those who raise slaves for the market are to be found among all classes, from Thomas H. Benton down to the lowest political demagogue, who may be able to purchase a woman for the purpose of raising stock, and from the Doctor of Divinity down to the most humble lay member in the church. It was not uncommon in St. Louis to pass by an auction-stand, and behold a woman upon the auction-block, and hear the seller crying out, "How much is offered for this woman? She is a good cook, good washer, a good obedient servant. She has got religion!" Why should this man tell the purchasers that she has religion? I answer, because in Missouri, and as far as I have any knowledge of slavery in the other States, the religious teaching consists in teaching the slave that he must never strike a white man; that God made him for a slave; and that, when whipped, he must not find fault,—for the Bible says, "He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes!" And slaveholders find such religion very profitable to them.[39]

The campaign to publish slave narratives such as Brown's was part of efforts, mostly by northern whites, to abolish slavery in the U.S. by revealing the degrees of inhumanity practiced and accepted by white Americans. Other anti-racist campaigns used similar tactics, such as the anti-lynching campaign led largely by Black women fifty years later, the 'We Charge Genocide' petition of 1951 that exposed state-sanctioned racist practice, and the recent Say Her Name campaign focused on Black queer women. These efforts to make visible the continuous violence exacted on Black bodies and reveal the perpetual practices of inhumanity carried out by white actors and the state across time and space.[40]

Wishing to appear to be on a higher moral plane than Southerners while also engaging in vast practices of cruelty, St. Louisans continued to walk the line between Northern and Southern sympathies. The city played an important role in the Civil War, and residents were bitterly divided on the issue of slavery. St. Louis was used as a Union post; however, the rest of Missouri largely supported the Confederacy, and state politics were highly contentious before, during, and after the war. The nation's major lines of communication with points west were anchored in Missouri, including the Pony Express. Three major trails—the California, Oregon, and Santa Fe—originated from St. Louis, and the confluences of the Missouri, Mississippi, and Illinois Rivers made the city a strategic location for the production and transfer of war resources. Consequently, the region

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[39] Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown*, 83.

[40] The anti-lynching campaign and movement was active between 1890 and the 1930s and was comprised of mostly Black Americans trying to pressure state and federal legislators to pass anti-lynching laws by shining a light on the horrors of lynching practices and keeping track of the number of lynchings that had occurred. The 'We Charge Genocide: The Crime of Government Against the Negro People' petition was a paper written by the Civil Rights Congress and delivered to the United Nations in Paris in 1951. It used the U.N.'s definition of genocide to highlighted the many ways Black Americans were victims of state violence and genocide. The Say Her Name campaign, according to the website, is a gender-inclusive racial justice movement that campaigns against police brutality and anti-Black violence against Black women in the United States. The campaign highlights the gender-specific ways violence disproportionately affects Black women, especially Black queer and trans women, by making specific acts highly visible.

experienced much economic and population growth during the decade of the 1860s. By 1870, it was the eighth largest city in the United States.[41]

Contentious politics around slavery, immigration, transportation, and labor were largely divided between St. Louis City and the rural county and state throughout the short-lived Reconstruction period in Missouri. Leaders of St. Louis City felt unduly governed by what they considered a backward state legislature and county administration, with particular resentment toward "the authority of an antiquated and irresponsible power called a county court."[42] The politically driven takeover of St. Louis city police by the state prior to the Civil War was one point of contention that foreshadowed contestations over municipal autonomy in the years that followed. Furthermore, the largely anti-urban and rural-leaning attitudes within St. Louis County fueled animosity toward city residents. The relatively new and large population of Irish and German immigrants that settled in St. Louis City initially opposed slavery and supported Union efforts throughout the Civil War. Upon emancipation, however, immigrant labor interests began to view large numbers of free Blacks moving northward as a threat to wages and employment. Fueled by management, European immigrants became a significant force in state politics against Reconstruction policies. These sentiments were encouraged by those opposed to labor rights, who consistently tried to pit white and Black workers against one another.

The Veiled Prophet Ball and secret society, for example, were conceived in 1878 as a way to reestablish the hierarchy of management over labor (after labor strikes in the 1880s)[43] by reinforcing class distinction, white colonial heritage, and heteropatriarchy in St. Louis—furthering the rift between white and Black workers in the face of Reconstruction and efforts to organize workers. The Veiled Prophet Ball, which continues in St. Louis to this day, uses blatantly racist and misogynistic imagery and illustrates exclusionary practices deeply ingrained in the parochial culture of aristocracy in St. Louis. As part of the ball, the St. Louis elite present their daughters to a secretly chosen 'veiled prophet,' loosely based on the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, who chooses the new 'queen of love and beauty' reportedly based on her father's influence in the community.[44] The list of queens reads as a 'who's who' of families in St. Louis. In recent history, the ball has been the focus of protests against racial and sexual oppression, most notably in the 1960s and 1970s, including when members of ACTION (Action Council to Improve Opportunities for Negros) unveiled the prophet in 1972.[45] More recently, the ball has been the target of Ferguson protesters and

[41] U.S. Census data, 1870.
[42] St. Louis Home rule Charter of 1876, *Missouri Republican*, August 6, 1875, 2.
[43] The 1880s saw a series of labor strikes and agreements across the United States that, to some extent, brought Black and white workers together against industrial management. The Great Southwest Strike of 1886 was a railroad strike involving the Knights of Labor against Jay Gould's railroad empire in Texas, Arkansas; Missouri, Kansas; and Illinois. The following year, the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 culminated in the 1877 St. Louis general strike, which galvanized workers across the city. It was ended when an estimated 8,000 troops and police killed at least eighteen people and imprisoned the leaders. Cumulatively, these strikes resulted in much backlash against organized labor and renewed efforts to racialize labor organizing.
[44] See, for example, Lucy Ferriss, *Unveiling the Prophet* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005) and Thomas M. Spencer, *The St. Louis Veiled Prophet Celebration: Power on Parade* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 2000).
[45] Ferriss, *Unveiling the Prophet*.

Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment (MORE), which launched an 'Unveil the Prophet' campaign in 2015 aimed at exposing how powerful corporations and institutions in St. Louis support the oppression of African Americans, women, and queer individuals. MORE has also revealed how prominent St. Louis corporations have specific connections to the prison industrial complex.[46]

Figures **2.5** and **2.6.** Two posters for the early Veiled Prophet Ball, circa 1883 (source: Wikimedia).

Figures **2.7** and **2.8**. Two recent images of the Veiled Prophet Ball (source: Black Tie Photo).

[46] In an article based on interviews with representatives from Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment, *Feministing* reported, "[MORE] is targeting the Veiled Prophet Organization in its inaugural #UnveilTheProfitweek of action to expose the 'power behind the police' — the corporate executives, developers, bankers, and others who shape (and profit from) people's lives in Ferguson and beyond." http://feministing.com/2015/07/02/removing-the-mask-ferguson-organizers-expose-veiled-profit-in-st-louis/.

Figure **2.9**. Percy Green and members of ACTION (Action Council to Improve Opportunities for Negroes) protesting the Veiled Prophet Ball, October 3, 1969. (source: Gene Pospeshil/St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

3. HOMERULE AND A CULTURE OF POLITICAL AUTONOMY

3.1 The 'Great Divorce' and the growth of suburban North St. Louis County

The political rift between the city and the county culminated when the Missouri electorate ratified a new state constitution in August 1875 that included provisions for St. Louis City to adopt a charter and establish the first example of constitutional municipal home rule in the United States.[47] The following year, a board of freeholders was elected to draft a city charter and develop a scheme for separation from St. Louis County. Although the 1875 constitution limited home rule charters to cities over 100,000 residents, a precedent for municipal autonomy was set in Missouri when the charter and separation scheme narrowly passed. Later, the constitution of 1945 further liberalized provisions for municipal autonomy.[48] In the years after 1875, St. Louis County would be carved up into as many as 99 municipalities (today there are 90). Unlike St. Louis City, these cities still reside within the boundaries of the county; however, levels of municipal autonomy are viewed as a constitutional right within the region.

St. Louis County emerged from the "great divorce" from St. Louis City debt-free and with seemingly endless space to grow. The city, which had assumed the county's debt as part of the scheme of separation, was now contained by a permanent city limit with no possibility for future annexation, an agreement the city would soon come to regret.[49] Commuter development in the county began in earnest for wealthy St. Louisans when a rail line between St. Louis City and the outlying towns of Ferguson (est. 1855) and Florissant

[47] Henry J. Schmandt, "Municipal Home Rule in Missouri," *Washington University Law Quarterly*, 4 (1953): 385-412.

[48] Fourth and current Missouri Constitution of 1945, Art. 6 § 19(a).

[49] The city has unsuccessfully attempted to rejoin the county four times since 1876. For a discussion of merger plans, see Peter W. Salsich, Jr. and Samantha Caluori, "Can St. Louis City and County Get Back Together? (Do Municipal Boundaries Matter Today?)," *St. Louis University Public Law Review* 34, no. 13 (2014) 13–50.

was built two years after separation from the city. The Suburban and Electric streetcar line was also built into North St. Louis County soon after the rail line and development expanded to include elite planned neighborhoods in the garden city tradition—with large lots, curvilinear streets, and restrictive covenants (Figure 2.17). Describing the developing North St. Louis County suburbs, Annie Orff's 1893 essay in the *Chaperone* (later the *American Women's Review*) describes the prevailing distinction between city and county and how the historical exclusivity of the area was translated into different suburban environments:

> The pleasure of leaving the chaos of the city on the Suburb and Electric car line comes to your mind as you are carried twelve miles through charming environments….. Having left the dirty, noisy city, this entrancing glimpse of arcadian splendor, is refreshing indeed….. The heart of the city dweller yearns for an abode of cleanliness, health, and repose such as is offered by these peerless suburbs. Its residents have the highest social standing, and include the most influential and wealthiest business men. Of course all objectionable features such as factories, dairies or any nuisance are excluded and objectionable people cannot be found here. Future immunity is secured by the requisite restrictions in all deeds to property, which ensure the most noble of neighbors….. This region is not one individual suburb, but a cluster of suburbs that appeal to different tastes and nobilities. This beautiful spot, which was chosen as a home by the illustrious William Clark, is now conspicuous because of a splendid residence of Governor E.R. Francis. That men of such unerring judgment, high standing, and moral fortitude should have chosen this, of all regions for a home, is significant.[50]

In keeping with representations of the city and suburbs at the time, as described in Chapter One, the eight pages of Orff's article portray the city as a chaotic place occupied by objectionable people with questionable moral fortitude whereas the untainted suburbs are home to only the most upstanding citizens. The same cultural politics is used today in North St. Louis County to 'discipline' people moving from the city based on 'moral' arguments linking bodies to space.

The history of land claims in North St. Louis County included original Spanish land deeds confirmed by the U.S. government, long tracts of land used as common fields for agriculture, a large number of claims made under the New Madrid Act following the earthquake of 1812, and U.S. land sold off to private buyers, which conformed to U.S. patterns of land division on a north/south axis. This created what appeared to be a haphazard patchwork of parcels and irregular roads historically established between important sites. The unusually large collections of land by single owners in North St. Louis County, much of which was held by the Lucas, Hunt, and Clark families, in close proximity to rail lines and roads, also drew investors looking for large open spaces (such as cemeteries, golf courses, and country clubs) with nearby transportation. As a result, the development of the area worked in opposition to planning models that promote contiguous arrangements of rationally organized patterns or grids. It was, however, very conducive to

[50] Annie L. Y. Orff, "From City to Suburb: A Glimpse of the Beautiful Spot in the Shadow of St. Louis," *Chaperone Magazine* (1893): 69–71.

establishing small, insulated communities with minimal connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

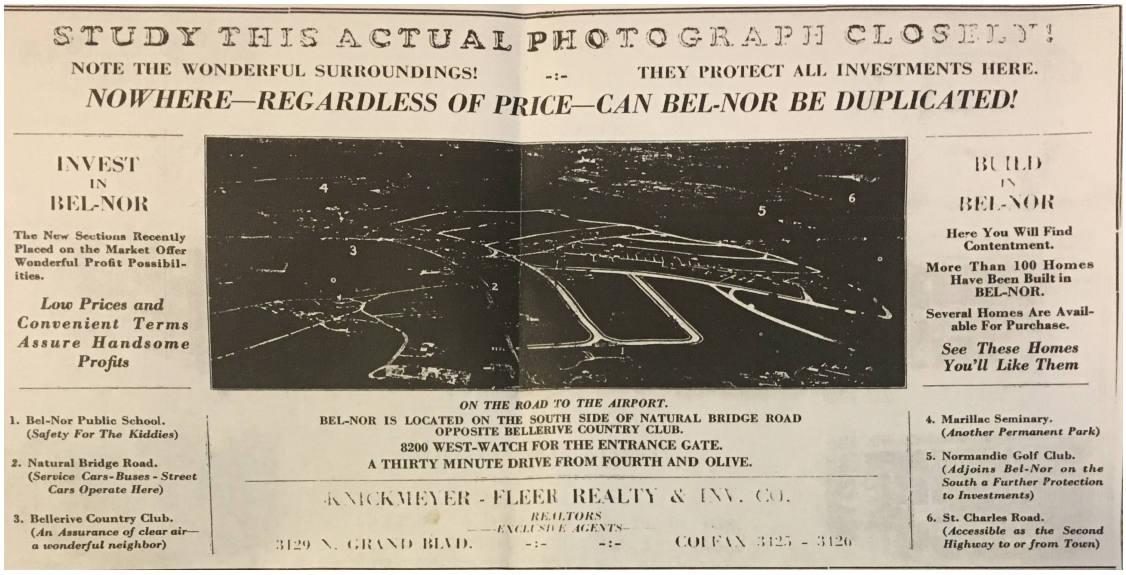

Figure **2.10**. Advertisement (circa 1930) for Bel-Nor subdivision, which later incorporated as a village (source: Missouri Historical Society Library).

Figure **2.11**. Close-up of 1909 plat showing overlays of patterns in N. St. Louis County (source: Missouri Historical Society Library).

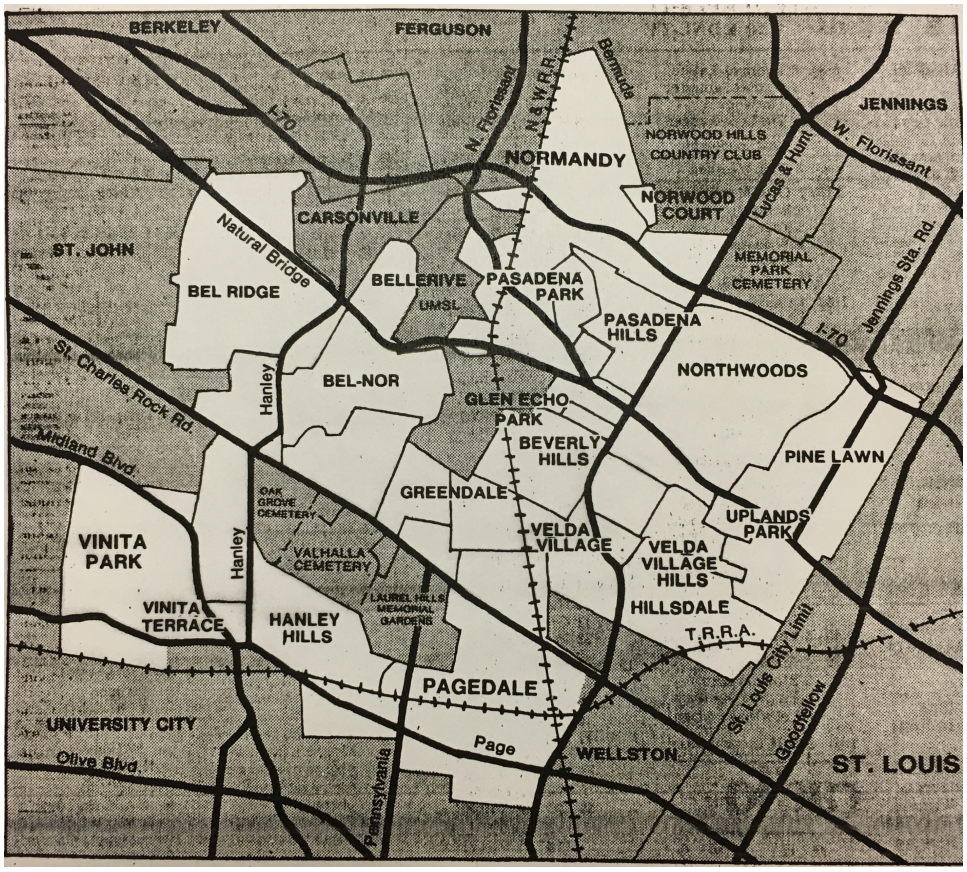

Figure **2.12**. 1981 abstracted map of the Normandy suburbs in North St. Louis County. As a matter of scale, Pagedale, located at the bottom of the map occupies approx. one sq. mile (source: Normandy Municipal Council Archives, Missouri Historical Society Library).

As St. Louis entered the twentieth century as the fourth largest city in the United States, hosting both the World's Fair and Summer Olympic Games in 1904, the city enjoyed international status and entertained hopes of winning a fierce competition with Chicago as the industrial and commodities hub of the Midwest. Although St. Louis ultimately lost its bid, due largely to transportation politics, a significant number of factories and other industrial facilities, including those involved in automotive and aviation development and manufacturing, increasingly located along the commercial rail line running through North St. Louis County to points north and west. Industrial growth brought new residential developments selling small lots to middle- and working-class families finding jobs in new manufacturing industries (Figure 2.18). By the beginning of WWII, the area was dotted with stately neighborhoods, gradually built-up subdivided tracts, cemeteries, country clubs, churches, and other religious institutions, such as Catholic sanatoriums, convents, and schools—all of which had distinct physical boundaries and organizational logics. St. Louis County never looked back after separation from the city, and multiple attempts to reunify the city and county have failed since 1876.[51]

[51] These attempts occurred in 1926, 1930, 1959, 1962, 1984, 1988, and 1990.

Throughout the nineteenth century, a few towns and neighborhoods in North St. Louis County were formally and informally developed by and for African Americans who were excluded from other development—except when they were held as slaves prior to the Civil War and as domestic and agricultural workers thereafter. Several of these communities existed in the early 1800s when free Blacks claimed small farming plots and others gradually settled around them, although this history has largely been lost. At least one Black community grew up around the slave quarters of a plantation in Ferguson following the Civil War. Most of the Black neighborhoods in North St. Louis County were eventually erased by newer development when the area became more desirable to whites and shaped by corresponding government infrastructure projects. A few neighborhoods and blocks have maintained a continuous Black presence in St. Louis County, such as Whitney Street in Pagedale, Rock Hill, areas of Webster Groves, and the city of Meacham Park, annexed by Kirkwood. Kinloch, however, is the only historically Black city in North St. Louis County remaining today—albeit as a shell of its former self.[52]

3.2 Kinloch: the rise and fall of an all-Black community

Due to white backlash against Reconstruction-era policies, the developer of the Kinloch Park subdivision in North St. Louis County in the late 1880s could not sell lots to Black families in proximity to whites, although there were no formal laws restricting such sales. Capitalizing on the northern migration of Blacks seeking jobs and crowding in the Black areas of St. Louis City, the company laid out a subdivision exclusively for Black homeowners called South Kinloch Park, which was a segregated portion of the community founded in 1890. According to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* Black families bought readily, but difficulty was encountered when banks refused to accept 'Negro' notes as collateral for loans.[53] To get around the banks, the developer sold lots, or groups of lots, to whites who made small down payments and gave notes to cover deferred payments. The notes were accepted by the banks, discounted by the companies, and resold to Black buyers at double the price, with profits going to white investors.[54] Ads ran in Black and white newspapers promoting lots in Kinloch Park to Black buyers and white investors. One that ran after the turn on the century stated:

> The good colored people of South Kinloch are building themselves a little city of which they have a right to be proud…. We have been able to induce a number of white people of good standing to come in with us and cooperate with us to help with their money, influence, and good will to make South Kinloch Park a better place for the self-respecting negro to live and make his home. We have given these good people a big share of our profits in order to get their help and reward their good will toward the Negro.[55]

Although framed differently, the trope of the 'self-respecting Negro' continues to be perpetuated in contemporary narratives of North St. Louis County today.

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[52] Much of the information in this paragraph was found in Wright, *St. Louis: Disappearing Black Communities*.
[53] *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "Lots White Men Buy Doubled in Price to Negroes," January 24, 1917.
[54] Ibid.
[55] *The Argus*, circa 1915. Located at the Missouri Historical Society Library.

Fearing a rise in black equality, white Kinloch Park split from Black South Kinloch Park and became the city of Berkeley in 1938, when a second Black member was elected to the board of the segregated school district. In turn, South Kinloch incorporated as Kinloch and was one of the first incorporated all-Black towns in the U.S.[56] The new city of Berkeley surrounded Kinloch on three sides with physical barriers between the two cities. The city of Ferguson bordered Kinloch to the east, and the two cities impacted the development of each other as discussed in Chapter Five. After losing its entire commercial tax base to Berkeley in the split, Kinloch suffered continued disinvestment after WWII and was eventually devastated by the expansion of Lambert International Airport. Today, fewer than three hundred people live in Kinloch, down from 6,501 in 1960.[57]

Figure **2.13**. An ironic sign in Kinloch today (source: Ryan Schuessler/ Al Jazeera).

[56] See Harold M. Rose, "The All-Negro Town: Its Evolution and Function," *Black America: Geographic Perspectives*, eds. Robert Ernst and Lawrence Hugg (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1976), 352–367.
[57] U.S Census data, 1960, 2010.

Figure **2.14**. 2016 satellite map of an area in Kinloch that was not updated since the demolition of the Schnucks, a major local grocery store in the St. Louis region, distribution center (source: Google Maps).

3.3 A patchwork of tiny cities

Following WWII, North St. Louis County was filled in by homebuilders and commercial developers capitalizing on federally subsidized financing for white homebuyers, infrastructure projects, and vast numbers of working- and middle-class families looking to leave increasingly crowed and racially mixed neighborhoods in St. Louis City. The housing in these post-WWII developments is smaller than the older Garden City developments and follows a grid, although each development adheres to a different grid based on major streets radiating from the City of St. Louis. The physical landscape of North St. Louis County therefore consists of a patchwork of infill housing between large tracts of land with older developments, towns, religious and institutional grounds, industrial land and corporate headquarters, the University of Missouri–St. Louis (hereafter UMSL), and Lambert St. Louis International Airport. As a result, the built environment of North St. Louis County is especially fragmented and noncontiguous, laying a physically fragmented groundwork for political fragmentation to follow.

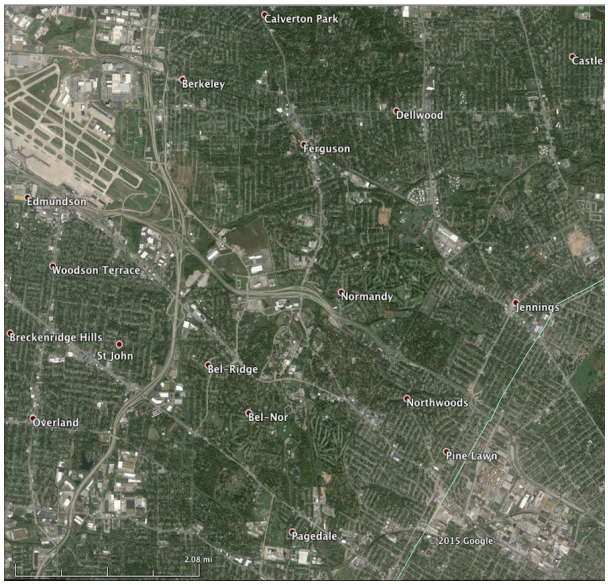

Figure **2.15**. Satellite view of North St. Louis County (source: Google Maps).

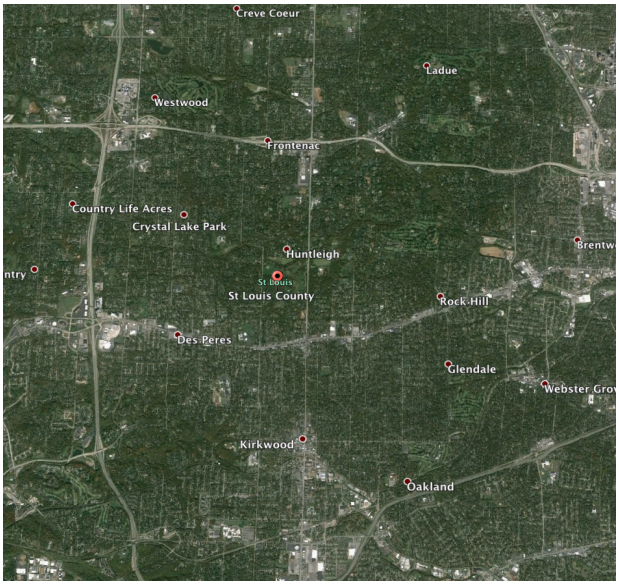

Figure **2.16**. Satellite view of West St. Louis County (source: Google Maps).

[These two images at the same scale illustrate differing development patterns and connectivity between the North and West portions of St. Louis County.]

Like the developments that preceded them, newly settled neighborhoods in North St. Louis County in the 1940s and 50s tended to be ethnically and religiously homogenous. White working-class neighbors and kinship networks in ethnically divided areas of St. Louis City relocated to St. Louis County in similar proximities to one another, and developers often appealed to specific white European ethnic groups when advertising new homes.[58] Churches with ethnically homogenous groups followed congregants to certain suburbs prompting those left behind to follow suit. The suburbs were consciously and unconsciously viewed as a means for ethnic minorities to claim or reinforce "whiteness" in contradistinction to "the dark races" left behind in urban space.[59] Following WW II, government-backed lending practices aimed at white families and veterans combined with sub/urban policy that facilitated transportation to and from the city encouraged white city dwellers to buy homes in the suburbs. Consequently, the expansion of suburban developments dramatically increased. In North St. Louis County, for example, the population of the municipality of Bellefontaine Neighbors grew from 766 residents to 5200 in eighteen months. Between 1950 and 1952, 1330 buildings were completed in the small

[58] I discuss this in Jodi Rios, "Everyday Racialization: Contesting Space and Identity in Suburban St. Louis," in *Making Suburbia: New Histories of Everyday America* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 185–207.

[59] See David R. Roediger's study regarding the formation of white working-class racism in the United States and specifically his discussion of Irish-American white racial formation in *The Wages of Whiteness: Race an the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), 133–166. See also George Lipsitz's discussion of labor politics and the relationality of identities in *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 48–69.

city of Bellefontaine Neighbors.[60] Expansion in North St. Louis County increased again after the University of Missouri established a campus on 128 acres within the boundaries of Bellerive, Bel-Nor, and Normandy, attracting thousands of students in addition to faculty and staff. Researchers at the UMSL subsequently took particular interest in research issues in North St. Louis County.

In keeping with Missouri's spirit of home rule, local autonomy was, and is, highly valued in St. Louis. Residents often identify with their neighborhoods before, or in lieu of, the rest of the metropolitan St. Louis area.[61] Prior to 1960, Missouri state law allowed existing local governments to easily annex adjacent land; the laws also made it very easy for almost any area to incorporate. As a result, a leap-frogging phenomenon of incorporation occurred in St. Louis County between 1940 and 1960 in which neighborhoods large and small incorporated as autonomous and semi-autonomous first-, third-, and fourth-class cities and villages to avoid being joined with other communities that were viewed as different.[62] Because neighborhoods in North St. Louis County tended to be smaller due to physical fragmentation, the area ended up with an exorbitant number of tiny cities that were essentially incorporated neighborhoods, some with barely over 100 homes. Formal and informal histories describe this patchwork of cities as tiny fiefdoms where fierce politics play out over relatively little power. Community pride and the desire to control one's immediate environment with people perceived as like-minded meant that collaboration across municipal boundaries was not easily achieved.

Figure **2.17**. 19th C. Garden City development in N. St. Louis Co. (source: Pasadena Hills Historic District).

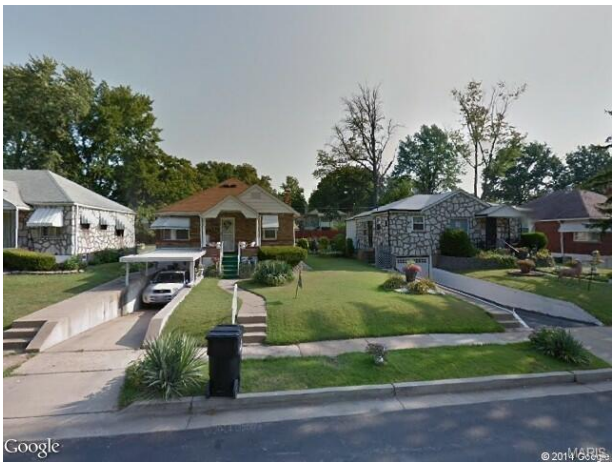

Figure **2.18**. 20th C. Working-class development in North St. Louis Co. (source: Google Maps).

[60] See John Keaser, "The Town That Started From Scratch: How City Fathers of Bellefontaine Neighbors Guided it From Dormant Village of 766 Persons to Population of 5200 in 18 Short Months," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 20, 1952.
[61] This is based on interviews with St. Louis residents and my own experience of living in the region for twenty years.
[62] E. Terrence Jones looks at this phenomenon in *Fragmented by Design*.

Figure **2.19**. Normandy Hills subdivision, 1893. An example of a Garden City Design in N. St. Louis County (source: Missouri Historical Society).

Figure **2.20**. Hazel Hill subdivision in Pagedale. An example of a working-class development at the turn of the 20th C. (source: print owned by author).

While the census tracts of traditional 'suburban' areas have always had levels of diversity and have diversified even more since the 1950s, the representation and imagination of suburbia as white space prevail in St. Louis County. As discussed in Chapter One, the suburbs came to represent white middle class expectations of space and people in the American imagination. These expectations were, and are, used to enforce and police norms in areas that fall outside of traditional definitions of suburban space, as discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

4. 'NEGRO INVASION'

Soon after the rash of incorporation and even before the Fair Housing Act of 1968 opened up previously walled-off areas to African Americans, Black residents were moving to neighborhoods in proximity to Black areas in St. Louis City generally located along the northern border. A handwritten document in the archives of the Missouri Historical Society, entitled "Normandy's Black History," states,

> By 1964, Garfield and Lincoln schools had a significant number of Black children. The James Price family is typical of many Black families who moved into the Normandy area in the 1960's. When James and Maggie and their two sons moved onto Dardenne Street in Pine Lawn, only two Black families lived on their block. Ten years later, in 1974, only one white family remained. Dr. Wright, the principal of Garfield school, recalls that nearly every house and

yard improved in appearance after streets became Black. Mrs. Price said they felt like pioneers in those early days but that Pine Lawn and the Normandy area have made a good home.[63]

4.1 White anxiety and a frenzy of academic research

Civil Rights legislation—specifically the Fair Housing Act of 1968—opened up more suburban areas to black homebuyers by 1970. White suburbanites and institutions across the U.S. resorted to other tactics to limit the potential for Black citizens to buy homes in historically white neighborhoods. As documented by multiple published studies between 1973 and 1976, St. Louis County policymakers, suburban municipal leaders, and grassroots organizations attempted to subdue public panic and slow the "inevitable social and physical decline" resulting from the influx of African-American families from St. Louis City into the perceived all-white county.[64] Task forces were assembled and meetings took place between residents, civic leaders, and academic researchers. As in cities across the United States, race tensions ran high and many residents from that period remember acts of violence and property damage aimed at discouraging new Black families from moving in and white homeowners from selling to Black buyers.[65] Blockbusting tactics among realtors were well documented, and redlining strategies among lenders became commonplace in St. Louis County throughout the 1970s.[66] According to researchers, administrators, and leaders (all using a vocabulary of war), many areas 'fell quickly' to 'negro invasion,' with some areas reaching 70 percent Black by 1975.[67]

A research study on racial attitudes, carried out in 1968 by the University of Michigan and sponsored by the National Commission on Civil Disorders, looked at fifteen large cities across the United States. The researchers reported in 1970 that white residents in St. Louis had the least liberal attitudes concerning race of all fifteen cities by several percentage points.[68] Based on the report, white residents in St. Louis were considerably more likely to mind if a Black family moved in next door or if their children had Black friends. The majority of white respondents in St. Louis also said they were more likely to become friends with a white person with a much lower level of education than themselves than a Black person with the same level of education. Similarly, a study of residents (70% white, 30% Black) in the Normandy area of North St. Louis County, carried out in 1974 by Sarah Boggs and E. Terrence Jones at the UMSL, reported that residents believed the most

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[63] Oral history entitled "Normandy's Black History," Normandy Historical Society Archives, Missouri Historical Society Library.

[64] University of Missouri–St. Louis Study: "Factors in Suburban Blight: A Study of Housing in Northwoods, Pine Lawn, and Hillsdale," conducted by Rick Corry and Tom Dyer, (June, 1973); Normandy Municipal Council, Citizens' GOALS Project "Report," Don Moschenross, Director (November, 1973); University of Missouri–St. Louis Study: "Households in the Normandy School District," supervised by Sarah Boggs and E. Terrence Jones, (November, 1974); Sutker and Sutker, *Racial Transition in the Inner Suburb*; University of Missouri–St. Louis Study: "Local Government Intervention in the Face of Mortgage Disinvestment: The Case of Normandy," conducted by Bryan Downes, Joan Saunders, John Collins, (January, 1976).

[65] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.

[66] Gordon, *Mapping Decline*.

[67] Based on statistics published by the Normandy Municipal Council in a report entitled "A Look at the Normandy Area: A Study Compiled for the Normandy Residential Services," (July 1975).

[68] Robert Adams, "St. Louis Ranks Worst in Survey of Racism," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 5, 1970.

important problems facing the area included racial conflicts, danger to people and property from perceptions of increasing crime, and real estate agents steering white people away from the Normandy area.[69] The study also showed that of those who believed the quality of housing was becoming worse, almost all said it was due to the "in-migration of Blacks and 'undesirables'" and the corresponding "lack of home maintenance."[70] The study reported that most white residents liked municipal autonomy, most wanted cities to pass ordinances aimed at property maintenance, and most supported maintaining dwellings for small families through occupancy permits.

In contrast to perceptions of what happens to neighborhoods when Black residents move in, a study carried out in 1969 by the Center of Community and Metropolitan Studies at UMSL that looked at schools, housing, and municipal governments within the Normandy School District in North St. Louis County found the following: 1) There were no substantial differences in the price or condition of homes between integrated neighborhoods and all-white neighborhoods; 2) The primary impetus for whites moving out appeared to be normal changes such as death, retirement, and aging combined with a closed housing market in other areas, as opposed to racial bigotry; 3) School taxes were more apt to pass because Blacks are more likely to support tax levies than the whites they replace; and 4) Black residents demand more services from their governments and are therefore more likely to support municipal consolidation measures than are white residents who fear change.[71] The study did find that white-to-Black turnover in integrated neighborhoods was higher and that when whites did move, the house was sold to a Black buyer at market or above-market rates due to racial steering by real estate agents. One of the researchers conducting this study, Herbert Werner stated to a reporter of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*,

> The idea that Negroes depress property values is a myth fostered by real estate men. There has never been any evidence to support this myth and yet it crops up again and again, including in your own newspaper.[72]

Another study conducted in 1973 by researchers at UMSL looked at factors of suburban blight in three North County municipalities and found that not only did the quality of housing not deteriorate when occupied by Black residents, the quality in fact improved.[73]

4.2 Vocabularies of war

In spite of these early findings, after 1970 white residents began moving out of many areas of North St. Louis County at substantial rates. This shift appeared to confirm the hypothesis of other studies regarding a racial 'tipping point'—that once an area

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[69] Sarah Boggs and E. Terrence Jones, Executive Summary, "Normandy School District Resident Survey," copy located in Normandy archives, Missouri Historical Society Library.
[70] Sarah Boggs and E. Terrence Jones, "A Study of Residents in the Normandy School District," executive summary, located in the archives of the Normandy Municipal Council, Missouri Historical Society Library.
[71] Dana L. Spitzer, "County Area Studied After Blacks Move In," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 6, 1969.
[72] Spitzer, "County Area Studied After Blacks Move In."
[73] Bryan T. Downes, Rick Corry, and Tom Dyer, "Factors in Suburban Blight: A Study of Housing in Northwoods, Pine Lawn, and Hillsdale," Report, UMSL, Department of Political Science, June 1973, page 18 (located in archives at St. Louis Historical Society Library).

(especially a suburban one) becomes 30–40 percent Black, it will eventually become all Black.[74] The momentum of white residents out of the area escalated when media attention was directed to "racial tensions" at Normandy High School in 1970, when more than sixty Black students were suspended following an in-school protest after a Black female student was hit with an object in the lunch room.[75] Well-documented blockbusting tactics by local real estate agents who routinely called residents and sent mailings intended to scare white homeowners into selling their homes added to the white exodus. In 1973 six North County subdivisions complained to county authorities that white residents were continuously harassed by real estate agents, leading to unsuccessful efforts by county council members to pass legislation prohibiting blockbusting practices. Real estate interests defeated the legislation.[76] Another contrast to findings of the 1969 study was that Black leaders, who were eventually voted into office in the 1980s and 90s, did not in fact support municipal consolidation as the researchers predicted. Rather, many Black citizens viewed Black municipal autonomy as a victory for Black suburbanites.

Local studies published on the area throughout the 1970s, along with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Home Owner's Land Corporation (HOLC) guidelines that established risk ratings for lenders, perpetuated a vocabulary of war and associations of risk with Black bodies and space. With racial homogeneity at the top of the risk assessment list used by the FHA, documents stated that neighborhoods "invaded" or "infiltrated" by African Americans had or would lose all value "and fall" to the "occupation" of blacks.[77] Another study stated, "the ineluctable sequence of black penetration to invasion to secession becomes predominant under certain circumstances."[78] Recent writing on the St. Louis suburbs continues to frame 'racial tipping' as a ruinous phenomenon of residential segregation when neighborhoods become all Black, while all-white demographics go unquestioned. White residents and the leadership of St. Louis County, in conjunction with real estate agents acting as gatekeepers, conceded much of North St. Louis County to 'Black occupation' and considered it a casualty to what they saw as the inescapable migration of Blacks out of the city.[79] The implications of the 'discursive wars' carried out in this area are discussed in Chapter Four.

Many white homeowners in North St. Louis County did respond to blockbusting tactics. Initially, homes were sold to middle-class Black families at high prices due to demand and limited inventories available to Black buyers. As other areas in the county opened to middle-class Blacks, demand slowed in North County and many homes were sold

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[74] E. Terrence Jones, "The Municipal Market in the St. Louis Region: 1950–2000," in *St. Louis Metromorphosis: Past Trends and Future Directions*, B. Baybeck and E. T. Jones, eds. (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2004).

[75] See, for example, "Normandy High Gets Tough," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 28, 1970; Normandy Calm After Warning," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 30, 1970; "Classes Resume at Normandy High," *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, November 30, 1970; "Normandy High Reopens—Police Patrol Campus," *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, December 1, 1970; "Parents of Blacks At Normandy Meet," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 7, 1970.

[76] Eric L. Zoeckler, "Split on ending Blockbusting," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 29, 1973.

[77] As cited in Gordon, *Mapping Decline*, 89.

[78] Sutker and Sutker, *Racial Transition in the Inner Suburb*, 32, my emphasis.

[79] Key-Informant Interviews.

'as is' by alarmed sellers to speculators and investors looking to turn homes around quickly for a profit. These homes were cosmetically improved overnight or on a weekend and sold or rented to unsuspecting Black buyers at prices that were still at market rate.[80] Due to hidden problems with many of these homes, new homeowners faced unexpected repairs and system replacements that some were not able to afford. In other instances, the interim owner would divide rooms without a building permit and sell the house as a five-bedroom house, for example, instead of a three bedroom. New owners with large families would move in and subsequently be charged with occupancy violations based on the number of rooms on record with the city.[81] Landlords tended not to fix problems with properties and instead rented to lower income residents when problems arose. HUD, which had increased FHA lending in this area between 1950 and 1970 (allowing lower requirements for white borrowers), also participated in this trend since repossession rates had also increased. Upon repossessing homes, HUD sold off properties 'as is' to investors at reduced prices.

The 'overnight' sales occurring in many areas of North St. Louis County made it difficult for municipalities to oversee housing quality, and this in turn led to more ordinances aimed at property and Black homeowners, including occupancy permit ordinances aimed at excluding larger (Black) families.[82] If people not listed on the occupancy permit of a residence were found to be spending nights, the owner was subject to fines. Without an occupancy permit, children were also not eligible to be enrolled in the public schools. In 1970, the Legal Aid Society became involved in complaints against the city of Pagedale regarding occupancy permits. Several Black families, and in particular Black women, alleged they had been harassed by the city for having more than four children, allowing visiting relatives to stay at their homes, and having babysitters occasionally spent the night when a parent/homeowner was working nights.[83] At the time, the leadership in Pagedale was all white, and the Legal Aid Society threatened racial charges against the city. One of the women involved in the complaint, who was the first Black homeowner on her block, stated, "it has been the most miserable year of my life . . . . because of my white neighbors."[84] While reports of animosity toward Black families in general occurred, single Black mothers were most often the ones making claims regarding harassment by neighbors and by municipalities over ordinance violations.

As neighborhoods in North St. Louis County 'transitioned,' it became almost impossible for potential buyers to receive federally secured loans from banks or saving and loan associations due to the 'risk' associated with Black neighborhoods. As a practice, conventional lenders did not lend to whites in 'transitioning neighborhoods' and instead

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[80] Bryan T. Downs, Joan Saunders, and John N. Collins, "Local Government Intervention in the Face of Mortgage Disinvestment: A Case of Normandy," Revised Working Draft (January 1976), in the archives of the Normandy Municipal Council, Box 14, Folder 11, Missouri Historical Society Library.
[81] See, for example, D. D. Obika, "Beverly Hills Women Says Realtor Lied About House," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 7, 1976.
[82] Downs et al., "Local Government Intervention."
[83] *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "Legal Aid Society May Challenge Pagedale Occupancy Permit Law," May 20, 1970.
[84] Ibid.

encouraged white buyers to take out loans on homes in all-white areas.[85] Documents also show designations of high-risk lending areas in North County zip codes (redlining) by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, which further decreased conventional lending to qualified Black residents. This provided openings for mortgage investment companies (MICs) to make high-interest loans to investors and Black buyers at high interest rates. MICs could provide FHA certified loans although the requirements they placed on borrowers and properties tended to be less strict than conventional lenders. When foreclosures occurred, MICs collected their money and turned the property over to HUD, which in turn started the process over by selling the property quickly. Although saving and loan associations were generally not making conventional loans to residents in 'transitioning neighborhoods,' they were making short-term interim loans to investors at high rates and buying FHA insured loans on the secondary mortgage market—turning them back to FHA when foreclosures occurred.[86] Most people, however, would not learn of similar lending practices that bundled government secured high-risk loans and sold them as 'safe investments' until thirty years later, when a national foreclosure crisis immobilized the U.S. economy. Once again, North St. Louis County foreshadowed trends that would eventually reach a critical mass.

As a result of the largely unseen practices by lenders and those flipping housing in North St. Louis County, Black residents, rather than the institutions driving disinvestment, were blamed for the deterioration of physical property, loss of home values, and a declining tax base. Black homeowners were consequently targeted with ordinance violations for property and occupancy infractions that were initially aimed at curbing blight associated with new Black occupants. Eventually ordinances would be crafted to target not just property but also what could be called 'living while Black,' in order to generate as much income as possible and make up budget deficits brought about by disinvestment and the white panic that had been fanned by the real estate market. Adding to municipal shortfalls and policing-for-revenue practices, in the late 1970s the county-wide sales tax shifted from point-of-sale to distribution tied to population. This change penalized communities losing population and benefited the growing cities to which white residents were moving. Federal urban austerity policies throughout the 1970s, discussed in Chapter One, also meant fewer resources for areas facing disinvestment, and the federal government ended many municipal tax-sharing mandates throughout the Reagan era, leaving struggling cities in North St. Louis County further stranded.

4.3 Political autonomy at all costs

In spite of pushes for consolidation by academic researchers and regional policymakers, stressed cities 'dug in their heels' and increasingly turned to policing and

[85] 'Transitioning neighborhoods' was, and is, a term used by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, which was established by the federal government to determine risk ratings for mortgage lending, and by real estate agents and developers to denote Black presence in neighborhoods without specifically citing race.
[86] The accounts of lending practices in this paragraph are largely based on the research findings reported in, Bryan T. Downes, Joan Saunders, and John Collins, "Local Government Intervention in the Face of Mortgage Disinvestment: The Case of Normandy," Revised Working Draft, UMSL (January 1976). Located in the archives of the Normandy Municipal Council, Box 14, Folder 11, Missouri Historical Society Library.

municipal courts in order to balance their annual budgets.[87] In 1981, Tim Fischesser, the executive director of the Normandy Municipal Council, which formed in 1970 as part of a community extension program at UMSL and partnered with municipal administrators of most cities within the Normandy School District to address common issues, was interview by a reporter from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Fischesser expressed his belief that money would not be enough to push cities to consolidate and overcome residents' psychological block against losing political autonomy.[88] He stated, "What you notice is the variety of ideas that come around. People here (across the larger geography) just don't think alike."[89] These differences were not just racial but existed between neighborhoods where class, ethnicity, and religion established social norms and group identity. When Fischesser was interviewed in 2010 regarding his experience with the Normandy Municipal Council, which disbanded in 1990, he said it had become clear early on in the formation of the council that municipalities would never consolidate on their own accord and the best the council could hope for was to facilitate cooperation around common issues, public services, and community-building events. He acknowledged specific achievements but lamented that many opportunities for cities to work together were thwarted by distrust, competition, and the uneven effects of disinvestment and access to resources across communities.[90]

School districts in North St. Louis County were losing white students at a higher rate than the neighborhoods themselves throughout the 1970s. By the early 1980s it was clear the Normandy School District, which was 85 percent Black in 1981, was on its way to becoming an all-Black district. The district had not received a tax increase since 1969, and two attempts to raise the school tax were voted down in the late 1970s. The defeat at the polls was attributed to the fact that the majority of white residents either did not have school-age children or did not send their children to Normandy schools.[91] Private and parochial schools saw vast increases in white students. Rev. Robert A. Ottoline, the pastor at St. Ann Catholic Church whose school received many of the new white students, told a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reporter in 1981, "Let's face it, there's not going to be any white people moving here and sending their children to Normandy schools."[92] Rev. Ottoline saw his parish as a stabilizing force in the area by proving a place for white children so white families would not be forced to either move or send their children to schools with high numbers of Black children. In response to a question regarding why St. Ann School was thriving when other Catholic schools were in decline, he said, "We have the numbers, we have the whites, and we have money. That's the only way we make it." Rev. Ottoline acknowledged, however, that the tendency for municipalities to resist cooperation and keep to themselves was not a Black/white issue. Regarding the tendency for municipalities to not work together, he said, "Forty or fifty years ago, when everybody out here was white, they had that same problem."[93]

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[87] As stated by Tim Fischesser, interviewed by author on March 10, 2010.
[88] Courtney Barrett, "An Alliance of Diversity," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 30, 1981.
[89] Barrett, "An Alliance of Diversity."
[90] Tim Fischesser, interviewed by author on March 10, 2010.
[91] See Barrett, "An Alliance of Diversity."
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

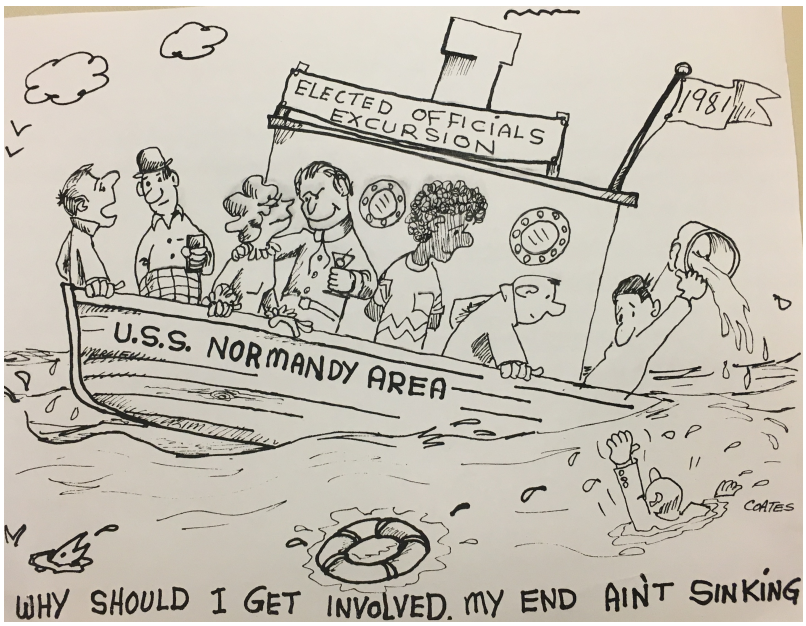

Figure **2.21**. Cartoon from 1981 drawn by Mayor George E. Coates of Beverly Hills in North St. Louis County (source: Missouri Historical Society Library, Normandy Collection).

While the demographic transition of residents in North St. Louis County was swift, demographic transitions in municipal leadership occurred much more slowly. In areas that had become majority Black by 1975, elections in which Black candidates sought to unseat white leadership were still highly contested, and backroom deals, outbursts at city council meetings, violence outside city halls, arrests, and restraining orders were reported throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In Pagedale, for example, Black candidates began running unsuccessfully for office in 1970. By 1972, the city was reported as 70 percent Black, and an all-Black slate for mayor and three aldermanic positions was on the April 4 ballot, which included Mary Louise Carter, the current mayor of Pagedale.[94] All of the candidates were defeated. Black candidates would continue to run and be defeated until 1977, when two Black women were voted into aldermanic positions. The white male mayor of Pagedale during the 1970s was arrested several times and involved in numerous physical altercations at city hall. Allegations of fraud, fixing tickets, and routinely firing anyone that disagreed with him were also common; however, he served as mayor for thirteen consecutive years.[95]

In 1982, Pagedale made national news by electing the first all-Black and all-female city administration in the United States, which included the mayor and five alderpersons.[96]

[94] "Race is Not an Issue, Says All-Black Pagedale Slate," *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 28, 1972.
[95] See George E. Curry, "Police Allege Pagedale Mayor Interfered," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 6, 1980.
[96] Monte Plott, "Pagedale Mayor is Ousted; City Hall Now All Women," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 7, 1982.

Figure **2.22**. Photo published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch when Pagedale became the first city in the U.S. to elect all-Black, all-female leadership. April 11, 1982 (source: Sam Leone/St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

The positive notoriety did not last long, however. Two months later the *Detroit Free Press* reported,

> The meetings of the Board of Alderpersons sometimes resemble Latin American soccer matches with competing factions in the audience shouting loud approval or displeasure at the parliamentary play. Talk of impeachment is common and allegations of threats of physical violence against board members have been made at meetings.[97]

Although this type of behavior was common at city council meetings in Pagedale long before Black women were voted into office, including the white mayor engaging in fistfights during council meetings in the 1970s, the media that began following Pagedale when it made national history with its all-Black and all-female leadership related chaos to an administration of 'fighting Black women.'[98] The St. Louis media, which has a history of portraying local politics in North County municipalities as a circus, had material to work with since shortly after the election the city had three police chiefs at one time due to infighting between the council and the mayor. The mayor and her appointed police chief were also arrested by one of the two additional police chiefs for assault, a charge they both disputed. The mayor accused the arresting police chief of fraud and holding her in a shoe

[97] Joe Swickard, "Government is a Hot Show in a Small Missouri Town," *Detroit Free Press*, July 11, 1982.
[98] "Town Run By All Women Now Has Three Police Chiefs Hired," *The Chillicothe Tribune*, June 17, 1982.

store for five hours against her will, during which time she said he fired shots at her.[99] Based on previous white administrations, such events could be considered normal in Pagedale; however, white administrations were not covered in the same way. Three months after the all-Black, all-female leadership was elected, a white man gained the one open seat on the council. Just before the election, Darlene Crawley, one of the first Black officials elected in 1977 and a harsh critic of the mayor, stated,

> I hope to rectify this all female and all Black image. I'm supporting a white male in the election Tuesday. I'm not looking at color and I'm not looking at sex. I'm looking at six candidates and picking the one I think will be best for Pagedale. Maybe if we break it up a little, some of the attention will go away and we can get back to running the city.[100]

Photos by JIM BALMER

Pagedale Mayor Mary Hall (left) and her chief opponent, Alderperson Darline Crawley.

Government is a hot show in a small Missouri town

Figure **2.23**. In spite of the fact Pagedale politics had long been a 'hot show' under white male leadership, newspapers around the country featured local politics in Pagedale after it became the first city to elect all-Black, all-female leadership (source: JM Balmer/Detroit Free Press).[101]

Pagedale, as well as other small municipalities around it, continued to elect and maintain majority-Black leadership after 1985. Often this leadership was also majority female. Contrary to research predictions, these cities did not become more open to

[99] Michael D. Sorkin, "Pagedale Mayor, Her Choice for Police Chief Arrested," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 17, 1982; Dale Singer and Michael D. Sorkin, "Pagedale Mayor Wants Protection From Chief," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 20, 1982; Michael D. Sorkin and E. S. Evans, "Injunction is Issued in Pagedale Dispute," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 22, 1982.

[100] Ibid.

[101] See note 97.

consolidation measures or municipal cooperation. They also did not curb the trend toward funding municipal budgets through the policing of Black residents and through the courts, which began under white leadership in the 1970s. Rather, these policies were expanded, often in direct relationship to demographic trends. Many Black female leaders interviewed in the early 2000s regarding their experience of coming into municipal leadership in the 1980s and 1990s stated that they were very aware that they would be scrutinized more than their white male predecessors and that nobody wanted to be at the helm of city leadership if, or when, it appeared that dissolution was the only option for their city. Most leaders who were interviewed defended the passing of ordinances aimed at property and behavior in their cities by stating they were continuing to run cities as they had been run previously and that the biggest challenges facing small cities were people who refused to care for property. Leaders believed that Black communities had the same rights as white communities to expect a nice environment, stable home prices, and respectable behavior. According to several leaders, people that do not care for their property or themselves do not belong in suburban cities and "should go back to the projects."[102]

In outlying and larger municipalities of North St. Louis County, such as Ferguson and Florissant, transition in the demographics of residents and leadership lagged behind smaller communities that were closer to Black neighborhoods in St. Louis City. By the time the teenager Michael Brown, Jr. was shot by a white Ferguson police officer in 2014 in Ferguson, the city was 67 percent African American but maintained its majority white leadership, a fact that was often cited as a contributor to the unrest witnessed after the shooting and subsequent data produced by the Department of Justice regarding extreme racialized policing practices in Ferguson.[103] Although the demographic misalignment of the population and the leadership did not help relieve tensions in Ferguson, the presumption that the policing of Black residents based on suburban norms was specifically carried out by white leadership is proven incorrect by the fact that even more extreme forms of racialized policing practices are carried out in multiple cities in North St. Louis County with all-Black leadership. The data and circumstances regarding these practices are discussed in Chapter Three.

What is consistently apparent in the study that follows is how the particular history of this region—which led to vast physical, political, and social fragmentation, along with the relentless pursuit and defense of political autonomy—has resulted in a highly fractured environment of self-interest and hyper-racialized experiences of residents across the region. What is also common to both the preceding narratives and the study that follows is that the labor of St. Louisans of color was and is critical to the existence of the St. Louis region, and practices of violence exacted on Black bodies by white St. Louisans have held few consequences in the past and the present.

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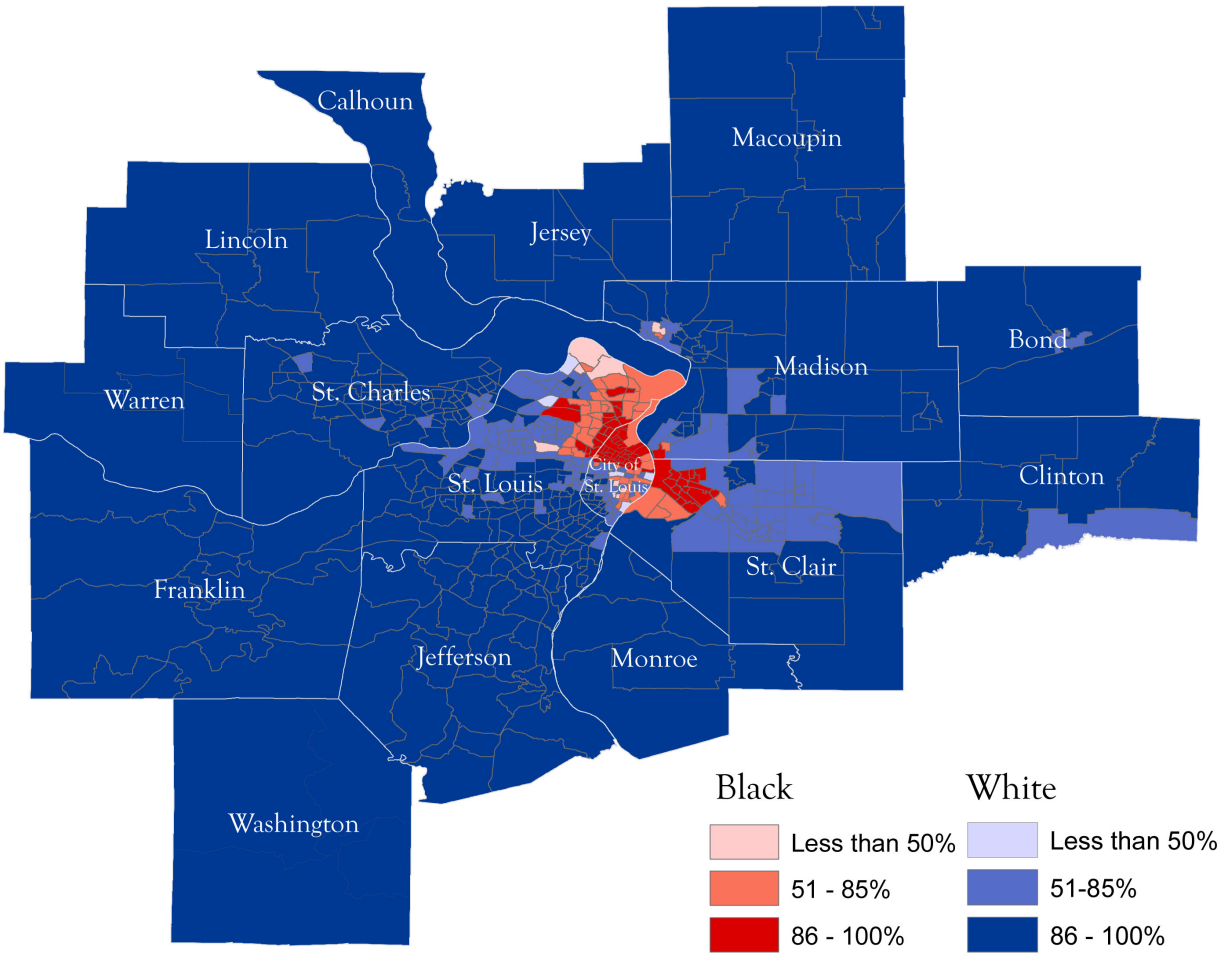
[102] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County elected officials.

[103] United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *The Ferguson Report: Department of Justice Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department* (New York: The New Press, 2015).

5. DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE ST. LOUIS REGION TODAY

Today the St. Louis metropolitan area consists of fifteen counties in two states with approximately 2.8 million people.[104] Encompassing over 9,000 square miles (Map 2.1), the region includes over 300 local governments and 165 school districts with the highest number of taxing authorities in the nation at 26.8 taxing units per 100,000 people.[105] St. Louis County, at just over 1 million people, is by far the most populated county in the region although geographically one of the smallest, covering just 524 square miles. Established as a district in 1804 when the Upper Louisiana Territory was transferred to U.S. control, and as a county in 1812 when the Missouri Territory was formed, St. Louis County is the oldest county in Missouri. The city of St. Louis, which separated from the county in 1876 due to differing political priorities discussed above, has a population today of roughly 320,000 residents, down from a high of 856,796 in 1950, and spans 66.2 square miles.[106]



Map **2.1**. The 15 counties, and St. Louis City, that make up the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. Areas that are less than 50% white or Black are color-coded based on the majority of a single race reported in that census tract. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).

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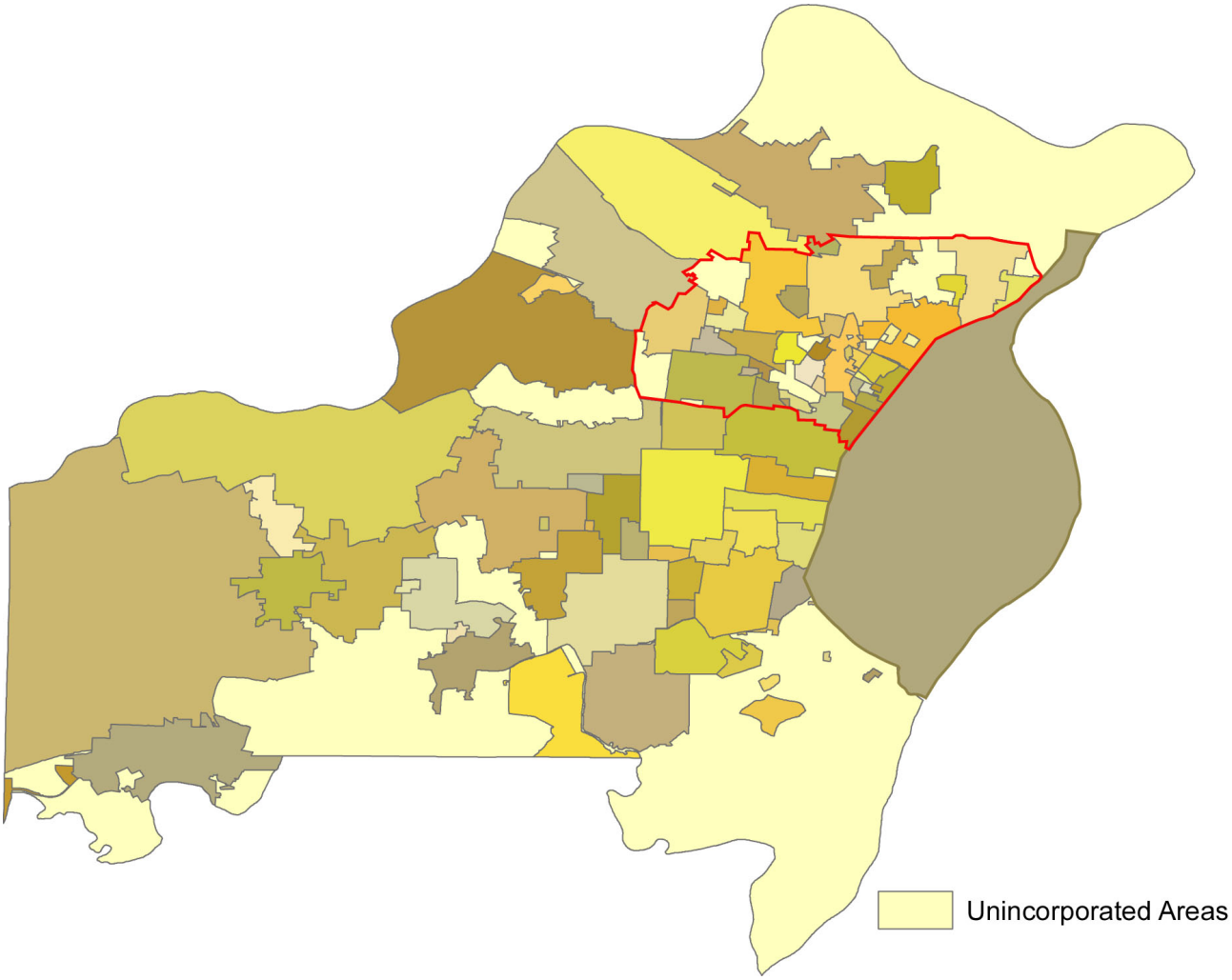
[104] Depending on the source and how boundaries are drawn, the St. Louis region is said to include twelve to seventeen counties. The fifteen counties included in Map 2.1 are based on counties with economies that are highly dependent upon the St. Louis metropolitan area.

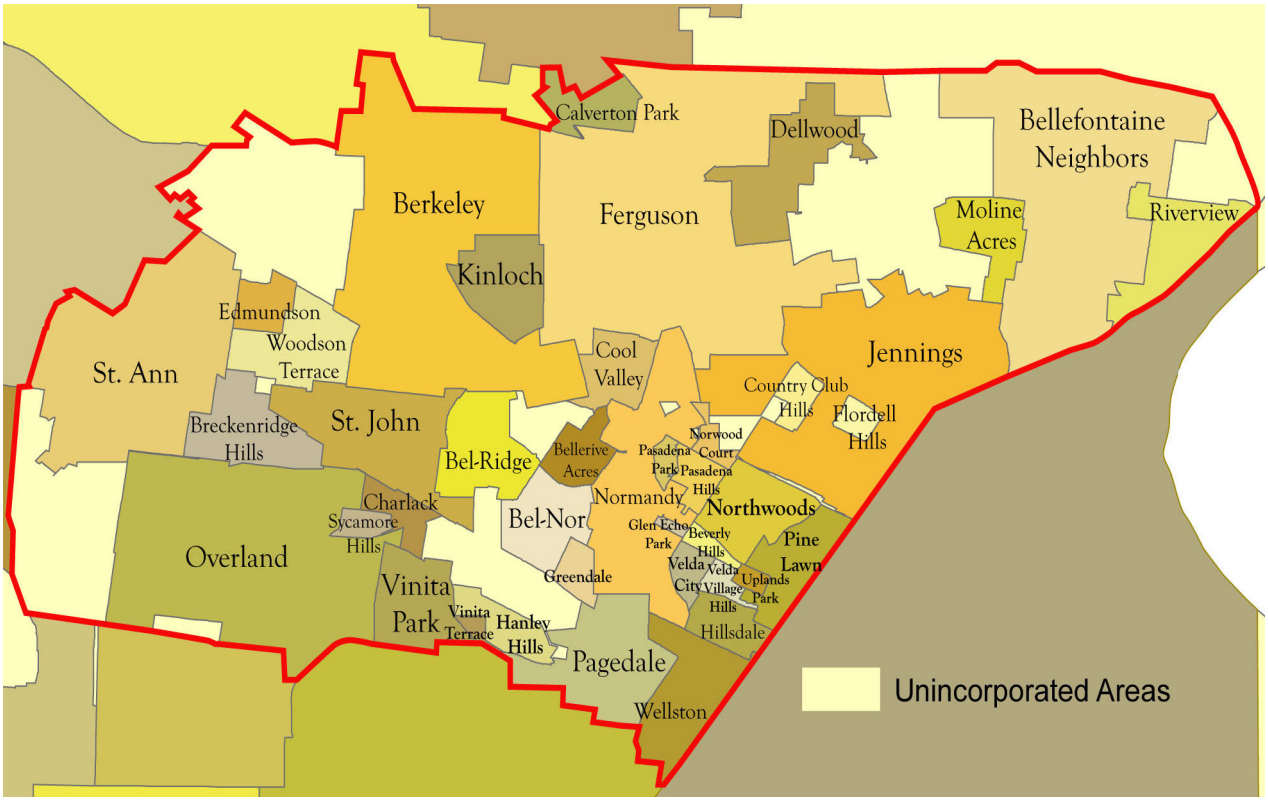
[105] U.S. Census data, 2010.

[106] Ibid.

There are 90 municipalities in St. Louis County today (Map 2.2), of which 81 maintain independent courts, 61 have independent police forces, and all provide some level of basic services. More than half (50) of the 90 municipalities are located in the northern fifth of the county footprint to the north of Olive Boulevard in the area known as North County and 42 municipalities are located in the inner-ring area of North County (Map 2.3). This area covers roughly 50 of the 524 square miles in St. Louis County. Of the 42 municipalities located in the inner-ring area of North St. Louis County, twenty-five can be found within a twelve square mile area known as the Normandy suburbs, roughly defined by Page Avenue, Interstates 70 and 170, and St. Louis City limits. People driving on interstates or thoroughfares in this area may cross seven or eight city limits in a one-to-two-mile stretch.



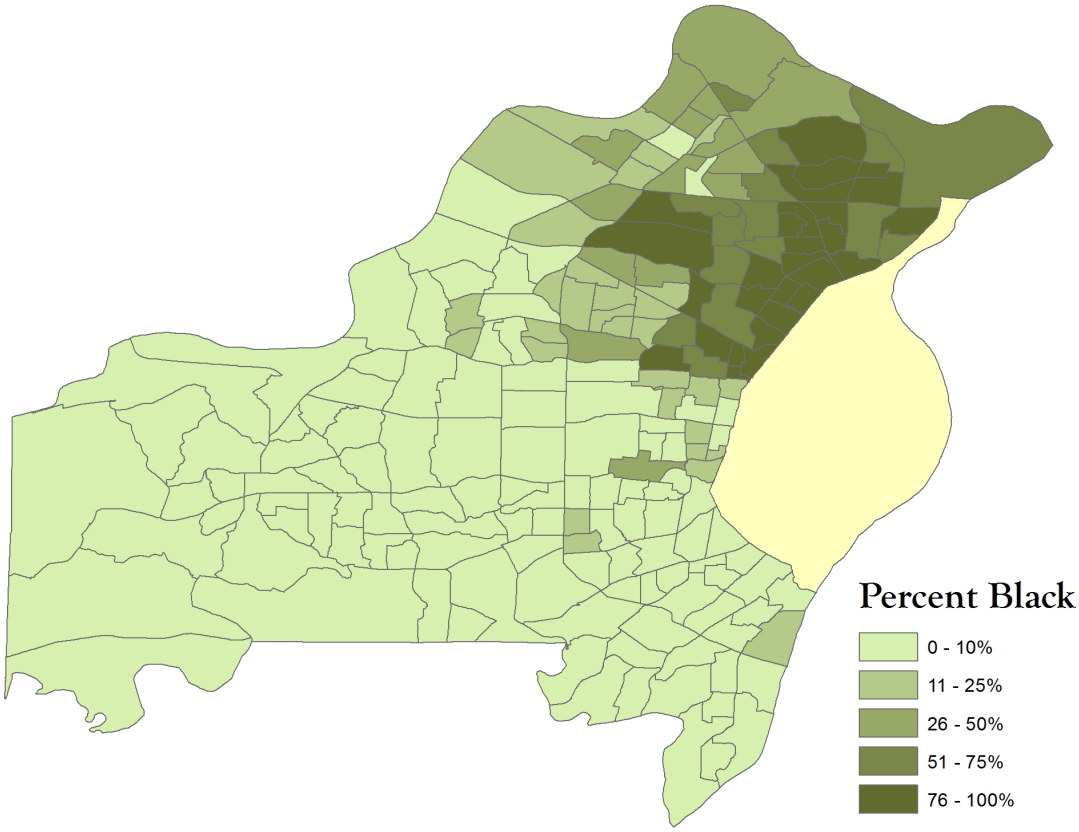
Map **2.2**. Municipalities of St. Louis County, Missouri. Inner-ring area of North St. Louis County is outlined in red. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).



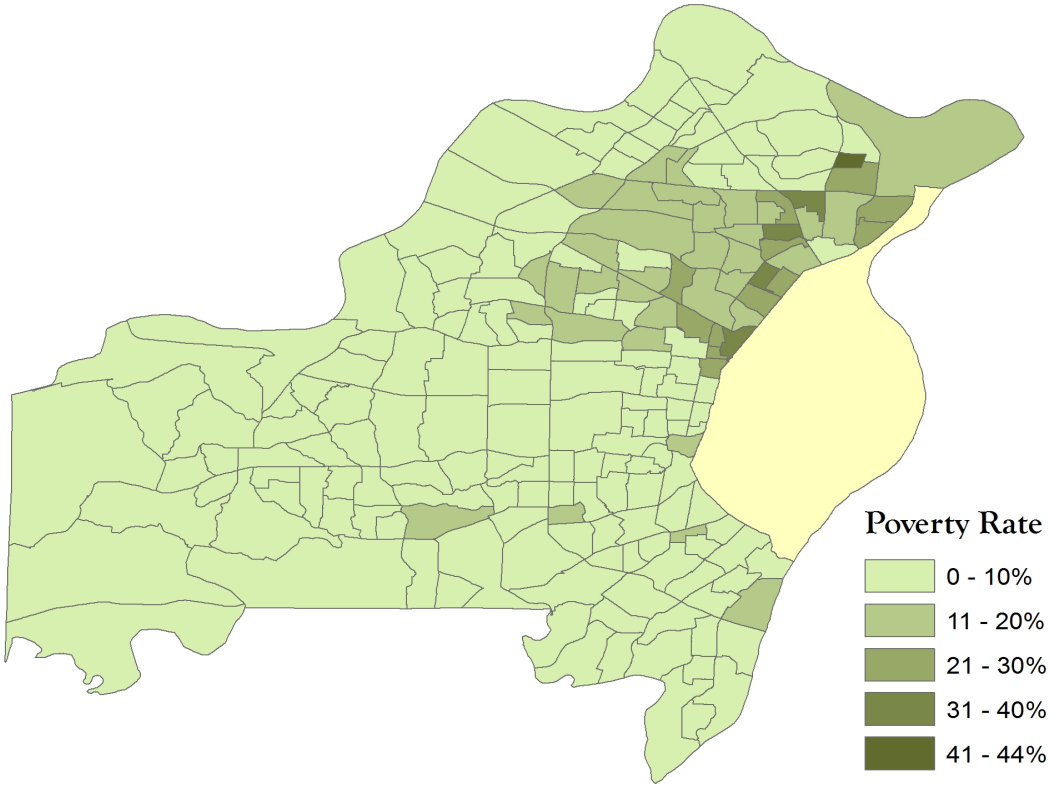
Map **2.3**. Inner-ring area of North St. Louis County. Forty-two of the 90 cities in St. Louis County sit within this footprint. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).

Black residents make up 24% of the population in St. Louis County—up from 2.7% in 1960. More than 80% of the Black population lives in North St. Louis County, which is majority Black, and many municipalities in North St. Louis County are over 90% black.[107] As discussed above, demographic shifts were rapid in this area following Civil Rights legislation, and several municipalities inverted within a twenty-year period—from over 90% white in 1960 to more than 90% Black by 1980—with the most dramatic shifts occurring in the mid-1970s.[108] Today, demographic mapping of race, income, poverty levels, education, workforce, family structures, health, and amenities reveal a consistent line dividing North St. Louis County from the rest of the region (Maps 2.4–2.8).

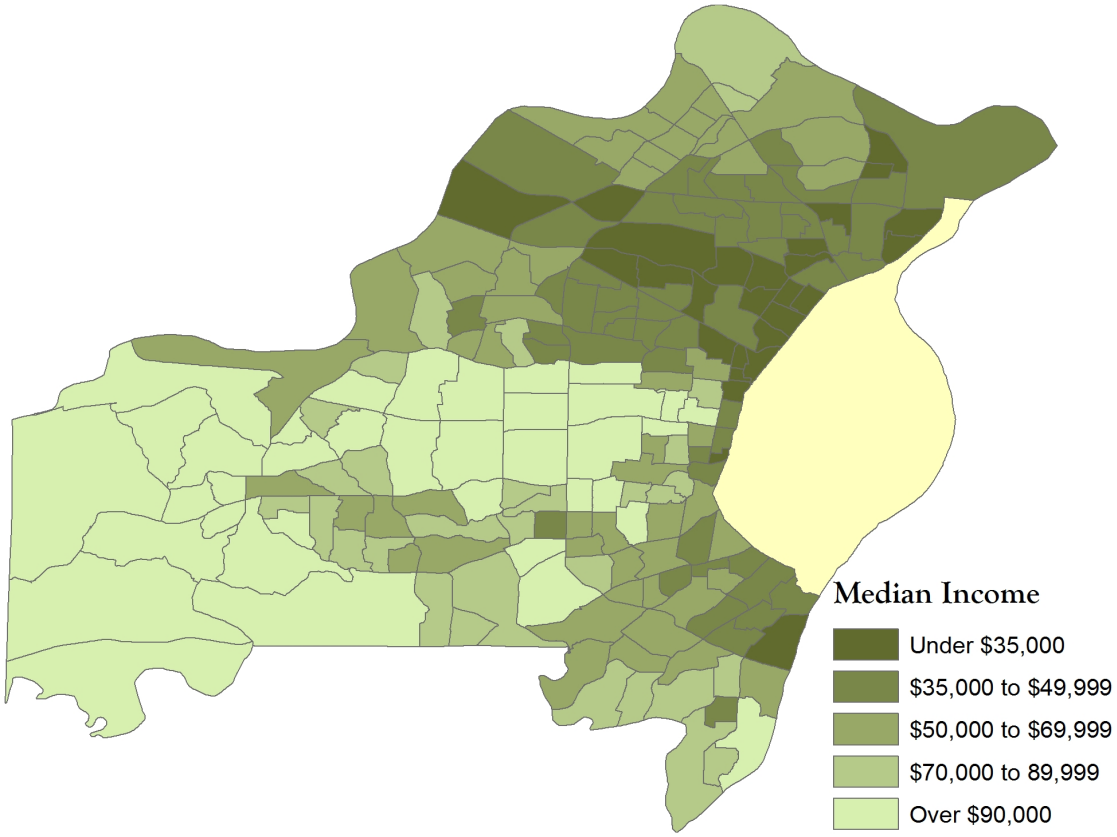
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.



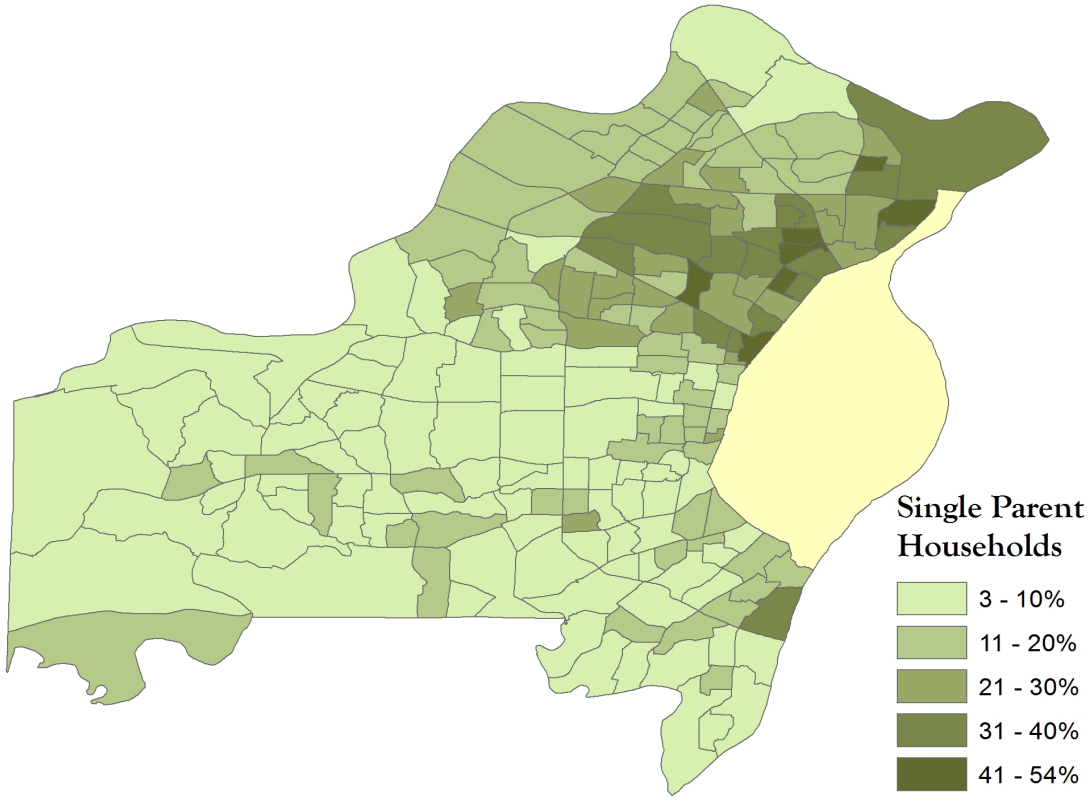
Map **2.4**. St. Louis County, percent Black. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).



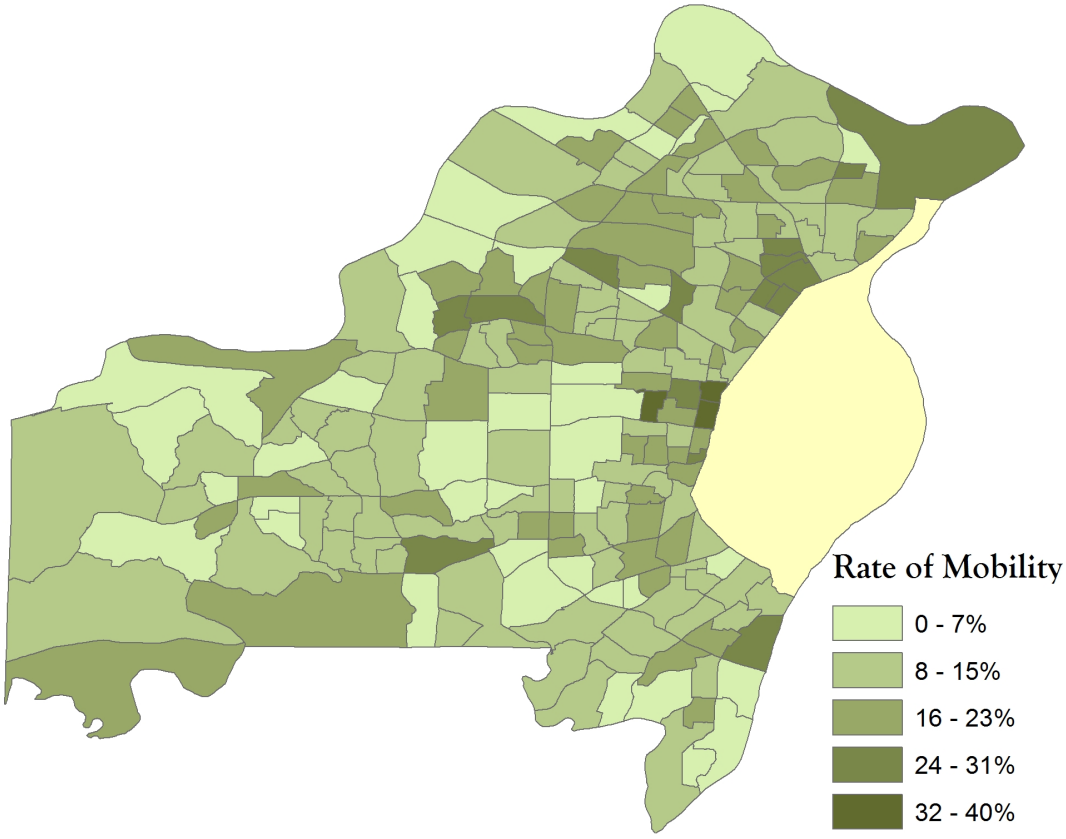
Map **2.5**. St. Louis County, poverty rate. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).



Map **2.6**. St. Louis County, median income. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).



Map **2.7**. St. Louis County, single parent households. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).



Map **2.8.** St. Louis County, households that moved within the past year. 2010 U.S. census data (source: author).

The history of geographic fragmentation, contested jurisdictional powers, a culture of political autonomy at all costs, and a disregard for Black bodies continues to shape the St. Louis region today. These histories are rooted in struggles over identity and power at the intersection of colonial society with the ideals of manifest destiny and liberal democracy. This has led to disproportionate power spread across multiple polities and systems of oversight, all of which compete mightily for limited resources, thus heightening the vast social, economic, and spatial disparities evident across the St. Louis region, with concentrations of negative indicators located in North St. Louis County. The racialized implications and cultural politics of race and space greatly impact the experiences of African Americans, indigenous and non-privileged groups throughout the history of St. Louis County and today, making the distance of a few miles critically important regarding one's civil rights, everyday experience, life chances, and even exposure to death.

St. Louis is not unique in producing racial disparity through space. In fact, to some extent, that is the definition of metropolitan space based on the evidence of cities across the globe. The St. Louis region, and specifically North St. Louis County, is perhaps just an extreme example of how a system has emerged today from particular historical and spatial conditions that produce and maintain racialized disparities in, and through, spatial practice and cultural politics. The chapters that follow describe and examine these practices that have led to conditions such that "if you were to design a place whose sole purpose was to

create and maintain a system of racialized poverty, it would look like this."[109] It is difficult to understand these practices without knowing how the history of spatial, cultural, and political fragmentation shaped North St. Louis County.

[109] Statement made by the Southern Poverty Law Clinic (SPLC), as relayed by Thomas Harvey of Arch City Defenders—a law firm representing indigent residents in North St. Louis County—after he explained practices in North St. Louis County to leaders at SPLC.

CHAPTER THREE
THE RACIAL STATE OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

In this very violence, something rotten in the law is revealed.
—Walter Benjamin, *Critique of Violence*

Racialized violence continues today in the suburbs of North St. Louis County. In keeping with the histories discussed in Chapter Two and the logics of colonial/imperial expansion, capitalist production, and surplus labor, poor Black residents in this area are viewed as profit-generating bodies for the purpose of funding tiny cities that in turn fail to provide basic services—except for an ever-expanding police force. To put it in the way many residents do, municipalities use poor Black residents as 'ATM machines,' to which they return time and again through multiple forms of predatory policing and juridical practices. As part of this system and to hold onto the coveted yet hollow prize of local autonomy, both Black and white leaders across this region carry out vicious tactics of policing for revenue and run debtors' prisons that have been ignored by the larger region for many decades. Here, the double bind of the Black body means Black residents suffer from, and pay for, the loss of economic and political viability brought about by their very presence.

Taking a legal geography perspective, this chapter looks at how municipal governments in North St. Louis County are both victim and administrator of the contemporary racial state in the United States. The chapter provides an account of the racialized means and extreme measures cities in the area known as North County currently employ to extract money and resources from Black citizens in response to wholesale disinvestment in their jurisdictions linked to the race and socioeconomic status of their residents. Also considered are the ethical arguments around municipal dissolution and consolidation of majority-Black cities, with particular emphasis on the relationship between predatory policing and metropolitan race-making. The chapter concludes by considering current reform measures and asks what new 'race-making situations' will arise if racial paradigms are not shifted. While the focus of this work is on North St. Louis County, the implications are relevant to the experiences of sub/urban residents in the United States and beyond.

1. EVERYDAY POLICING AND EVERYDAY LIVES

1.1 Evelyn and Patrice

Evelyn is a sixty-eight-year-old Black woman who has lived in North County for twenty-six years. When I met her she had inherited the house she was living in from her long-time boyfriend, who had died fifteen years earlier, struck by a car while walking near his home on a street with no sidewalks. I got to know Evelyn over a period of three years because she participated in the 'services for seniors' project that my students organized as a way to engage with community members. In addition to the time I spent chatting with her while sitting between her two toy poodles on a worn red couch, my students would often come to class and relay how Evelyn had stuffed them with donuts and shared stories that put their own lives in stark perspective. Two of my male students from China became particularly attached to Evelyn, and one continued to ride the bus to visit her long after the

semester ended. Every time I saw her, she effusively thanked me for sending her "those nice Chinese boys" to help her around the house.

By the time I got to know her, Evelyn had received multiple citations for property-related infractions. My students were helping her address a long list of violations she could not afford to take care of on her own. Evelyn believed she was being harassed with citations because her son, who lived in another house in the same municipality, had vocally supported the candidate that had attempted to unseat the current alderperson in the previous election. She believed this because she had never received a citation until her son had become politically active. After that she had received eight notices of violations of local codes and several letters from the city threatening more fines and the possibility of losing her house if she did not comply. Most of the citations were cosmetic and not safety related. Evelyn also relayed a story about a time when she was in her yard tending to a rose bush and the alderperson drove by her house. According to Evelyn the alderperson stopped upon seeing her in the yard and told her she should worry about her weeds and not her rose bush and she had better paint her front door right away or receive another citation. Evelyn found the exchange very unsettling and moved between visible anger and tearful anxiety as she recounted the experience. When her daughter moved in to get away from an abusive relationship, Evelyn told me how she was immediately cited for failure to pay for a new occupancy permit and to list all occupants in her house. As Evelyn put it,

> my daughter was looking for housing so I didn't know if she was there for a few days or a few months. Why pay the fee for the permit if they're just visiting? But the city, they don't care. There's no such thing as a visitor around here. They just want their money. Once I paid for the permit and the fine, I thought "they may as well stay now." When I asked the alderperson who stopped in front of Evelyn's house about the incident, she stated that all residents of the city were treated equally and the city had the right to protect safety and property values by issuing citations to "people that don't know how or don't want to take care of their property."

Property violations were not the only experience Evelyn's family had with predatory policing. Evelyn's daughter, Patrice, had received eight traffic violation citations in the course of two years, four of which were for the same violation—a faulty muffler—received in four different municipalities over a few weeks. After moving in with her mother, Patrice was working two part-time jobs as well as getting her children to three different schools outside of the district because she wanted them to finish the school year where they had started, since, by her account, "they were doing so well." She shared, "I couldn't take off work or not get those kids to school to go get my muffler fixed. But that's how it is. It's like flies on shit. You got one problem with your car and they all be on your ass in an instant because they want to get at everything you got, which is really nothing.'" Because she worked evenings, Patrice could not attend three of the court dates, which were all held one evening each month. On the one evening she could attend, she had to make a decision regarding which ticket to take care of since two court dates were on that same night. She also could not make arrangements to take care of tickets other than physically showing up at court since the cities did not provide online payment methods, nor did they provide another means to pay. Consequently, Patrice had three warrants issued for her arrest even

after she emptied her bank account of $800 to pay fines and fees. “If all that hadn’t happened,” she said, “I could have fixed my car and taken care of monthly expenses. Maybe even moved out of my mother’s house.”

Patrice unfortunately had first-hand experience with warrants and understood why she did not want to find herself again in a cycle of municipal jailing. Three years before I met Patrice, she had gone through a similar experience. As she explained,

> When my tail light was busted out, the same thing happened which is also why I don’t want to show up at courts because, who knows, they may ship me over to Jennings and throw me in jail when I try to pay a $50 ticket in Velda City. Or they’ll take my driver’s license away until I can pay and if I lose my car, I lose both my jobs and then I lose my kids. That’s how it works. The last time, I got pulled over for no reason at all. The cop was just driving behind me running my plates. He saw there was a warrant in St. Ann and I ended up in jail there. They told me I had to pay a $1000 bond in cash. I was living on my own then and actually doing okay. My mom took my kids but they couldn’t get to school. I wasn’t allowed to shower for the whole 10 days. There was like fifteen of us in there, coming and going, and not enough beds for everyone. People were peeing and heaving and bleeding right in where we was supposed to sleep. I haven’t never seen nothing like that. It was literally like animals in a cage. It took ten days for my mom and brother to get the money together. By that time, I’d lost my job. As soon as St. Ann got their money, they drove me over to Pine Lawn and booked me into jail there. The bail there was set at $500 and there was no way my mom and brother could get more. I had to call my ex-boyfriend, the father of my youngest two to get me out. I’d been trying to get away from him for years but I don’t have anybody else after my mom and my brother so I ended up going back to him after that. Everything just all fell apart. Maybe I was lucky though because I know people who go through four or five jails and they still owe thousands of dollars. I don’t know what’s going to happen though if I get pulled over again. I have to think real carefully about when and where I drive. Damn, I wish I could leave St. Louis.

1.2 Draconian practices and debtors’ prisons

Stories like those of Evelyn and Patrice that detail Black citizens’ experiences with the police, housing inspectors, and municipal courts, including the effects on their lives, were told to me time and again through interviews and during informal conversations throughout the time I spent in this area over the past fifteen years. However, prior to the sustained protest movement following the death of Michael Brown, Jr. in Ferguson, few policy makers, journalists, or anyone else was interested in hearing these accounts. Nevertheless, residents consistently described a geography of micro legal systems designed to criminalize and entrap people in a web of seemingly endless fines and fees for routine traffic and non-traffic ordinance violations that disproportionately impact poor Black residents. The intergenerational effects on Evelyn’s family went even further as she recently told me stories of her son’s latest encounters with traffic stops and warrants, as well as her granddaughter’s encounters with the Ferguson police department as a peaceful

protester. Evelyn has since moved out of Missouri and lives with her brother in Birmingham, where she grew up. Patrice still lives in her house, which Evelyn is trying to sell, but "after what's owed on it in fines," the city may as well have it, she said when I contacted her by phone. "I swore I'd never go back to the South," she went on. "But nobody should have to live like that."

Of the more than fifty people interviewed randomly over the course of eight years, more than half had been stopped more than eight times for traffic violations, and 40 percent had received a property violation citation. Of those receiving property violations, 90 percent had received between five and ten violations in one year. Of the more than one hundred people interviewed at court nights in sixteen municipalities, more than half had been stopped more than five times while driving in North St. Louis County.[1] Numerous people shared stories that started with an initial traffic or property violation of between $100 and $300, which they could not pay immediately. Some attended court dates to tell the judge they could not pay and were subsequently assessed more fines each time they showed up. Others were issued a warrant for 'Failure to Pay,' which required they pay the additional bail or go to jail indefinitely. Those who were afraid to show up for court dates out of fear of the inability to pay were assessed more fines and issued a warrant for 'Failure to Appear.'

Not uncommon were stories like that of Patrice—of people jailed for inability to pay tickets or of relatives languishing in a municipal jail for weeks only to be taken to the next municipal jail after they are able to cobble together money for bail. Ironically, one of the few acts of collaboration between municipalities that typically refuse to cooperate with one another is a data base of municipal warrants, which leads to a leapfrogging jail population across jurisdictions. People described similar 'inhuman conditions' and practices in numerous jails. Common complaints included the lack of personal hygiene implements such as a toothbrushes, towels, or soap; the refusal to accommodate requests to use the bathroom or to shower; the refusal to provide feminine hygiene products to women; vast overcrowding and unsanitary conditions; and taunts, including racial, gendered, and homophobic slurs. Many stories ended with the loss of jobs, housing, and even children. Several stories told by the media ended tragically when individuals hung themselves in municipal jails out of despair.[2]

It is not uncommon for an individual to rack up hundreds of dollars in fines, as did Patrice, for failure to pay or failure to appear in court for a single infraction. Yvonne Fulsom waits in line each month at the municipal court of Pasadena Hills to make a $25 payment on a $1,000 debt to the city because she let her pit bull urinate in her own yard without a leash and was unable to pay the initial fine, leading to a warrant for her arrest. For Ms. Fulsom, $25 represents 12 percent of her monthly grocery budget. She will need to appear in court on the one designated night every month for more than three years to pay off the fine. If she misses a night, she faces arrest and more fines. Another woman interviewed outside of

[1] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.

[2] Multiple people being held for minor traffic offenses in the last ten years have died by hanging themselves in municipal jails in St. Louis County, including in the towns of Jennings, Pine Lawn, and Pagedale.

the Pagedale court stood in a long line to pay $30 toward what she said was a $350 cumulative fine for moving into her house after dark without a permit and failing to list her boyfriend, who occasionally spent the night, on her occupancy permit. She has spent an evening every month standing in line for the past eight months. If she does not show up to pay her installment, she will face jail and more fines. "This month I was short," she said. "I had to borrow from my neighbor who knows what this city does to people. But now I owe her and the city. If I could move, I would."[3]

The threat of jail time and the inability to move due to economic constraints ensure that municipal court payments are a priority for residents, regardless of the constraints of their monthly budgets and the sacrifices required to make these payments.[4] In many cases, the absence of opportunities for formal employment lead residents to turn to informal economies for day-to-day survival. These facts expose another reading of theorizations regarding the uses of the wageless class.[5] Due to the 'taxation by citation' structure of municipal financing, informal economies are a primary source of funding for municipal budgets. Selling food subsidies and blood, bartering, receiving compensation for listing non-family dependents on tax returns, hustling products of questionable origin, taking out payday or car title loans, and borrowing money from equally struggling family members as well as friends and neighbors are all examples of how residents coble together resources to pay fines, fees, and bail for minor infractions.[6] As a result, cities remain financially solvent by extracting resources gained through informal economies and Black identity pivots between survival within, and resistance against, structures of a racially defined state. While extreme, this phenomenon is not unique to St. Louis County. When Eric Garner resisted arrest for selling cigarettes on a Staten Island street corner, saying "this stops today," he was referring to the perpetual criminalization of his attempts to survive. Like Michael Brown, who, according to his companion Dorian Johnson was fed up with being harassed by police in North St. Louis County when he was shot by Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson, Garner's resistance led to death.

Across the area of St. Louis County locally known as 'North County,'[7] city ordinances and policing practices specifically target the cultural norms and economic vulnerabilities of poor Black residents. In addition to traffic stops for every possible vehicle and driving

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[3] Key-informant interview—North St. Louis County resident.

[4] Reported in Ryan J. Reilly and Mariah Stewart, "How Municipalities in StL County Use Police as Armed Tax Collectors," *The St. Louis American*, April 2, 2015.

[5] Hall et al. use a Marxist theorization of wagelessness, or the wageless class, as the necessary production of a disposable reserve labor force necessarily inherent to capitalist societies. Wageless individuals—unemployed or underemployed in the formal labor market—either opt out of super-exploitation in the labor force or simply find no work available to them. From the standpoint of historical materialism, the wageless class, or black sub-proletariat, is tied to both the history of slavery and the history of labor in the United States—where surplus labor intersects with racialized rationalizations of wageless labor within slave society. This combination of race and class, which Hall et al. describe as *secondariness*, is acutely visible in North St. Louis County, where blacks experienced few economic advantages in the era of economic growth in the 1990s and early 2000s and have significantly added to the 'wageless class' in the wake of recent economic downturns.

[6] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.

[7] I use 'North St. Louis County' and 'North County' throughout this chapter, depending on whether I am referring to the location or using the colloquial name for the area.

infraction, residents are policed for the number of people around their barbeques, the types of music they listen to, the color coordination of their curtains, the way they wear their pants, where they play basketball, how they paint their back doors, where their children leave their toys, and how they use their front porches.[8] Since many residents cannot pay the high fines and fees for the inordinate number of citations handed out across this geography, tens of thousands of residents face warrants for their arrest, jail time, and even more fines and fees. This is not to mention the numerous other impacts of these events on their lives.[9] In some municipalities, residents justifiably fear the city will take their property and demolish their homes if they are unable to fix unbecoming yet non-safety-related issues with their dwellings.[10] Cumulatively, this has led to what many residents express as a lifetime of indebtedness and fear and a feeling of being trapped in a place they do not have the economic means to leave. In fact, the culture of fear over basic daily activities that I consistently observed when working with residents in this area is what initially led me to look further into what was happening in North County.

As Donald Moore has pointed out, "localized struggles over territorialized power ground alternative articulations of rule."[11] North County offers an important example of how municipal governments have become critical instruments in the remaking of the modern racial state and processes of subject making in everyday life.[12] As discussed in Chapter One, cities have increasingly assumed the role of administrating urban austerity policy and acting as gatekeepers of citizen's rights, in what Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore describe as geographies of "actually existing neoliberalism."[13] Using formal and informal means of coercion and real and perceived forms of discipline and surveillance to construct hierarchies of power that appear rational and routine,[14] small cities use narratives of

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[8] This statement is based on a review of municipal ordinances in the cities that occupy St. Louis County.
[9] This information is from resident interviews. Additionally, over fifty media articles have recently been written on this subject. See, for example, Radley Balko, "Why we need to fix St. Louis County," *The Washington Post*, October 16, 2014; Campbell Robertson et al., "Ferguson became Symbol, but Bias Knows no Borders," *New York Times*, March 7, 2015; Jennifer Mann, "Municipalities ticket for trees and toys as traffic revenue declines," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 24, 2015.
[10] This is based on interviews with residents, documents obtained from the city of Pagedale, MO, and recent media attention documenting practices in Pagedale. See, for example, Jennifer Mann, "After code violation crackdown, Pagedale officials now threaten to demolish homes," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 10, 2015.
[11] Donald Moore, *Suffering for Territory: Race, Place, and Power in Zimbabwe*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 21.
[12] David Theo Goldberg describes the engagements of the racial state as defining, regulating, governing, managing, and mediating racial matters, all of which describe municipal practices found in North St. Louis County at a local scale. See Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 109.
[13] Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore, "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism,'" *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (July 2002): 349–79.
[14] Kimberle Crenshaw, "Color Blindness, History and the Law," in *The House that Race Built*, Wahneema Lubiano, ed. (New York: Vintage Press, 1998), 280–89. Crenshaw, among others, has shown how formal and informal practices rooted in racialized distinctions coalesce in the public and private spheres resulting in both blatant and obscured forms of racial discrimination. The routinization of racialized difference is a fundamental component of race-making. See, for example, John Comaroff, "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions," *Social Identities* 4, no. 3 (Fall 1998): 321–61; Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Barnor Hesse, "Reviewing the Western Spectacle: Reflexive Globalization

propriety, risk, and property to discipline residents, extract resources, and create new forms of statecraft under the banner of maintaining municipal autonomy.[15] Recently, this area has also become illustrative of how militarized local police forces are used to quell resistance to state practices through 'rational violence' enacted on residents, as witnessed in Ferguson, which sits within this geography.[16] Recent attention to shockingly racialized practices in North County occurred when sustained protests and militarized police responses were publicly witnessed following the death of a Black teenager at the hands of a white police officer in Ferguson. Prior to the unrest, however, cities across North County had been practicing for decades various forms of policing for revenue. These practices went seemingly unnoticed by all except for those who either lived in or studied this area.

While Ferguson has attracted international attention as a large majority-black municipality with majority-white leadership that has been shown to practice extensive predatory policing of its Black citizens,[17] it is by no means the worst offender when it comes to racialized policing-for-revenue practices. Nor does Ferguson represent all of the many nuanced issues that are at work in tiny majority-black cities of North County. Unlike most of its neighbors, Ferguson enjoys relatively stable commercial areas, including a revitalized shopping district, that bring in a steady stream of the much-coveted sales tax upon which Missouri cities rely.[18] After a contested annexation between 1956 and 1964, it is also home to the Fortune 500 company Emerson Electric, which employs over 1300 workers and provides another stable, albeit limited, taxing source.[19] Furthermore, as a chartered city, Ferguson has a greater degree of autonomy and taxing authority relative to the tiny third- and fourth-class cities and villages in North County, which have limited power but seemingly unlimited political liability. As Ferguson remains in the local and national spotlight and is held to the terms of a consent decree with the Department of Justice, many assume that the racialized practices revealed in this case will be remediated through the election, appointment, and hiring of more Black officials and police officers. If this is the solution, why, then, are predatory policing practices even more extreme in nearby majority-black cities that have all-black leadership and significantly more Black

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through the Black Diaspora," in Avtar Brah, Mary J. Hickman, and Máirtín Mac an Ghaill, eds., *Global Futures: Migration, Environment and Globalization* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 12243.

[15] In addition to formal policies, the rhetorical shaming of residents by leaders and some property owners based on racialized stereotypes that stand in contrast to the 'suburban ideal' does much work toward certain forms of what Michel Foucault identified as governmentality—the regulation of the self and others or the conduct of conduct. See Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 777–95; Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982–1983*, Frederic Gros, ed., Graham Burchell, trans. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

[16] I am referring to the tanks, body armor, and gas used against protests in Ferguson in 2014.

[17] United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *The Ferguson Report: Department of Justice Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department* (New York: The New Press, 2015). This report was released online by the Department of Justice on March 4, 2015, https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/pressreleases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf.

[18] This is discussed later in the chapter.

[19] See, for example, Walter Johnson, "Ferguson's Fortune 500 Company," *The Atlantic Magazine*, April 25, 2015.

police officers? Cities practicing the highest degree of predatory practices do not actually look like Ferguson in terms of size, demographics, leadership, or economic opportunities.

The case of North County is not a simple matter of white actors exploiting Black citizens, although its history supports that theme. Black leaders in numerous majority-black cities in this area have adopted the white spatial logics of the racial state for their very survival. In fact, cities with the most per capita predatory policing statistics are cities with the largest ratios of Black residents with all-black leadership.[20] The leaders in these cities have turned to the last means available—policing and the courts—to fund municipal budgets, avoid insolvency, and hold onto the coveted, yet in this case, hollow prize of Black leadership.[21] Using narratives of good suburban citizenship in contrast to Black criminality and 'subpar black space,' vicious cycles of taxation by citation prey on the most vulnerable residents in an area given the contradictory label of 'suburban ghetto' by scholars, policymakers, and the media. The same tropes of Black deviance have also rendered blatantly unconstitutional practices invisible in North County for decades because they mirror normative perceptions about types of people and types of space. Using cultural politics, micro policing, and false perceptions regarding the benefits of political autonomy, small local governments have developed and now oversee new forms of physical and political violence that reinforce old logics of the new racial state—differentiating groups and diminishing personal rights for the purpose of extracting resources from marginalized people and maintaining racial hierarchies. There is a twist, however, in this model of oppression since the extraction of resources does not directly turn the wheels of conventional or visible capitalist markets, but rather, is developed as a means to make up for vast amounts of capital extracted from cities through years of racialized processes described in Chapter Two.

2. SPATIALIZING BLACKNESS: RISK AND REVENUE

2.2 Race-making situations

Prior to, and just after, the passage of the Fair Housing Act in 1968, many people believed that inequalities between white and Black citizens in the United States could be resolved by breaking down legal barriers preventing African Americans from accessing full benefits of middle class status and, specifically, the resources associated with suburban neighborhoods and ways of life. Although the actual suburbs have always had a degree of diversity, by the 1960s, the imagined 'authentic' suburbs were almost interchangeable with the ethos of 'the American Dream.' The space of the suburbs came to represent middle-class benefits and upward mobility acquired through hard work, determination, and conforming to social norms. Civil Rights era logic assumed that Black families gaining

[20] This is based on a review of the data regarding demographics and municipal court citations between 2004 and 2014.

[21] Mayors interviewed for this work and quoted in the local media consistently refer to local autonomy as the most important issue surrounding court reform. One could question what has been gained through local autonomy given recent reports of vast violations of rights driving current reform measures. The concept of minority mayors winning a "hollow prize" comes from the study *Black Control of Central Cities: The Hollow Prize* (1969), by H. Paul Friesema. Friesema observed that by the time a minority finally rises to the position of mayor, that city is very likely to be in decline—and legislatures are unlikely to assist minority municipalities.

entrance to middle-class suburbs would gain access to 'the American Dream' and therefore experience the same advantages that ethnic Europeans found when they left the central cities. These included higher standards of living, wealth accumulation through home ownership, access to better schools, convenient and upscale shopping districts, the ability to selectively control land use through zoning, and safety. Many discourses around inequality shifted from race to class, with an emphasis on individual responsibility as the last legal barriers preventing racial equality were dismantled in the United States. Lacking in these discussions, however, was whether or not areas in which middle-class Black families settled would maintain the benefits of middle class status. The promise of post racial suburban privilege was not, in fact, the experience of many Black residents moving to the suburbs and certainly not the experience of most Black suburbanites locating in North St. Louis County during and after the 1960s.[22]

It turns out the suburbs are actually 'race-making situations' for Black residents rather than race-equalizing opportunities. Borrowing the term from Edgar T. Thompson and David James—who showed how the plantation and the Black ghetto, respectively, create, reinforce, and rely on racial stereotypes of inferiority—Mary Jo Wiggins has shown how majority Black suburbs, even affluent Black suburbs, do exactly the same things in multiple ways.[23] Wiggins looks specifically at how disinvestment and lack of new commercial investment based on residual racisms, implicit biases, and especially perceptions of risk, create self-perpetuating cycles of economic deprivation that undermine physical and social landscapes. Wiggins argues that as a result, white communities can look at the disparities between white and Black suburban neighborhoods and conclude that white space and people are superior because laws and policies are represented as race-

[22] Sheryll D. Cashin argues that black suburbs do not live up to the suburban ideal, and many black suburbanites may give up more than they gain by moving to the suburbs, in Cashin, "Middle-Class Black Suburbs and the State of Integration: A Post-Integrationist Vision for Metropolitan America," *Cornell Law Review* 86 (2001): 755–67, 771–74. Interviews with Black residents who moved to North St. Louis County in the 1960s and 1970s and a review of St. Louis County property assessment records and U.S. Census Tract data reveal that property values and income have steadily fallen when adjusted for inflation over the past forty years.

[23] Mary Jo Wiggins, "Race, Class, and Suburbia: The Modern Black Suburbs as a 'Race-Making Situation,'" *University of Michigan Journal of Legal Reform* 35 (2001–2002): 749–808; Wiggins borrows the term 'race-making situation' from the work of sociologists David James and Edgar Thompson. See David James, "The Racial Ghetto as a Race-Making Situation: The Effects of Residential Segregation on Racial Inequalities and Racial Identity," *Law & Social Inquiry* 19 (1995): 407, 413; Edgar T. Thompson, "The Plantation as a Race-Making Situation," in *Plantation Societies, Race Relations, and the South: The Regimentation of Populations. Selected Papers of Edgar T. Thompson* (Durham: Duke University Press), 115–17 (1975). Thompson conceptualized the slave plantation of the early nineteenth century as a 'race-making situation.' The plantation was developed in order to turn free labor into profitable commodities to supply a growing nation. The myth of racial superiority of Whites and inferiority of Blacks was developed to supply and control the Black labor force (slave trade) and create an alternative Black identity. James extends this concept to racial segregation after the abolition of Jim Crow laws, arguing that Black ghettos, like the Southern plantation, are "race-making situations" that shape racial identity and perception and are intended to limit the upward mobility of Black citizens. Relying on these conceptualizations, Wiggins argues that the modern black suburbs "subtly reinforce rather than reduce racial stigma and perpetuate rather than eliminate conditions of racial inequality." Wiggins, "Race, Class, and Suburbia," 753.

neutral. From this perspective, differences and disparities are linked to individual and group attributes or deficiencies rather than structural causes.[24]

North County stands as a prime example of the race-making situation Wiggins describes. As African Americans moved to the suburbs in large numbers following the Fair Housing Act of 1968, areas that crossed the 'tipping point' of racial inclusion eventually became majority-black.[25] This process happened quickly in the St. Louis region as the risk associated with Black bodies and Black space followed families into the suburbs of North County.[26] What was already a highly fragmented landscape quickly became a patchwork of fierce competition where municipal winners and losers sorted along racial lines. As a result, municipalities that maintained majority-white populations and stable commercial investment were able to 'poach' sales tax revenues from cities less able to attract businesses in a state where sales tax is structured as a primary source of municipal revenue. Over time, this dramatically limited Black families' access to the advantages they expected to find in the suburbs, such as appreciating home values, good public education, better public amenities, increased access to goods and services, and the ability to restrict types of commerce and zoning. Instead, property values declined; property taxes have remained high; school districts have lost their state accreditation;[27] parks, recreational facilities, and grocery stores have closed; and retail stores have been replaced by dollar stores, check cashing establishments, used car lots, and vacant storefronts. Strapped cities have not been able to afford limiting the number of low-end and predatory businesses moving in or to pass zoning restrictions limiting types of use and retail establishments. The processes that played out in this area illustrate the racialized influence on 'the political economy of place,' which sorts physical space and amenities, resulting in areas that hoard opportunity while others bear the burden of environmental hazards, nuisance businesses, and limited access to basic needs.[28]

In spite of depreciated property and sales tax revenues, municipal leaders of the majority-black cities in North County that gradually became predominantly Black still

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[24] Wiggins, "Race, Class, and Suburbia," 753.

[25] For a discussion regarding the racial tipping point, see E. Terrence Jones, "The Municipal Market in the St. Louis Region: 1950–2000," in *St. Louis Metromorphosis: Past Trends and Future Direction*s, ed. Brady Baybeck and E. Terrence Jones (St. Louis: University of Missouri Press, 2004).

[26] For a description of the economic downturn in North St. Louis county following the arrival of Black residents, see Bryan Downes, Joan Saunders, and John Collins, "Local Government Intervention in the Face of Mortgage Disinvestment: The Case of Normandy" (report, University of Missouri–St. Louis study, January 1976); Tom Dyer, "Factors in Suburban Blight: A Study of Housing in Northwoods, Pine Lawn, and Hillsdale" (report, study conducted by Rick Corry and Tom Dyer, University of Missouri–St. Louis, June 1973); Normandy Municipal Council, "Citizens' GOALS Project Report," Don Moschenross, director (November 1973).

[27] The Normandy School District (recently restructured as the Normandy Schools Collaborative) and Riverview Gardens School District are the only two unaccredited districts in the state of Missouri.

[28] John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch lay out the factors and processes for understanding the political economy of place based on Marxist political economy in *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Logan and Molotch build on David Harvey's reading of the city as a contested site of labor and capital that produces real and imagined social and physical spaces. See David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers, 1973). For a discussion regarding processes of environmental racism, see Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

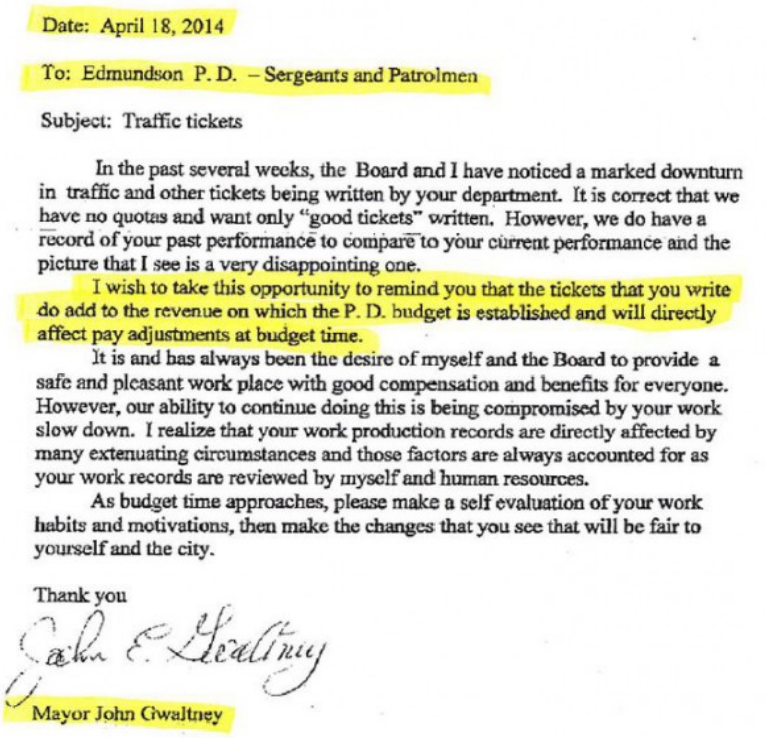
needed to provide basic services and remain financially solvent. The alternative was to face disincorporation, a fate viewed by most Black leaders and many residents as a major step backward in terms of Black political empowerment. A convenient and productive way to generate new 'legitimate' revenues was provided in the powerful historical and political forces linking Black people to criminality, which was heightened by the convergence with the 'white spatial imaginary' of suburban space.[29] Turning to the courts and following trends in much larger cities over the past forty years,[30] tiny majority-black cities have capitalized on familiar narratives of public safety, cleaning up space, and punishing deviant behavior, while ensuring a much needed revenue stream. Here, the neoliberal spatial policy that is traditionally described relative to large urban areas translates to the scale of tiny fourth-class suburban municipalities and intersects with the desperation of city leaders to maintain municipal autonomy at all costs. Legal advisers and those hired within the courts, who are paid well to develop mechanisms by which cities prey on their own residents, also have much at stake and work mightily to maintain this system.[31] The culture of policing for revenue is enabled by particularly loose oversight of municipal courts, as determined by the Missouri Constitution, and perfected through necessity. By 2013, municipal courts of St. Louis City and County, which comprise 22 percent of the state's population, collected 46 percent of statewide municipal fines and fees.[32] North County accounts for the largest per capita portion of regional collections, far surpassing the city of St. Louis, which is not part of a county, as well as Kansas City, Missouri. As a result, the funding of relatively small suburban cities through 'the policing of deviance' has been taken to unimaginable extremes.

2.2 Policing for revenue

Today, North County has over fifty municipalities and is less than 50 percent white. The majority of small third- and fourth-class cities, and villages[33] located in proximity to St. Louis City are over 70 percent Black, and more than ten cities are over 90 percent Black.[34] The correlations between disappearing tax bases, majority-black populations, and predatory policing make it unsurprising to find that the most extreme examples of predatory policing are found in North County. Twenty of the twenty-one cities in St. Louis County that generate more than 20 percent of the municipal budget from court fines and fees are located in North County. Thirteen of the fourteen cities that rely on fines and fees as their largest source of revenue are also found in North County.[35] Reports and news coverage have also revealed that some city leaders and police chiefs set monthly citation quotas for police officers based on budgetary shortfalls, and many cities routinely plan future budgetary increases based on projected increases in arrest and fine quotas by police

[29] I discuss the white spatial imaginary in depth in Chapter Four.
[30] These trends are discussed in Chapters One and Two.
[31] See, for example, Jennifer Mann, Jeremy Kohler, and Stephen Deere, "A web of lawyers play different role in different courts," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 29, 2015, front page.
[32] As published in the Missouri Courts report on municipal courts fines and fees collection, 2013.
[33] The Missouri state statutes classify chartered (first-class) and non-chartered (third- and fourth-class) cities and villages on the basis of population and limit the form and power of government options based on classification.
[34] U.S. Census data, 2010.
[35] Better Together, "The Will to Change: Why Does a Region with World-Class Resources Struggle to Thrive?" May 2016, http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BT-Will-to-Change-Final.pdf.

chiefs (Figure 3.1).[36] I personally witnessed one city leader calling the police chief and demanding that police officers come to a certain area and write more tickets. I witnessed the same official calling the mayor to report specific addresses for visits from the housing inspector because the residents "didn't have the right attitude" during interactions.



Date: April 18, 2014

To: Edmundson P. D. – Sergeants and Patrolmen

Subject: Traffic tickets

In the past several weeks, the Board and I have noticed a marked downturn in traffic and other tickets being written by your department. It is correct that we have no quotas and want only "good tickets" written. However, we do have a record of your past performance to compare to your current performance and the picture that I see is a very disappointing one.

I wish to take this opportunity to remind you that the tickets that you write do add to the revenue on which the P. D. budget is established and will directly affect pay adjustments at budget time.

It is and has always been the desire of myself and the Board to provide a safe and pleasant work place with good compensation and benefits for everyone. However, our ability to continue doing this is being compromised by your work slow down. I realize that your work production records are directly affected by many extenuating circumstances and those factors are always accounted for as your work records are reviewed by myself and human resources.

As budget time approaches, please make a self evaluation of your work habits and motivations, then make the changes that you see that will be fair to yourself and the city.

Thank you

John E. Gwaltney

Mayor John Gwaltney

Figure **3.1**. Letter from the Mayor of Edmundson (source: St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

Over the past ten years, most cities in this geography have averaged more than one citation per every one resident. Many average four to five citations for every one resident, with some issuing as many as ten times the number of residents every year.[37] Leaders have adamantly insisted that all policing and citations are based on safety and the protection of individuals and property. While the number of citations written in North County cities generally trended upward between 2004 and 2014, a dramatic decrease occurred in all but two cities between 2014 and 2015 (see Table 3.1). According to the logic promoted by city leaders, this data suggest that residents in North County suddenly became compliant between 2014 and 2015, which coincidentally corresponded with over fifty media articles, as well as state legislation, aimed at exposing and remediating predatory policing practices. It is not difficult to correlate the recent attention to these practices—brought about by Ferguson protesters following the death of Michael Brown, Jr.—with recent decreases in

[36] See, for example, Better Together, "Public Safety—Municipal Courts Report," October 2014; Editorial Board, "The Problem is Bigger than Ferguson," *New York Times*, March 12, 2015; Jennifer Mann, "Municipal courts operate in secret and work hard to keep it that way," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 15, 2015; Erica Hellerstein, "'It's racist as hell': Inside St. Louis County's predatory night courts," *ThinkProgress*, April 10, 2015.
[37] Missouri Courts, Traffic and Non-traffic ordinance filings 2005-2015. See, for example, http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=296.

the number of citations issued. Under new guidelines, all revenue generated from court fines and fees that is over 12.5 percent of the general operating budget is to be given to the local school district. If, as leaders have consistently argued, Black residents "don't know how to behave in the suburbs" and need to be policed for purposes of public safety and the protection of property, then the same leadership should, in theory, continue to police citizens and turn the excess revenue over to struggling schools. Interestingly, when cities cease to directly profit from policing, policing decreases substantially.

Black residents in suburban St. Louis currently pay for the risk attached to their own bodies. This is the double bind of Black suburban space: as middle-class African Americans claimed their right to the 'American Dream' and moved to the white suburbs, investment disappeared due to perceptions of social and economic threat resulting in municipal insolvency. The self-fulfilling prophecy of 'inferior Black space' led to the loss of middle-class suburban status along with sources of revenue as capital followed exiting white residents. Driven by the desire to hold onto the political gains of Black autonomy, municipalities make up for the shortfall by capitalizing on tropes of Black criminality and the ethos of suburban space. Ironically, the quest for political empowerment in North St. Louis County relies on, and perpetuates, the very disempowerment and precarity that leaves majority-black cities with few options.

3. DEGREES OF PREDATORY POLICING

3.1 Extreme Data

There is no need to explain the process or consequences of hyper-policing to Black residents of North County. However, people living outside of this area expressed shock when following the unrest in Ferguson, public attention turned to the numerous cities that fund over 20 percent of municipal budgets through court fines and court fees. Many of these cities have a long history of operating under the radar of accountability, and many exceeded the former 30 percent threshold with no consequences[38]—in violation of HB 103's revisions to the 'Macks Creek Law'(302.241.2 RSMo).[39] It has been argued that cities with higher property and sales tax revenues statistically have lower ratios of revenue from court fines and fees. It has also been argued that the culture of predatory policing in the St. Louis region extends beyond North County. While both of these arguments are based on verifiable truths, the per capita numbers of traffic and non-traffic violations in predominantly white cities are, in general, vastly lower. The data from St. Louis County show a distinct trend: the higher the percentage of Black residents in a city, the higher the percentage of the municipal budget is derived from court fines and fees. In the two majority-white cities that are exceptions to this trend, the cities of Bella Villa and Calverton Park, Black motorists make up a significant number of traffic stops relative to the municipal demographics, meaning that Black bodies are still policed for revenue in majority-white cities (see Table 3.1). Poor white residents of St. Louis County are also concentrated in

[38] As reported to the Missouri Supreme Court.

[39] The original Macks Creek Law set the limit for the amount Missouri cities could collect from fines and fees to 35% of the annual general operating revenue of the municipality. A reform bill, HB103, became effective in August 2013 and lowered the amount to 30% of the annual general operation revenue.

unincorporated areas making it more difficult to assess whether or not these residents are impacted by policing for revenue through the county court.

Table **3.1** Data for 34 of 90 municipalities in St. Louis County plus St. Louis City.

Municipality (34 of 90 cities in St. Louis County, plus St. Louis City)	Total Population	% Budget Fines/ Fees 2013	Area Sq. Mi.	% Pop. Af Am	% Traff Stops People of Color (10yr. average)	% Non-Traffic Violations Af.Am. (Data from Sunshine Request)	Average Violations Per Person Per Year (2005-2014)	"FERGUSON Change between 2013-14/ 2015 (Traffic)	EFFECT" Change between 2013-14/ 2015 (Non Traffic)	Per Capita Income	% Below Poverty Line
Bel-Nor	**1,499**	**11%**	**0.63**	**46%**	**78%**	**79%**	**2.65**	**-43%**	**-37%**	**$34,258**	**21%**
Bel-Ridge	**2715**	**25%**	**0.80**	**85%**	**74%**	*	**2.57**	**-47%**	**-13%**	**$13,299**	**41%**
Bella Villa	**729**	**57%**	**0.13**	**1%**	**12%**	**NR**	**9.6**	**-66%**	**-58%**	**$22,500**	**6%**
Bellerive	**188**	**29%**	**0.33**	**43%**	**93%**	**93%**	**3.01**	**-77%**	**-67%**	**$50,000**	**5%**
Berkeley	**8,978**	**11%**	**4.97**	**82%**	**63%**	**NR**	**1.34**	**-62%**	**-8%**	**$17,000**	**26%**
Beverly Hills	**574**	**26%**	**0.09**	**93%**	**96%**	**95%**	**10.29**	**-49%**	**-32%**	**$20,000**	**26%**
Black Jack	6,929	4%	2.6	81%	nr	NR	0.22	-49%	-24%	$25,000	25%
Calverton Pk	**1,293**	**66%**	**0.40**	**42%**	**72%**	**NR**	**4.17**	**-74%**	**-75%**	**$20,283**	**24%**
Charlack	**1,363**	**29%**	**0.26**	**35%**	**58%**	*	**3.44**	**-21%**	**-65%**	**$21,500**	**13%**
Clayton	15,939	3%	15.9	8%	35%	NR	0.48	-44%	-27%	$58,732	6%
Cool Valley	**1,196**	**29%**	**0.47**	**85%**	**76%**	**92%**	**3.04**	**-53%**	**-15%**	**$20,000**	**9%**
Des Peres	8,373	4%	4.32	1%	15%	NR	0.44	-16%	-16%	$51,800	2%
Ferguson	21,203	14%	6.22	67%	82%	*	0.91	-75%	-69%	$19,000	24%
Glendale	5,925	4%	1.29	1%	12%	NR	0.27	-6%	-16%	$56,200	1%
Greendale	**651**	**11%**	**0.21**	**69%**	**nr**	**91%**	**1.72**	**-34%**	**-20%**	**$28,000**	**5%**
Hanley Hills	2,101	11%	0.36	85%	nr	92%	0.69	-50%	-46%	$18,000	28%
Ladue	8,521	4%	8.55	1%	16%	NR	0.53	+10%	+65%	$96,000	1%
Lakeshire	1,432	3%	2.28	2%	2%	NR	0.21	+4%	No change	$28,000	3%
Maplewood	**8,046**	**9%**	**1.56**	**17%**	**53%**	**NR**	**1.49**	**-37%**	**-11%**	**$26,500**	**20%**
Normandy	**5,008**	**41%**	**1.85**	**70%**	**75%**	**90%**	**4.01**	**-17%**	**-28%**	**$15,600**	**34%**
Northwoods	**4,227**	**26%**	**0.71**	**94%**	**76%**	*	**1.53**	**-28%**	**+5%**	**$16,000**	**25%**
Oakland	1,381	13%	0.61	2%	nr	NR	0.56	-67%	No change	$28,000	3%
Ollivette	7,737	4%	2.78	24%	45%	NR	0.41	No change	-9%	$48,000	4%
Pagedale	**3,304**	**18%**	**1.19**	**93%**	**85%**	**Refused**	**2.14**	**-30%**	**-23%**	**$13,700**	**23%**
Pine Lawn	**3,275**	**48%**	**0.61**	**96%**	**79%**	**Refused**	**5.88**	**-1550%**	**-14%**	**$14,000**	**39%**
St. Ann	**13,020**	**37%**	**3.20**	**22%**	**40%**	**NR**	**1.25**	**-52%**	**-19%**	**$22,135**	**13%**
St. John	**6,517**	**24%**	**1.42**	**24%**	**24%**	**64%**	**1.96**	**-15%**	**-10%**	**$19,815**	**23%**
Uplands Park	**445**	**24%**	**.007**	**96%**	**nr**	**NR**	**4.27**	**-99%**	**-93%**		
Velda City	**1,420**	**22%**	**0.16**	**95%**	**92%**	*	**3.58**	**-40%**	**-36%**	**$18,000**	**21%**
Velda Vil. Hills	1,055	10%	0.12	99%	99%	99%	0.93	-13%	-46%	$17,500	28%
Vinita Park	**1,880**	**12%**	**0.72**	**65%**	**76%**	*	**1.37**	**+85%**	**-7%**	**$17,000**	**30%**
VinitaTerr.	**277**	**52%**	**0.06**	**73%**	**nr**	**89%**	**6.61**	**-23%**	**-46%**	**$21,000**	**19%**
Wellston	**2,313**	**12%**	**0.93**	**95%**	**nr**	**Refused**	**2.65**	**-35%**	**-16%**	**$8,600**	**50%**
Warson Wds.	1,962	3%	0.58	.5%	7%	NR	0.38	-44%	+41%	$15,000	5%
St. Louis City	319,294	2%	66.0	49%	67%	NR	0.57	+11%	-18%	$23,000	27%

*Amount estimated by city to provide data was cost prohibitive nr= not reported NR=not requested

Cities that average more than one violation per person per year are listed in bold.
Shaded rows denote cities in North St. Louis County
Ferguson, which was the focus of a scathing report issued by the U.S. Department of Justice regarding policing practices and excessive court fines and fees, is highlighted in yellow as a comparison to other cities.
Data obtained from:
https://www.ago.mo.gov/docs/default-source/public-safety/2013agencyreports.pdf?sfvrsn=2
http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=296
Independent request for court data to selected municipal courts (by author).
2010 U.S. Census Data

Although Table 3.1 reveals that Ferguson is by no means the worst offender in terms of budgetary funding from policing or citations per resident, the Ferguson protests led the Department of Justice to review municipal practices in the city and found that

> Ferguson's law enforcement practices are shaped by the city's focus on revenue rather than by public safety needs. This emphasis on revenue has compromised the institutional character of Ferguson's police department, contributing to a pattern of unconstitutional policing and has also shaped its municipal court, leading to procedures that raise due process concerns and inflict unnecessary harm on members of the Ferguson community.[40]

The report then describes in great detail the extent to which the police harassed the city's Black population. The police, for example, regularly accosted residents for what might be termed 'sitting in a car while black' and then charged them with bogus 'crimes' like failing to wear a seat belt in a parked car or "making a false declaration" that, for instance, one's name was "Mike," not "Michael."[41] Officers seeking promotion were told to keep in mind that their number of "self-initiated activities" (random stops) would have a significant effect on their future success on the force. The report cites several internal documents encouraging lieutenants and sergeants to tell officers wanting promotions that decisions would be based on the number of these stops.[42] Meanwhile, residents issued citations often lost their jobs and livelihoods due to court appearances, fines, and jail time. Justice Department investigators also discovered that Ferguson municipal court did not "act as a neutral arbiter of the law or a check on unlawful police conduct." Instead, it used its judicial authority "as the means to compel the payment of fines and fees that advance the city's financial interests."[43] If these are the conclusions drawn in one of the least 'predatory' cities in North County, it begs the question, "How much worse is it in cities issuing ten times the number of citations per person?"

Recent reports and media attention focused on Ferguson also emphasize that it is a predominantly African American city with a majority white leadership and police force. This imbalance helps to explain the mistrust between residents, leadership, and the police, and it also helps to account for the revelations of unjust practices directed primarily at Black citizens (outlined in the DOJ report).[44] This dynamic, however, does not explain similar and (as Table 3.1 reveals) even larger degrees of predatory practices in predominantly Black cities in North County that have all-black leadership. In fact, the residents in many of these cities suffer greater consequences of predatory policing than do residents of Ferguson. For example, in Pine Lawn, a community of 3,275 people which is 96 percent Black and has an all-black leadership, police officers issued more than 19,000 traffic tickets and over 9,000 non-traffic ordinance violations (eight violations for every

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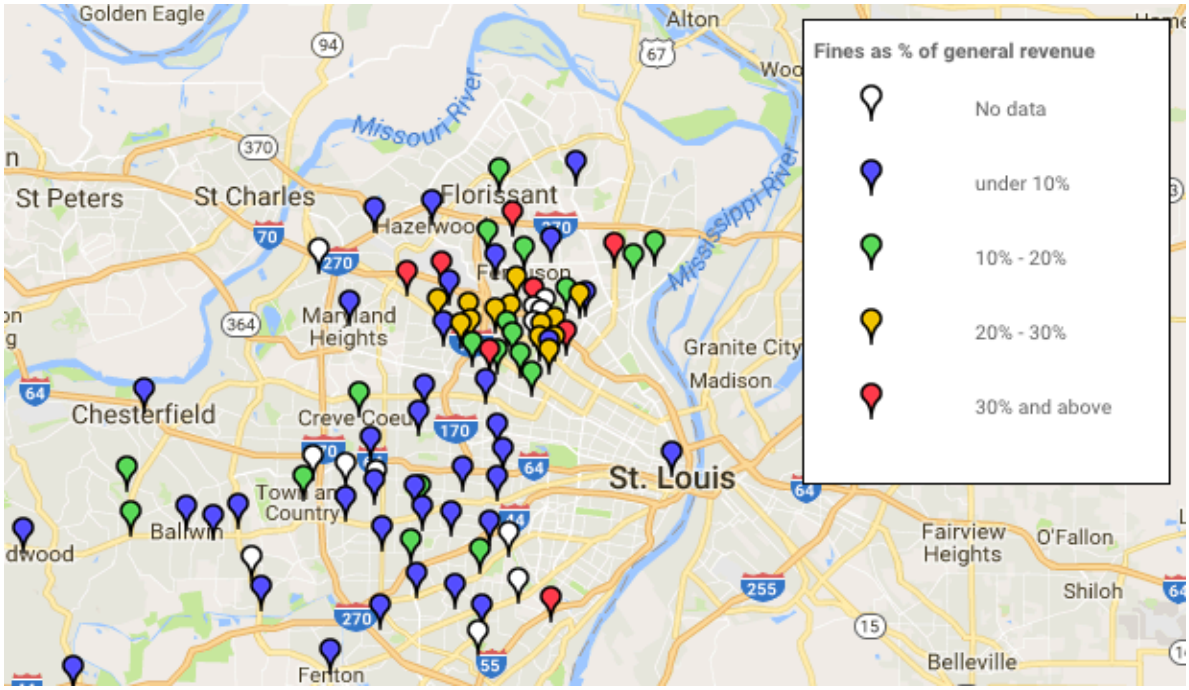
[40] United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *The Ferguson Report: Department of Justice Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department* (New York: The New Press, 2015), 2.
[41] U.S. DOJ, *Ferguson Report*, 32.
[42] Ibid., 20.
[43] U.S. Department of Justice, "Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department," March 4, 2015. See also Campbell Roberts, "A City Where Policing, Discrimination and Raising Revenue Went Hand In Hand," *New York Times*, March 4, 2015.
[44] U.S. DOJ, "Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department."

one resident) in 2014, with fines and fees comprising 48 percent of the city's budget.[45] Comparatively, the city of Ferguson with a population of 21,200 wrote 11,800 traffic violations and 11,900 non-traffic ordinance violations in 2014 (roughly one violation for every one resident), with fines and fees making up 22 percent of the municipal budget.[46]



Map **3.1**. Map of courts in the St. Louis region indicating the percent of the municipal budget generated through court fines and fees (source: Better Together, http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/courts-map).

3.2 Intimidation and fear

As described above, jail time and intimidation are often experienced by residents and are well-known tactics used by the courts to collect fines and fees for the multitude of citations issued. Although municipal judges are allowed under Missouri law to pursue alternative methods of collection in lieu of locking people up or issuing arrest warrants, including private debt collection, payment plans, community service, or even reductions in fines, jail time is common practice in many cities.[47] In spite of the fact that it is unconstitutional to jail someone solely because they are unable to pay fines and fees,[48] many courts jail individuals without holding the required hearings on their ability to pay the fine, a clear violation of those individuals' constitutional rights. More often courts threaten to jail individuals, knowing they won't follow through but hoping fear will entice them to take out payday or car title loans (loan establishments are conveniently located

[45] As reported to the Missouri State Courts by the municipal court of Pine Lawn for 2014. Data analyzed by author.
[46] As reported to the Missouri State Courts by the municipal court of Ferguson for 2014. Data analyzed by author.
[47] Missouri Courts Operating Rules, Judicial Code of Conduct, Municipal Courts, Section 37.65.
[48] In 1983, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to jail someone claiming the inability to pay fines and court fees without holding a hearing to investigate such claims. United States Supreme Court, Bearden v. Georgia, 461 U.S. 660 (1983).

near municipal courts), dip into rent or grocery money, sell government-issued subsidies in the informal market, or borrow from friends and family members whose financial status is also precarious.[49]

Interviews with North County residents and a review of court procedures reveal some of the varied ways cities pressure desperate residents to find ways to pay fines and fees for non-violent offenses, even when they lack the financial means. For example, citizens found guilty of a traffic violation in Beverly Hills must pay the fine in full or be jailed until someone shows up to pay the fine.[50] Similarly, it is well documented that Pine Lawn and Jennings have routinely jailed people for weeks and even months without a change of clothes or toiletries for failure to pay a speeding ticket.[51] Northwoods will demand and hold the driver's licenses of residents parking within city limits but unable to pay for the required city parking sticker. Residents in Velda City or St. Ann who are pulled over with a warrant for failure to appear in court must pay the fine on the spot or face arrest and being held until the assigned court date weeks later.[52]

In my own experience, I was pulled over for exceeding the speed limit by five miles per hour in the tiny municipality of Velda City. Upon being stopped, I unbuckled my seat belt to take my insurance and registration information out of the glove compartment. The police officer approached my vehicle and accused me of not wearing my seat belt. He threatened to take me to the police station when I refused to accept a citation for "failure to wear a seatbelt" and threatened me again when I refused to get out of my car. After revealing that I knew my rights and issuing my own threat to sue the department, he gave me a warning and sent me on my way. I believe this situation would have ended differently had I not been a white female with resources and legal knowledge. In another instance, my students working in Pagedale in 2009 noticed that a police officer sat at the intersection of an alley and a major thoroughfare, pulling over virtually every driver that did or didn't stop at a stop sign 20 feet beyond the intersection. One student decided to count the stops over the course of a day and document whether or not the driver stopped or rolled through the stop sign. By the end of the day, the student counted over seventy cars pulled over by the officer in what appeared to be indiscriminate reasons for the stops. During the same work project, one of the alderpersons for the city called the police chief in my presence and told him to instruct his officers not to stop the students who were working in the city.

While most residents I interacted with had frequent encounters with the police, the majority have given up on calling authorities when they are victims of, or witness to, a crime, stating they do not trust the police to act in their best interest. One woman interviewed for this research recounted a time when she called the police because her neighbors were arguing and she feared for the woman's safety. By the time the police arrived, the neighbors were quiet but she ended up in handcuffs because she refused to let

[49] Based on court records and interviews with residents of North St. Louis County.
[50] Jennifer Mann and Jeremy Kohler, *Municipal Courts: Progress Report*, Special Publication, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 20, 2015. http://graphics.stltoday.com/apps/muni-courts/.
[51] Quinton M. Thomas, et al. v. City of St. Ann, et al., Class Action Complaint, U.S. District Court, filed August 9, 2016.
[52] *Thomas v. St. Ann*, complaint.

police search her house. While she was handcuffed and watched by one police officer, the other searched her house unlawfully and then cited her for multiple housing infractions. When she complained to city officials, the housing inspector showed up at her house three days later and issued additional property violations, which she interpreted as retaliation and a warning.[53] In another more publicized case, a mother called the police because her mentally disturbed son had a knife and was threatening to hurt himself. The police arrived and coaxed him out of the house; he was carrying the knife and a bible. When he refused to drop the knife, he was shot dead.[54] Many people I spoke with stated that they would not call the police voluntarily "no matter what" because they feared they or someone else would be wrongfully arrested or killed.[55] "There is no way in hell I would call the police even if I was dying," one woman told me.[56] Judging from the statement by almost every respondent that voluntarily calling the police was entirely out of the question, officers appear to have plenty of time for police-initiated stops.

Figure **3.2**. A payday loan sign (foreground) and traffic law sign (background) next to the sign for the municipal court and police station in Beverley Hills, a small majority-black city in North St. Louis Co. with one of the highest policing-for-profit rates (source: author).

[53] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.
[54] See Michael McLaughlin, "St. Louis County Police Fatally Shoot Man Carrying Knife, Bible in Jennings," *The Huffington Post,* April 18, 2015.
[55] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.
[56] Ibid.

3.3 The effects of fragmentation

The fragmented geography and postage-stamp size of many cities in North County often mean that residents experience what Patrice has described—they often find themselves amassing several violations from multiple cities, often on the same day for the same infraction, such as having a broken taillight or faulty muffler. Residents comment on "the fact you can get pulled over in one jurisdiction then just cross over into another and in 5 seconds get the EXACT same ticket as you just did."[57] Another stated, "in the county you can get ticketed almost every other day. I have tickets from municipalities I didn't even know existed. Turns out, I was driving through five different towns when I thought it was all one—because they are literally the size of a football field." Yet another said, "I've been stopped three times in one week in three different municipalities on my way home from work because my windows were tinted. It is ridiculous. The only way you know you're entering a different city is a different police officer stops you."[58] Again, while extreme, these experiences are not unique to North St. Louis County. For example, the 2016 shooting of Philando Castile, who reportedly was stopped for a broken taillight and subsequently shot to death in front of his girlfriend and her daughter in his car in Falcon Heights, Minnesota, revealed how Black residents in suburban Minneapolis also experience hyper-policing. Castro had been stopped fifty-two times and issued eighty-six violations in fourteen years for minor traffic infractions and had paid thousands of dollars in municipal fines and fees.[59] As was the case in several instances involving North St. Louis County residents, witnesses claim that Castile's taillight was not broken. And as in the case of Michael Brown, whose physical appearance was blamed for his death, after the Philando Castile shooting the officer claimed that Castile's 'flared nostrils' resembled those of a suspect in a robbery.

Residents throughout North County point to tickets that do not list court dates, or list the wrong court date, as intentional attempts at creating confusion about how to settle tickets and ploys to prevent citizens from appearing for court dates.[60] Many also explain the difficulties they have encountered when trying to obtain information from part-time courts, which lack full-time staff, hold court only one or two nights each month, and often do not maintain websites. Others describe confusion due to multiple courts in a small geography, each with a different set of policies and practices. The biggest factor residents name for not appearing in court is fear of jail time for inability to pay, which many, like Patrice, have either experienced themselves or know about from others who have been jailed. Other reasons for not appearing include lack of childcare, since most cities do not allow children in court, and the inability to get to the court for fear of receiving another ticket while driving there.[61] As a result, the number of people who live with anxiety over warrants for their arrest or mounting fines for small infractions in multiple cities is staggering. This dramatically affects decisions residents make, such as when and where to

[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] See, for example, Eyder Peralta and Cheryl Corley, "The Driving Life and Death of Philando Castile," National Public Radio, July 15, 2016. http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/07/15/485835272/the-driving-life-and-death-of-philando-castile.
[60] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.
[61] Ibid.

drive and whether or not to use public space and amenities, like parks.[62] Public transportation is lacking in this area, which was developed as a series of commuter suburbs for people with cars. Food deserts are common, and many people described sending their children to the nearby gas station to buy snacks for meals because they did not want to use their cars to drive several miles for groceries out of fear of being pulled over.[63]

For those residents that do attempt to take care of violations immediately, stories of frustration, barriers, and jail time are surprisingly normal.[64] Many cities in North County issue so many violations that they often have several hundred cases on a docket for one court evening, with some courts averaging 500 cases per docket.[65] On court nights people can be found lined up and down the street of the court building for hours waiting to take care of a ticket. Many who were interviewed on those evenings worried while they waited that they might end up in jail that night because they did not come with enough money. Others explained that they constantly lived on the edge due to payment plans that took years to pay off. Many residents shared the sentiment of a woman who said, "money-wise I've practically gone broke multiple times. Court fees and paying fines constantly over minor things has really taken a toll on me and him (referring to her son)."[66]

Children and the parents of minors are not allowed in most courts, and police are assigned to keep order, which many residents say amounts to constant harassment while waiting.[67] Cases of those who can afford an attorney are heard first. When those who cannot afford an attorney finally appear, the most common directive to those unable to pay, according to those interviewed, is to immediately step out to call every friend and family member they can think of to bring money so they won't have to "be detained."[68] Not coincidentally, payday loan establishments have cropped up next to many municipal courts, in addition to bail bondsmen, to take advantage of family members who do not have the resources to pay fines and fees of those jailed. One municipal judge in this area points to this practice as particularly effective because the city receives more of what is owed, stating "if people didn't break the law they would not have these problems."[69] This is ironic coming from someone who works for a municipality that has not filed the required data for multiple years or adhered to the cap on municipal financing set forth by the Macks Creek Law, with no consequences.[70] Another judge handed brochures to residents for his brother's traffic school as a means to settle tickets.[71]

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[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Review of municipal court dockets, 2013–2014.
[66] Key-informant interviews—North St. Louis County residents.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Interview with municipal judge, August 10, 2015, who spoke on the condition he/she would remain anonymous.
[70] Review of Missouri Supreme Court public records, www.mo.courts.gov.
[71] As recounted in an interview with John Amman, March 13, 2015.

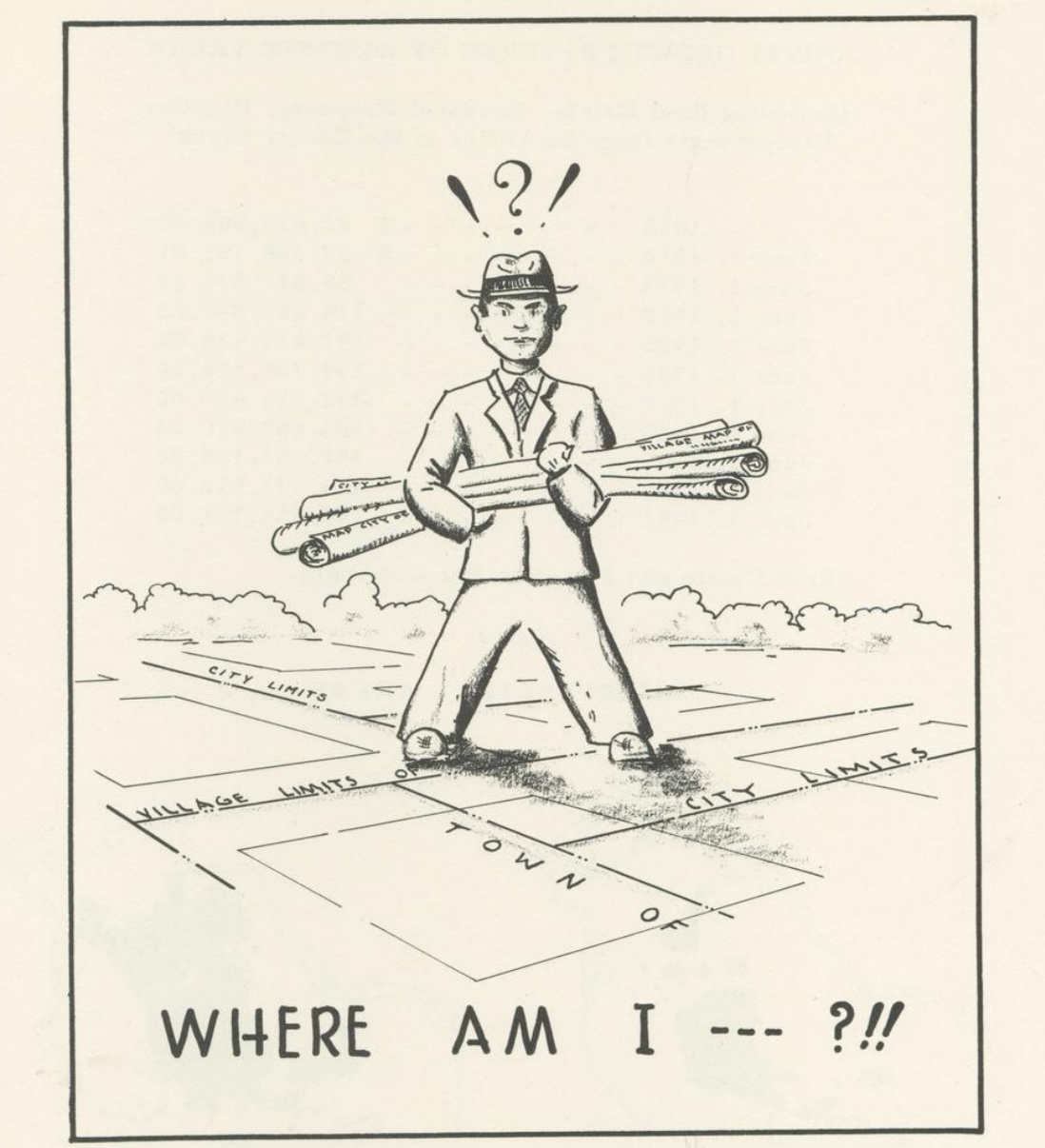

Figure **3.3**. Illustration depicting the 'Jurisdictional Jungle' in St. Louis County in a 1969 publication from St. Louis County entitled, "History and Growth of St. Louis County (source: St. Louis County archives).

3.4 A web of administrators

Attorneys, who have for decades worked in these municipalities as judges, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and city attorneys—often simultaneously—are highly critical

of recent media attention and calls for reform.[72] This web of lawyers, as journalists from the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* revealed in a recent expose article, have been instrumental in constructing a well-oiled machine for the purpose of extracting money from the very poor.[73] City councils and mayors who are supposed to approve and oversee the practices of police and courts have instead been counseled and instructed over many years regarding how to push legal boundaries for the purpose of generating more revenue through fines and fees.[74] One municipal leader remembered asking the city attorney "Is this legal?" referring to one of the city's practices, to which the attorney responded, "I don't know but we do it all the time over in X city."[75] These attorneys wear many hats—judge in two cities, prosecutor in another, city attorney in two more—leading to questions regarding their ability to act in an unbiased fashion. They also stand to lose much if recent calls for municipal court consolidation and reform are successful since they are well paid to work one to two evenings each month, in some cases over $50,000 per year while maintaining full-time law practices. Twenty-six law firms cover the eighty-one judge positions in St. Louis County, with some firms filling up to ten judge appointments around the county.[76] This does not account for those also working as prosecutors, city attorneys, and defense lawyers in multiple cities. Recently, a defense attorney working in the municipal courts testified at a public hearing on court reform about the tit-for-tat nature of the courts, stating that if he didn't accept a prosecutor's offer in one court, the same attorney acting as judge in another municipality was unlikely to judge in favor of his client.[77] This particular attorney was acting against the norm since eight attorneys that work in the municipal courts showed up at the same hearing to state that no conflicts of interest existed in the current structure.

3.5 Policing behavior and property

While the recent focus on North St. Louis and St. Louis County has been directed at traffic violations and warrants, many people are not aware of the many other methods by which municipalities in this area collect fines and fees and even take possession of property. These types of non-traffic and property violations have increased greatly over the past ten years.[78] When Senate Bill 5 was passed in 2015,[79] many feared that cities would seek to replace lost traffic-related revenue by increasing the number and costs of non-traffic violations issued. Based on preliminary data, this is a valid concern since the number of traffic violations plummeted while non-traffic citations increased significantly over the six-month period after SB-5 went into effect.[80] In 2016, the Missouri legislature passed modifications to SB-5, which added non-traffic violations to the limits set on revenue

[72] At a public hearing held by the working group of the Missouri Supreme Court on November 11, 2015, all three individuals that spoke against municipal court reform were attorneys employed by municipal courts.
[73] Mann, Kohler, and Deere, "A web of lawyers play different role in different courts."
[74] Based on interviews with municipal leaders.
[75] Interview with municipal alderman, Jan. 12, 2009.
[76] Review of municipal court appointments in the 81 courts of St. Louis County.
[77] Public hearing on municipal courts held by working group of the Missouri Supreme Court, November 11, 2015.
[78] Based on a review of the data reported to the Missouri Attorney General's office.
[79] Senate Bill 5, passed in March of 2015, capped the amount at 12.5%.
[80] Analysis of municipal records from 2015 reported to the Missouri Attorney General's office.

generated through the courts.[81] These types of non-violent violations target property and behavior and include things like: manner of walking; wearing sagging pants; playing loud music; leaving toys or wading pools in front yards; playing in the street; having basketball hoops or barbequing in front yards; drinking alcohol within fifty feet of a grill; installing mismatched curtains; loitering in a park; failure to secure a trash can lid; failure to keep grass at a certain length; allowing individuals not listed on occupancy permits to spend the night; owning a nuisance dog; telling someone's future; and failure to contract with the private trash collection company.[82] The idea that someone could potentially land in jail for failure to appear in court or for the inability to pay for a citation for mismatched curtains seems implausible; however, residents questioned about this possibility gave answers such as this one: "Yes, that could happen—for real."[83]

Cities also use bizarre interpretations of the International Property Maintenance Standards (IPMS) to cite hundreds of homes for specific infractions one year, while choosing another 'pet infraction' the next year. [84] For instance, in 2010 the city of Normandy cited 110 homes for "Failure to Paint Sign Pole," citing ordinance 505.020, which adopted the IPMS as the standard for property maintenance requirements. This was in addition to the 303 homes that received citations for "Violating Minimum Housing Standards," with reference to the same ordinance (505.020). But the only wording in the IPMS guidelines that comes close to the language about failing to paint a sign pole in the Normandy ordinance is a clause stating that all exterior metal must be painted with rust resistant paint. The following year, no houses received a "Failure to Paint Sign Pole" citation in Normandy; however, eighty-one homes were cited for "Failure to Paint the Front of a Rear Door," again using ordinance 505.020.[85]

One could argue that the practices outlined above are not race-based since, as one leader put it, "we're all poor and we're all black."[86] This, however, would be shortsighted since the reasons that these cities seemingly 'must' resort to policing-for-revenue, predatory policing, and the tactics employed by the court system all pivot around the realities and nuances of race and race-making. While tiny cities in North St. Louis County with more diverse populations claim that the inordinate number of traffic citations written to Black drivers is due to the number of Black non-residents driving through their boundaries, the same cities disproportionately cite Black residents for housing and non-traffic violations. Of the eight municipalities that complied with a request for data regarding non-traffic ordinance violations, all of them issued a larger percentage of

[81] The Missouri legislature voted on May 12, 2016, to limit the fines cities can charge residents for non-traffic ordinance violations and add fines and fees collected from non-traffic violations to the cap cities can collect from court fines and fees set at 12.5% of the total municipal budget by 2015 Senate Bill 5.
[82] Based on a review of court documents and ordinances in 24 municipalities in North St. Louis County.
[83] This statement, or something similar, was made by more than 20 residents of North St. Louis County during resident interviews.
[84] The International Code Council publishes the IPMS for adoption as legally enforced codes by municipalities and associations.
[85] The data in this paragraph concerning the city of Normandy was obtained by the author from REGIS using the Missouri Sunshine Law.
[86] Interview with municipal leader, April 9, 2012.

citations to Black residents than the overall percentage of Black residents in their jurisdiction.

For example, Greendale has a population of 651 residents and is 69% Black.[87] Between 2012 and 2014, 91% of all non-traffic violations were written to Black Greendale residents.[88] The city of Bellerive has a population of 254 people and is 43% Black.[89] Between 2012 and 2014, 93% of non-traffic violations were written to Black residents of Bellerive.[90] The city of Bel-Nor has a population of 1500 people, of whom 43% are Black. Between 2012 and 2015, 79% of non-traffic ordinance violations were issued to Black residents of Bel-Nor. In Cool Valley, 85% of the 1196 residents are Black, but Black residents receive 92% of non-traffic violations. Normandy, with a population of 5008 residents, of whom 70% are Black, issues 90% of non-traffic citations to Black residents. Finally, the city of Pasadena Park has a population of 470 people, of whom 60% are Black, and issues 78% of non-traffic ordinance violations to Black residents. The issuing of non-traffic ordinance violations to a disproportionate number of Black residents feeds the cycle of traffic violations, since whenever a police officer stops a Black driver, for any or no reason, the likelihood is high that the driver will have an outstanding warrant for failure to pay a non-traffic violation. It is interesting to note that seventeen municipalities either did not comply with my request, in violation of the Missouri Sunshine Law or demanded more than $500 to provide data. This response led me to wonder whether or not disparities in non-compliant cities are higher than the disparities among cities complying with my request.

4. STRUCTURES OF SUBURBAN RACE-MAKING

4.1 Policing the suburban crisis

In 1978, Stuart Hall et al. published *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, which asserts that crime cannot be viewed independently from the institutions that aim to control and report on it.[91] The book examines the politics of policing—using mugging to look at the relationships between a rhetorical 'moral panic' and policing campaigns in the context of colonial and imperial legacies of human differentiation. The authors argue that agencies such as the police, the courts, and the media do not passively react to a given crime situation but "are actively and continuously part of the whole process."[92] More than thirty-five years later, this conceptualization is certainly evident in the case of North St. Louis County, where municipal leaders, police, and the courts not only participate in the process of criminalization but, to a large extent, have created specific

[87] U.S. Census data, 2010.

[88] Based on analysis of data requested from the city of Greendale and obtained from REJIS (Regional Justice Information Service) by the author through invocation of the Missouri Sunshine Law. The Revised Statutes of Missouri Chapter 610 were signed into the Missouri Constitution in 1973 following the passage of the Freedom of Information Act by the U.S. Congress in 1966. The law expressly states that meetings, records, votes, actions and deliberations of public governmental bodies are to be open to the public.

[89] U.S. Census data, 2010.

[90] Based on analysis of data requested from the city of Bellerive and obtained from REJIS by the author through invocation of the Missouri Sunshine Law.

[91] Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[92] Ibid., 54.

ways to criminalize Black behavior for economic purposes. Utilizing tropes of deviance, residents are moved from rights-bearing citizens to rights-less criminals through the active policing of a rhetorical 'suburban crisis,' which works in tandem with equally powerful imaginations of suburban space and norms.

As discussed here and in the previous chapters, the 'crisis in the suburbs' promoted by municipal leaders stems from the very real economic crisis brought about by plummeting property values, hollowed out commercial districts, and the evaporation of state and federal funding. Leaders, municipal judges, and city attorneys, however, frame the 'crisis' as a public safety issue and their "fundamental right to protect private property."[93] According to these narratives, the astronomical number of citations handed out—which is ten to twenty times higher than in white suburbs—is strictly due to the inability of Black residents to follow simple rules and behaviors said to threaten safety, devalue property, and discourage private investment. Consistently invoking the 'right of the city,' leaders, judges, and city attorneys claim that residents would have nothing to complain about if they would just "act right and take care of their property."[94] Blaming the residents for the predicament of lost investment shifts the focus of responsibility away from public and private actors that abandoned this area and ignores the blatant poaching of resources practiced by more financially stable cities in the region.

While much has been written about the criminalization of poverty[95] and the many economies of the prison industrial complex,[96] residents of North St. Louis County are punished for the threat that the phantasm of blackness poses to the economic viability of municipalities and are subsequently extorted based on their own financial hardships. Comparing municipal practices to criminal racketeering, a class action complaint against thirteen cities in North St. Louis County makes the following point:

> [Cities] have abused the legal system to bestow a patina of legitimacy on what is, in reality, extortion. If private parties had created and implemented this scheme, enforced it by threatening and imposing indefinite incarceration, and milked poor families of millions of dollars, the law would punish them as

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[93] Taken from interviews with public officials and statements made by officials at public meetings between August 2014 and November 2015.

[94] In an interview, the mayor of Normandy, Patrick Green, repeatedly spoke about rights of the city of Normandy to secure the same economic advantages and order as that of its more well-to-do counterparts by policing behavior in public space and protecting the value of private property. In independent interviews, Mayor Green of Normandy, Mayor Carter of Pagedale, and Mayor Murphy of Cool Valley all argued that the seemingly excessive amount of fines collected in their cities, as recently reported in the media, is due to residents' inability to follow the law.

[95] See, for example, Kaaryn Gustafson, "The Criminalization of Poverty," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 99, no. 3 (2009): 643–716; Priscilla A. Ocen, "The New Racially Restrictive Covenant: Race, Welfare, and the Policing of Black Women in Subsidized Housing," *UCLA Law Review* 59 (2012): 1565; Suzanne Allen, et al., "Throwaway Moms: Maternal Incarceration and the Criminalization of Female Poverty," *Affilia* 25, no. 2 (2010): 160–72; Jackie Esmonde, "Criminalizing Poverty: The Criminal Law Power and the Safe Streets Act," *Journal of Law and Social Policy* 17 (2002): 63–86.

[96] See, for example, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

> extortionists and racketeers, and the community would take steps to prevent them from exploiting the most vulnerable of its members. These predatory practices are no more legitimate—indeed are more outrageous—when state and local government actors perpetuate them under cover of law.[97]

4.2 Blackness as risk

The association of blackness with risk creates and justifies multiple technologies of the modern racial state.[98] The case of North St. Louis County challenges academic tendencies to draw distinct boundaries around the realm of 'the state' and illustrates how technologies of control and influence operate within 'civic society' at multiple scales of governance.[99] The logic that rewards individuals and institutions that separate themselves from the risks associated with 'non-white' people and groups, however, is consistently deployed across scales and jurisdictions. Actions or inactions that disadvantage already disadvantaged groups are easily justified on the basis of economic and social risk and are practiced by leaders in both the civic and corporate realms who are subsequently represented as simply 'rational actors.' Black city administrators tasked with the responsibility of reducing risk and maximizing economic stability in their jurisdictions are thus encouraged to engage in racialized practices that lead to complex contradictions and dilemmas when cities become majority Black. In North County, the economic risk associated with Black residents creates another double bind for leaders of majority-Black cities because they must either work against the individual interests of their residents or risk insolvency by operating outside of the prevailing economic models.

In contradistinction to the concept of 'whiteness as property'—the legally protected rights associated with a privileged identity[100]—'blackness as risk' suspends the rights of Black citizens in order that risk may be contained, controlled, and limited on the basis of economic and physical security.[101] Whiteness holds tangible and enforceable rights, as

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[97] Class Action Complaint, Case No. 4:16-cv-1302, United States District Court, Eastern District of Missouri.

[98] David Theo Goldberg has theorized modern racial states as places "where states of being and states of governance meet. For instance, race has long enabled citizens both to deny the state's implication in violence and, where acknowledged, to deny any personal implications or to abrogate responsibility. Citizens of racial states thus are able to trade on the ambiguity between condition of being and form of governance, at once benefitting from reproducing racisms and distancing themselves from any implication in them." Goldberg, "Racial States," in *A Companion to Racial and Ethnic Studies*, David Theo Goldberg and John Solomos, eds. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Press, 2002), 236.

[99] See James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta, "Spatializing States: Towards an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist* 29, no. 4 (2002): 981-1002

[100] Although the conventional understanding of property refers to 'things' owned by persons, and the rights of individuals with regard to 'a thing,' the concept of property has evolved to include intangible rights as protected by legal ruling. As Harris theorizes, property is in this case a right, not a thing, and is metaphysical, not physical. Whiteness therefore includes multiple forms and interpretations of rights and is not just an identity but also a property with inherent, as opposed to explicit, legal status and legal rights. The right to move, the right to exclude, and the right to prosper at the expense of others are all part of the possessive rights of, and investment in, whiteness—as itself a defensible property—that have created the physical, social, and political conditions in North St. Louis County.

[101] Associations between blackness and risk have been theorized by several scholars including: Shona Jackson, "Risk, Blackness, and Postcolonial Studies: An Introduction," *Callaloo* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 63-68; and, Rashad Shabazz, *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicag*o

Cheryl Harris showed more than two decades ago.[102] In her now classic essay "Whiteness as Property," Harris examines the many ways white privilege is constructed and enforced in, and through, legal interpretations that do not explicitly rely on racist doctrine. The ways in which eminent domain is exercised and upheld in spite of legal challenges by communities of color, based on legal claims of 'public good' and 'highest and best use,' exemplify how the property of whiteness determines what is 'good' or 'best' for people and space.

'Blackness as risk' can be understood as the inverse of Harris's argument. The association of blackness with risk permeates all levels of current decision-making, from individual to institutional, in a society where historical constructions of race determined whether one was free or unfree and where one drop of Black blood stripped individuals of the privileges afforded white subjects.[103] In a more blatant example of the legal ramifications of 'blackness as risk,' less than one percent of police officers who shoot and kill unarmed people of color are charged with a crime, and even fewer are convicted of wrongdoing. This statistic alone shows how the risk associated with Black bodies is understood as sufficient reason for the use of deadly force.[104] The risk associated with the Black body can be clearly seen in North County, from structural disinvestment and the hollowing out of middle-class suburbs to the legalized killing of unarmed Black residents.

4.3 A punitive society

Given the rhetorical power of 'crisis' and 'risk,' and the experiences of residents described in this chapter, it is useful to consider Michel Foucault's theorization of 'the fine' (defined as the taking of property—real and monetary) relative to the four tactics of state violence he identifies in *The Punitive Society: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1972–73.*[105] All four of these tactics are on bold display in North St. Louis County—exclusion, compensation, marking, and confinement. Foucault argues that the fine imposed on an individual within a punitive society involves 1) compromising the right to live somewhere (exclusion), 2) redemption for what is lost due to the individual (compensation), 3) public acknowledgment of a sovereign power and authority by the subject (marking), and 4) literal denial of physical and individual freedoms (confinement).[106] Residents of North St. Louis County find their right to a place to live compromised in the form of multiple

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(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015). In this case, I am linking associations between blackness and risk as the antithesis to Cheryl Harris's conceptualization of 'whiteness as property'. Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106 (1993): 1707–91.

[102] Harris, *supra* note 21.

[103] For example, Guy Stuart traces the racialized social factors that impact risk assessment by mortgage lenders throughout the twentieth Century with a particular focus on mortgage lending practices in Chicago in the 1990s, showing how embedded racialized discriminations continue to produce the spaces of the American city, in *Discriminating Risk: The U.S. Mortgage Lending Industry in the 20th Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

[104] According to data collected by the organization Mapping Police Violence, 102 unarmed black persons were killed by police in the United States in 2015. Of those incidents, charges were brought against ten police officers and two officers were convicted of crimes. See http://mappingpoliceviolence.org/unarmed/.

[105] Foucault, *The Punitive Society: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1972–73*, Bernard E. Harcourt, ed., Graham Burchell, trans. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015).

[106] Ibid., 6–8.

property violations, harassment, loss of income, and in some cases, the confiscation of their homes. Many residents relinquish their so-called 'right to the suburbs' and return to St. Louis City, where they report there is significantly less harassment, or they are excluded from the benefits of full 'suburban citizenship.'[107] Residents also end up compensating the city through fines and fees for the loss brought about by the risk associated with their very bodies. They are marked as deviant—publically harassed and humiliated—through constant stops and draconian court policies. These policies have lasting effects on residents' future employment and housing opportunities. Lastly, confinement and the denial of individual freedom are frequent threats and part of the reality experienced by countless people across this geography.

Foucault goes on to argue, "what has to be brought out first of all in the analysis of a penal system is the nature of the struggles that take place around power in a society."[108] He asks, "What forms of power are actually at work for power to respond to infractions that call its laws, rules, and exercise into question with tactics such as exclusion, marking, redemption, or confinement?"[109] The criminalization of normal behavior, extreme policing of minor infractions, as well as everyday practices of oppression within this region, are some of the forms of power at work that reveal how governance and governmentality operate at the lowest and most mundane levels of society. In this way, the racial state is a local affair.

5. MISSOURI STATE LAW

In addition to the risk associated with Black people and Black spaces, which have contributed to uneven development in North County, it is important to consider how the St. Louis region is impacted by the constitutional provisions and political cultures of the state of Missouri. As Gerald Frug has argued, much can be known about the laws and values of a state by looking closely at the physical and political landscapes of its major cities.[110] Indeed, as laid out in Chapter Two, the St. Louis region has been directly shaped by the history, laws, and struggles of the state of Missouri. From the ways by which rights were determined or denied in the Louisiana Territory, to the conditions by which Missouri entered the Union under the Missouri Compromise, to the rewriting of the Missouri Constitution to provide constitutional allowances for home rule and separation of St. Louis City from St. Louis County, to landmark decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court regarding exclusionary zoning in St. Louis and Kansas City, to the minimum restrictions Missouri placed on both annexation and municipal incorporation, to the high premium regional actors and residents place on municipal autonomy and home rule. All of these policies and political cultures have determined the geography of North St. Louis County and the experience of the residents, including the segregation of their schools, the high percentage of property taxes they pay, and the predatory policing they face every day. Not surprisingly, many landmark cases regarding race and space emanate from this region.[111]

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[107] Suburban citizenship is discussed in Chapter Four.
[108] Foucault, *The Punitive Society*, 13.
[109] Ibid., 12.
[110] See, for example, Gerald Frug and David J. Barron, *City Bound: How States Stifle Urban Innovation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).
[111] These include Dred Scott v. Sandford, Buchanan v. Warley, Shelly v. Kraemer, Jones v. Mayer, U. S. v. City of Black Jack, and Lidell v. City of St. Louis.

5.1 'Peculiar civil courts'

The questionable role and power of municipal courts as laid out in the Missouri state constitution, including grey areas as to whether municipal courts should act more as criminal or civil courts, has impacted North County in ways few might have anticipated. T. E. Lauer described the apparent problem of municipal court ambiguity in 1966 in his argument for municipal court reform in Missouri, which did not transpire at that time.[112] In addition to identifying inherent conflicts of interest, a clear lack of procedure and standards, little uniformity across municipalities, consistent duplication of laws, strangely particular ordinances across municipalities, and an alarming disinterest in the spirit of justice, Lauer also reveals that abuses by the municipal courts have a long history. He states:

> While our criminal law makes an increasing claim to adhere to the theory that rehabilitation of the offender is the proper end of criminal justice, municipal ordinance violators are dealt with almost as though the twentieth century had never happened: the offender is punished by the imposition of a fine or jail sentence. And failure to pay a fine will cause the offender to be remanded to jail, there to 'lay it out.' But ordinance violations are trivial matters, we will say; they are only civil matters and surely the fine or imprisonment cannot amount to much. An examination of the statutes, however, discloses that in third and fourth class cities an offender may be punished by a fine of one hundred dollars and imprisonment in the "city prison or workhouse" for three months.[113]

While significant problems have existed within policing and municipal courts in St. Louis County for more than fifty years, more recent manifestations of predatory policing and court practices have taken a new racial turn both statistically and rhetorically.[114] Since 1966, the most egregious municipal court practices, such as jail time for failure to pay and the funding of municipal budgets through the court, were greatly reduced across Missouri, including in many majority white areas of West and South St. Louis Counties, through reform measures.[115] These practices have increased, however, in North County at roughly the same rate as the increase in the Black population.[116] From specific types of ordinances (e.g., against sagging pants and barbequing in the front yard)[117] to justifications for policies (e.g., statements such as "these people don't know how to act in the suburbs")[118] to employing dehumanizing practices and tropes (e.g., leaving a body in the street for four and a half hours and labeling it "animalistic"),[119] the criminalization and dehumanization of the

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[112] T. E. Lauer, "Prolegomenon to Municipal Court Reform in Missouri," *Missouri Law Review* 31 no. 1 (Winter 1966): 69–97.
[113] Lauer, "Prolegomenon to Municipal Court Reform," 91.
[114] This is based on analysis of court records for municipalities in North St. Louis County that show a disproportionate number of citations issued to black individuals and numerous media articles and segments since the death of Michael Brown, Jr. focused on the racial implications of policing in North St. Louis County.
[115] Analysis of court records of municipal courts across St. Louis County looking at arrests with jail time and the percent of municipal budget funded through court fines and fees between 2005 and 2015.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Review of municipal ordinances in North St. Louis County.
[118] Interview with municipal alderperson, March 12, 2010.
[119] Media and witness accounts of the day Michael Brown, Jr. died in Ferguson, MO, and court transcript of the grand jury testimony of Darren Wilson, the police officer that shot Brown.

Black body conveniently justifies significant increases in court-generated revenues, which make up for significant disinvestment and loss of sales tax revenues.

The conclusions drawn by the working group ordered to look at municipal practices by the Supreme Court of Missouri in 2015 identified eight problems.[120] Four problems were linked to incompetence within the courts themselves, and three were directly linked to deficiencies in Missouri state law. For example, the report made note of "state law that enables municipalities to profit financially from ordinance enforcement activities, and judicial selection and retention procedures that expose the judges and court personnel to undue and improper pressure from the executive and legislative branches of municipal government."[121] The report also attributed unfair treatment of residents based on conflicts of interest to "state law, in the form of the Supreme Court Rules constituting the Code of Judicial Conduct and the Rules of Professional Conduct for attorneys, which permit such practical conflicts of interest to exist."[122] Regarding the last problem, "that matters pertaining to warrants and bonds in some instances are handled by law enforcement and the courts in a manner that is deliberately discriminatory against African-Americans and members of other minority communities," the report cites racism as the root cause. However, the report laments that "the complete elimination of actual racism is well beyond the power of legislatures and courts."[123] While it is true that legislation and court rulings cannot single-handedly eliminate racism, claiming that racism is too big of a problem to solve appears to excuse these entities from actually addressing racist practices.

5.2 Funding cities through retail

One of the most influential pieces of Missouri legislation with regard to the experience of residents in North County today was passed in 1969. It allows cities in Missouri to levy a municipal sales tax in addition to the relatively low state sales tax rate. There is a direct relationship between the loss of sales tax revenue and an increase in the amount of revenue generated through policing and the courts.[124] Upon passage of the state legislation, most cities in the St. Louis region almost immediately passed a local sales tax, and many approved lower property tax rates at the same time. The vast fragmentation of the region and tiny size of many cities promoted a cannibalistic approach to sales tax revenue as cities lured shoppers from surrounding municipalities in order to pay for services in their own jurisdiction. This passes the cost of local government to people outside of municipal boundaries and creates vast disparities between the 'winners and losers' of what is today a sales tax war.[125] Currently, sixty-nine of the ninety-two local governments in the region list sales taxes as their primary

[120] See Supreme Court of Missouri Municipal Division Work Group, "Report to the Supreme Court of Missouri," submitted March 1, 2016.
[121] Ibid., 2.
[122] Ibid., 3.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Based on comparison data analysis of sales tax revenue and revenue generated by court fines and fees, 2005–2010.
[125] See Sidney Plotkin and William E. Scheuerman, *Private Interest, Public Spending: Balanced-Budget Conservatism and the Fiscal Crisis* (New York: Black Rose, 1994), for a discussion of how every subunit of government has been pitted against every other subunit in response to vase decreases in public funding from federal and state revenues.

source of revenue.[126] Not surprisingly, the majority of the twenty-three cities that cannot rely on sales tax due to the hollowing out of tiny commercial districts are located in North St. Louis County. Furthermore, residents in many areas of North St. Louis County must travel to neighboring communities to buy groceries and other necessities and pay a sales tax of between 7.5 and 10 percent to fund the services for more well-off neighbors, while their own property taxes remain the highest in the county.[127] Adding to the fierce competition between jurisdictions and the creative measures to raise revenue was the passage of the 1980 Hancock Amendment to the Missouri Constitution, which limits the tax revenue the state can collect from personal income, prevents the state from imposing laws on local governments without funding them, and bars local governments from levying or increasing any tax without voter approval.

5.3 Tax Increment Financing

The dependence on municipal sales tax and measures that preclude the equitable collection and distribution of resources established under Missouri state law means that developing and maintaining thriving commercial districts is not just generally advantageous to cities, it is essential for the funding of municipal budgets. As such, competition for economic development is also fierce, and vast incentives are offered to developers and retail businesses by municipal governments that are in a position to lure commerce away from weaker communities. Developers and businesses often call the shots and hold tiny cities hostage with the threat of leaving, in a manner similar to the way sports teams operate in large cities. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is frequently used throughout the United States to attract development, but because Missouri state law allows sales taxes in addition to property taxes to be captured by TIF, this mechanism is particularly attractive to both cities and developers in the St. Louis region.[128] Furthermore, under Missouri law, the creation of a TIF area requires only municipal approval, whereas other states have a more rigorous regional approval process to ensure TIF is used in the manner it is intended—for public rather than private good. Consequently, it is common to find TIF areas in relatively affluent neighborhoods throughout the region. In a particularly notorious example in St. Louis County, an upscale area of the county seat, Clayton, was deemed 'blighted' in order to secure a TIF district. According to the watchdog group Better Together, over two billion public tax dollars have been diverted to developers in the past twenty years as subsidies for private developments in the St. Louis region.[129] Of the one hundred and sixty-eight TIFs carried out in St. Louis City and County,

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[126] Better Together St. Louis, Policy Brief, "The Will to Change: Why does a region with world-class resources struggle to thrive?" (May, 2016) p. 5. Report can be accessed at http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BT-Will-to-Change-Final.pdf.

[127] Based on resident interviews and a review of municipal property tax rates for St. Louis County.

[128] Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is the ability to capture and use most of the increased local property tax (and, in Missouri, sales tax) revenues from new development in a defined district for a defined period of time. The cost of the development is paid back after the project is built, making it an attractive development tool. The intended uses of TIF are for the revitalization of depressed areas, to build affordable housing, create jobs, and remediate areas with environmental issues, although these uses are often liberally interpreted.

[129] Better Together St. Louis, Policy Brief, "The Will to Change: Why does a region with world-class resources struggle to thrive?" (May, 2016), p. 5. Report can be accessed at http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/BT-Will-to-Change-Final.pdf.

thirteen are located in North St. Louis County, which covers more than one third of the physical geography.[130]

6. CONCLUSION

Proponents of municipal consolidation are calling for the 'natural end' to cities that do not serve the interests of residents. Majority-Black cities, as the 'worst offenders' of predatory policing practices and the least capable of competing in the game of municipal solvency will be the first to be dissolved under proposed reforms. The arguments used to promote consolidation focus almost entirely on the symptoms of municipal insolvency—specifically predatory policing—and not on the cause, and certainly not on where responsibility historically lies. Those who have long supported consolidation plans view unrest in Ferguson as a political opportunity to highlight the very real consequences of political fragmentation, such as municipal dysfunction, inefficiency, greedy administrators, and racist practices, as they push for regional consolidation plans.[131] However, from this perspective, cities that can survive the restructuring of revenue sources will be permitted to exist, while those that cannot restructure should be absorbed into surrounding jurisdictions. It is assumed in all of these discussions (in the media and public forums) that residents will be better off as citizens of unincorporated areas of St. Louis County or larger municipalities without consideration of how municipal space functions as a racializing force or what new race-making situations may emerge under alternative oversight. The all-Black leaders of tiny cities are cast as the villains in these stories told by the media and regional actors whereas the state and county politicians forced into action by Ferguson protesters and legal advocates are often represented as heroes. In most cases, questions of accountability have not gone beyond municipal leaders, whose only powers lie within the police force and courts.

6.1 Inflections of race

The people of North St. Louis County understand the history, policies, and politics described in this chapter, and their experience defies the notion that race is becoming increasingly less important in the United States. Many people I spoke with also believe that the implications of race today are less about skin color and personal prejudices and more about the power to control in ways that benefit one group over another, which has always been the fundamental purpose of race-making. This perspective explains why race-making situations are implemented by Black leaders using white spatial logics. As part of renewed political activism triggered by the death of Michael Brown, Jr., residents are calling for reforms that go beyond the discourse of police brutality and demanding that systemic racial disparities be addressed while not letting Black leaders off the hook.[132]

As a result, several initiatives aimed at addressing inequities in this area are taking advantage of a political moment in which, due to sustained protest, leaders must at least

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[130] See Better Together, Tax Incremental Financing Map, http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/tax-incremental-financing-map.

[131] Based on interviews with leaders at Better Together and Arch City Defenders as well as attending multiple meetings on court reform between October 2014 and December 2015.

[132] The Ferguson protestors continue to organize protests aimed at court reform in St. Louis County.

appear to be paying attention after twenty-five years of complacency. The state legislature quickly passed Senate Bill 5 in the spring of 2015, bringing the threshold of revenue from court fines and fees down to 12 percent, from its original 30 percent.[133] When Governor Nixon signed SB-5 into law in July 2015,[134] he stated, "under this bill, cops will stop being revenue agents and go back to being cops."[135] Multiple private and class action lawsuits have also been filed by public service law firms and law faculty at St. Louis University on behalf of residents caught in the web of municipal courts.[136] Many new and existing organizations have turned their attention to municipal court reform and municipal consolidation, and in 2016 the Missouri legislature added fines and fees from non-traffic violations to the 12.5 percent established by SB-5.[137] Multiple task forces and working groups have also been commissioned or voluntarily formed to look at specific practices in Ferguson, St. Louis County, and the state of Missouri more generally, including working groups ordered by both the governor of Missouri and the Missouri Supreme Court.[138]

In addition to the scathing review by the Department of Justice regarding racist and race-based practices and culture in both the municipal administration and police department of Ferguson,[139] the Ferguson Commission released its September 2015 report focusing squarely on race.[140] After a year of research and listening to communities, the report began by stating, "We know that talking about race makes a lot of people uncomfortable. But make no mistake: This is about race."[141] Remarkably, the commission was made up of a bi-partisan cross-section of community leaders, residents, and law enforcement representatives appointed by the governor of Missouri to report on the underlying causes of, and proactive responses to, unrest in Ferguson. Although there are

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[133] The Missouri legislature passed the "Macks Creek Law" in 1995 in response to practices in Macks Creek, Missouri, which was funding over 85% of the city's budget from fines and fees for traffic violations. The law limited the amount any city could collect from traffic violations to 30% of the municipal budget. Senate Bill 5, passed in March of 2015, capped the amount at 12.5%.

[134] The bill limits fines, bans failure to appear charges for missing a court date, and bans jail as a sentence for most minor traffic offenses. It also restricts how much of a city's general operating revenue can be raised from court fines and fees to 12.5%.
http://www.senate.mo.gov/15info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=160.

[135] Robert Patrick and Stephen Deere, "'Sweeping' court reform comes as Nixon signs bill to cap cities' revenue, end predatory habits," *Saint Louis Post Dispatch*, July 10, 2015.

[136] The cities of Ferguson, Jennings, Pine Lawn, Pagedale, and St. Ann are currently being sued for unjust court practices in class action lawsuits.

[137] The Missouri legislature voted on May 12, 2016, to limit the fines cities can charge residents for non-traffic ordinance violations and add fines and fees collected from non-traffic violations to the cap cities can collect from court fines and fees set at 12.5% of the total municipal budget by 2015 Senate Bill 5.

[138] For example, Governor Jay Nixon commissioned a cross-sectional panel (The Ferguson Commission) to investigate the causes of the Ferguson uprisings. The commission delivered its report on September 21, 2015; the Missouri Supreme Court assembled a working group to review municipal court data and conduct public meetings throughout the state of Missouri to investigate allegations of misconduct and calls for municipal court reform. The working group report is expected in April 2016.

[139] Department of Justice Report: "Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department," March 4, 2015; Ferguson Commission Report: "Forward Through Ferguson," September 21, 2015.

[140] Ferguson Commission, "Forward Through Ferguson: A Path to Racial Equity," pdf version published by *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* online , http://www.stltoday.com/forward-through-ferguson-report/pdf_b0865b51-1ec2-5487-9755-d617e19e43d9.html.

[141] Ibid., 6.

189 calls to action listed in the report that was supposed to focus on Ferguson, the authors make clear that the report is intended to read as a narrative about racial inequities found in the history, policies, and practices of the St. Louis region.[142]

The report is somewhat unique because it is intended to directly address the causes, as opposed to merely the consequences, of racial tensions. Governor Jay Nixon's executive order establishing the Ferguson Commission stated: "[T]he unrest and public discourse set in motion by the events of August 9 in Ferguson, Missouri underscore the need for a thorough, wide-ranging and unflinching study of the social and economic conditions that impede progress, equality and safety in the St. Louis region."[143] The Ferguson Commission, in its own words, embraced the call to be "unflinching." This meant

> listening, often uncomfortably, to the personal stories shared by citizens who came to our open meetings, and by people we interviewed throughout the process of developing this report….Many of the stories were frustrating, depressing, infuriating, deflating, and heart-wrenching. We are committed to honoring those stories, and facing those truths, throughout our work and in this report.[144]

The 203-page report presents the same depressing data regarding disparities of race and class in the St. Louis region that my research had uncovered and similarly attaches the experiences of marginalized residents to specific data and analysis. As a 'living document,' commissioned at the highest level of state government, the report is an important resource for understanding the degrees of racialized experience in the St. Louis region, with an emphasis on North St. Louis County. How the report will impact change and whether or not recommendations will be implemented remain to be seen. The fact remains that Black bodies, just as they historically have, continue to be used as revenue-generating reservoirs.

6.2 The right to, *and to be*, a city

Although cities are fighting to maintain the status quo, it is clear to municipal leaders that their world is changing. Less clear is whether change will come in the form of actually remediating inequitable and unconstitutional practices, finding alternative ways to exploit residents, or dissolving cities. Over the past two years, leaders have been attempting to preemptively 'reform themselves' in closed-door meetings with judges and attorneys in the hope of convincing state legislators and the Missouri Supreme Court that court reform can be internally addressed In spite of the findings of an extensive audit and public meetings held by a working group of the Missouri Supreme Court that found vast problems with municipal courts in St. Louis County, few reforms are slated for implementation other than telling cities to do a better job.[145] Several leaders of small villages and third- and fourth-class cities complain their sovereignty has been infringed

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[142] Ibid., 7.
[143] Ibid., 9.
[144] Ibid., 10.
[145] The Report of the Municipal Division Work Group to the Supreme Court of Missouri basically cited state laws that allow municipalities to fund budgets through the courts and incompetence within the municipal courts. See https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=98093.

upon by the state.[146] This consistent invocation of sovereignty suggests that the culture of fiefdoms in this fragmented area and the Missouri tradition of defying Dillon's Rule[147] continue to frame leaders' perceptions (and confusion) regarding hierarchy of power and structure of law.[148] However, the fact that cities have more or less been able to pass laws and conduct business as they wished for so many years certainly supports the conception that local governments can act as fiefdoms. In this way, municipalities continue to operate as racial states of 'sovereign subjects' caught in perpetual cycles by which residents fund their own oppression in order for cities to survive.

Black residents interviewed for this research unequivocally reject Black leaders' assertions that policing is strictly about public safety. In fact, most did not believe public safety had anything to do with municipal practices. When asked, virtually all Black respondents (N=84) said they believed policing was based on money and greed and not on issues of safety. One resident voiced the sentiments of the respondents as a whole:

> I think the public safety argument is a complete lie. How does not putting your trash can in the right place put the public in danger? And then when there is an actual law enforcement issue, they're nowhere to be found. They only fine us to put money in their pockets. I truly believe that.

Regarding the fact that most municipal leaders are Black, most residents said they thought the race of the leaders did not matter; however, they believed the race of residents had everything to do with municipal policy. Residents said things like "the color of the leadership doesn't matter, but I do think they treat us so badly because we are Black," and "it doesn't matter what color the leaders are, it matters what color the people are when it comes down to how much they care about the people in their community." Another Black resident stated,

> Black leaders are more corrupt because they can get away with more. Imagine if leaders treated a white community this way. They can do this because we're a Black community. Ferguson is under scrutiny because white leaders are oppressing black people. Black leaders get off the hook here because they can say it's not about race.[149]

Black leaders do indeed claim that policing is not about race or class in majority-black cities where the leadership is all Black. "We're all black and we're all poor so saying it's about race or class out here doesn't work," as several leaders told me in slightly different terms.[150] However, the same leaders do cite race when challenging recent reform

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[146] Municipal leaders cited the sovereign right of their cities to exist multiple times in interviews. Mayor Patrick Green of Normandy and Mayor Mary Louise Carter of Pagedale are especially vocal regarding this claim.

[147] In 1868, Judge John Dillon of Iowa ruled in federal court that cities exist at the pleasure of the state. In 1875, Missouri became the first state to establish municipal home rule to St. Louis by constitutional grant. Missouri later extended home rule provisions to smaller cities in the state.

[148] See for example, Henry J. Schmandt, "Municipal Home Rule in Missouri," *Washington University Law Review* 1953, no. 4: 385–412.

[149] This paragraph is based on data from resident interviews.

[150] Interview with mayor and city alderperson of Pagedale, May 2010.

measures. A dozen municipalities, most of which are very small and majority Black, brought a lawsuit against the state claiming SB-5 violates their constitutional rights.[151] The cities won the lawsuit by arguing the state is taking away an important revenue source without funding the law it has passed.[152] The lawsuit reveals how some municipalities will be vastly more affected by the law than others, and, in the end, many will cease to exist. The fact that small Black cities will be the first to be erased and merged with other cities or dissolved into unincorporated St. Louis County shows how race directly impacts issues of autonomy and democracy at the smallest scale.[153] It also harkens back to a long history of erased and disempowered indigenous populations and Black communities throughout history and particularly in the St. Louis region.[154] This argument, however, is both a classic double bind and zero sum game if the question at hand remains: Should small Black cities be allowed to oppress and harass residents because otherwise their questionable right to exist will be violated? Arguing that Black leaders have a right to oppress Black constituents because they are Black is an ironic twist in the logics of racial equality and illustrates the limitations of pursuing a 'racial democracy.' Clearly municipal leaders, Black or white, should not be allowed to construct systems by which cities are funded through violence. However, setting majority-Black cities up for certain failure is equally troubling and reveals the degree to which blackness-as-risk operates within the economic structuring of the United States.

Lawsuits arguing that the state has not funded the law created by SB-5[155] potentially shift the focus to a different question: What is the obligation of the state or the county to ensure certain levels of funding for cities with no alternative sources of revenue—especially cities with historically oppressed populations? This could also shift the focus to how the roots of inequality lie in the myriad ways Black residents have been isolated through legal forms of segregation and the legal gutting of resources from minority occupied areas. A shift in this line of questioning made by some reformers is: Should any of these tiny municipalities—Black or white—exist relative to the cost/benefits to the region and disparate experiences across a relatively small geography? The debates over localism versus regionalism are of course not new; however, the extreme practices, disparities, and

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[151] Twelve North County municipalities have filed a lawsuit in Cole County Circuit Court challenging the constitutionality of Senate Bill 5. The plaintiffs include Normandy, Cool Valley, Velda Village Hills, Village of Glen Echo Park, Bel Ridge, Bel-Nor, Pagedale, Moline Acres, Village of Uplands Park, Vinita Park, Northwoods, and Wellston. In the lawsuit, the municipalities claim that Senate Bill 5 "has imposed staggering unconstitutional unfunded mandates on the St. Louis County municipalities." It also claims that the new law does not apply equally to all municipalities in the state and unfairly targets majority-Black municipalities in St. Louis County. The municipalities claimed severe damages, "resulting in a devastating reduction of municipal services for their residents."

[152] See, Jennifer Mann and Jeremy Kohler, "Judge sides with St. Louis County cities that claimed municipal court reform law is unfair," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 28, 2016. The state has appealed the ruling, and the state auditor and attorney general are attempting to enforce the provisions of SB-5.

[153] The issues and decisions facing cities in financial distress as well as the racialized factors impacting municipal dissolution are addressed by Michelle Wilde Anderson in, "The New Minimal Cities," *The Yale Law Journal* 123 (2014): 1118; and, "Cities Inside Out: Race, Poverty, and Exclusion at the Urban Fringe," *UCLA Law Review* 55 (2008): 1095.

[154] See John A. Wright, Sr., *St. Louis: Disappearing Black Communities* (St. Louis: Arcadia Publishing, 2005).

[155] See, for example, Jeremy Kohler, "North County cities sue to block law that limits revenue from traffic cases," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 19, 2015.

violations of individual rights revealed in the case of North St. Louis County bolster arguments for regionalism by vividly illustrating the devastating consequences of "the favored quarter"[156] or, in this instance, 'the favored fragments.' These, however, are not the points of the lawsuit brought by municipalities and not the arguments that leaders are discursively highlighting. Rather, according to the arguments made in the case and consistent statements made by municipal leaders, the purpose of the lawsuit is solely to declare SB-5 unconstitutional and return to the business of predatory policing. Simply focusing on municipal autonomy versus regional governance in terms of remediating disparity does not acknowledge the historical and prevailing weight that blackness carries with it.

It appears that any discussions will remain centered on the consequences of predatory practices, and Black leaders will continue to be scapegoats for the vast inequities and suffering residents endure. While it is difficult to find much sympathy for Black leaders intentionally preying upon their citizens, majority-white cities in West St. Louis County and most of South St. Louis County will remain unaffected, whether the state is able to enforce SB-5 or not. Cities in North St. Louis County that have hung onto white populations and/or bolstered commercial districts and capitalized on corporate investments, such as Emerson Electric and Express Scripts (headquartered in Ferguson and Berkeley), will likely weather current reform measures. The culture of fragmentation will continue to be defended by those that can afford to claim autonomy in the St. Louis region, and small Black communities will dissolve or be annexed into neighboring cities. This brings us back to the question regarding whether residents will be better off as part of unincorporated St. Louis County or if new race-making situations will evolve within alternative systems. As one resident put it, "I think bringing city governments together could decrease the number of citations we get but I don't think it will stop whoever we have to answer to from harassing us. They will just find another way to make us pay and leave us struggling in the end." The ways by which narratives shift, power is maintained, and struggles over space play out are discussed in Chapter Four.

[156] Sheryll Cashin describes "the tyranny of the favored quarter" as areas of metropolitan regions with resources that create externalities that are then shifted to areas without resources. Poorer neighbors are burdened by their more affluent neighbors' ability to capture valuable assets and push out waste or 'unwelcome' types of people and entities that require outside assistance. Cashin, "Localism, Self-Interest, and the Tyranny of the Favored Quarter: Addressing the Barriers to New Regionalism," *Georgetown Law Journal* 88 (2000): 1985.

CHAPTER FOUR
DISCURSIVE REGIMES AND EVERYDAY PRACTICE

> In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.
>
> —Michel Foucault, *The Order of Discourse*

Debates over how to define and study urban and suburban space, as well as whether North St. Louis County is urban, suburban, or something in between, go beyond simple qualifications of physical geographies or the mapping of demographics. These distinctions reveal how space—as imagined, represented, and lived—is highly political and carries out specific types of work. Space can be recodified over time or overnight, depending on the intended work spatial distinctions perform and the processes used to attach social and cultural practices, as well as people, to space. The case of North St. Louis County lays bare the degree by which race, space, and identity are mutually constituted in the everyday imagination of people, the lived experience of metropolitan space, and the disparate outcomes that are produced in and through space.

This chapter reveals how discourses shape space in North St Louis County. By adopting rhetorics of producing respectable citizens, protecting private property, and upholding the norms of suburban space, Black and white leaders invest mightily in the white spatial logics of the suburbs in contradistinction to perceptions and significations of urban space. This is a critical component of the racial state of municipal governance, discussed in Chapter Two, which relies on the tolerance of Black suffering and the production of differentiated 'suburban citizenship.' The discursive regimes at work in this area also determine what is known and what remains unknown about it, as well as what can and cannot happen within seemingly fluid boundaries. As such, North St. Louis County provides important evidence of how discursive space and lived experience are deeply dependent and how struggles over spatial meaning and identity determine the opportunities and limitations of Black residents in metropolitan space. Using discourse analysis, personal observation, and interviews with more than one hundred residents of North St. Louis County, this chapter seeks to bring another layer of understanding to the extreme circumstances of state violence described in Chapter Two.

1. ON RE-BECOMING URBAN

1.1 The Normandy schools crisis

In the fall of 2013, the residents of suburban North St. Louis County found themselves in the crosshairs of the urban schools debate in Missouri when the Normandy School District (NSD) lost its accreditation after eighteen years of provisional status. Both state and school officials explained the district's demise as stemming from its inability to deal with unfortunate "urban problems"[1]—or, in less polite terms, "the ghetto mentality that

[1] Analysis of transcripts from Missouri Senate Education Committee hearings, public hearings sponsored by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Normandy School Board meetings

plagues the area"[2]—to quote the language used to refer to problems such as a high proportion of female-headed households, violence, and supposedly rampant drug problems (although statistics show that rates of violence and drug activity in the area are comparable to those in South St. Louis County).[3] Mobility rates of residents and functional homelessness,[4] which are often represented as problems of urban space, are two of the biggest challenges faced by the district according to the superintendent at the time, who repeatedly called for the use of alternative metrics in evaluating teacher and school performance in "an urban district that has many external challenges."[5] Referring to student transfers and the NSD controversy, the executive director of the group hired by the Department of Education to analyze statewide transfer laws stated, "we don't have any urban school districts in America that serve all of its kids well."[6] This statement identified the NSD as an urban district and suggested that 'urban' is how state and federal officials now describe failing schools regardless of their location.

When officials on the Missouri State Board of Education (Board) met to decide the accreditation status of the NSD, they did not consider the district's performance in relationship to the 1954 Supreme Court ruling on Brown v. Board of Education (*Brown v. Board*) because, according to prevailing interpretations of *Brown v. Board*, the highly segregated school district is a product of space and personal choice rather than policy. As Stanton Lawrence, the superintendent of the district at the time, later pointed out, several hours of deliberations strangely failed to bring up the fact that only three years earlier the same Board had merged a failed district into the then failing NSD. When the Board dissolved the Wellston School District in 2010, it was 100 percent African American, and more than 95 percent of its students came from impoverished families. The question at that time was which district(s) would receive the 'urban' student population made up entirely of poor Black children.[7] Parents and administrators held meetings at the non-failing school

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held between July 2013 and March 2014 that were focused on the crisis of the Normandy school district reveals repeated use of the word *urban* in reference to the problems, challenges, and character of the district.

[2] Key-informant interview. This attitude, framed by the rhetoric of personal responsibility, is also repeatedly expressed in letters to the editors of local news publications concerning this issue. For example, one writer stated: "The citizens of Normandy need to get off their collective butts and start taking responsibility for educating their children. The reason [other school districts are successful] is because the parents have worked hard, are involved . . . , and follow the American tenet of individual responsibility." Letter to the editor, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* February 16, 2014.

[3] St. Louis County crime-mapping statistics for 2013, http://maps.stlouisco.com/police.

[4] Persons or families may be classified as functionally homeless if they move often between locations such as the homes of family members or friends, automobiles, or motels. For a discussion of types of housing stability, see Sam Tsemberis, Gregory McHugo, Valerie Williams, Patricia Hanrahan, and Ana Stefancic, "Measuring Homelessness and Residential Stability: The Residential Time-Line Follow-Back Inventory," *Journal of Community Psychology* 35, no. 1 (2007): 29–42.

[5] Ty McNichol, district superintendent, statement made at a public hearing of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, November 11, 2013.

[6] Trymaine Lee, "Missouri School Busing Causes 'Crippling' Fallout," *MSNBC,* December 9, 2013. http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/heres-how-not-deal-failing-schools.

[7] The Missouri State School Board held one public meeting prior to unanimously voting to dissolve the Wellston School District and merge it with the Normandy School District. At that meeting, many parents from Wellston, Normandy, and other nearby districts voiced their concerns. See, for example, David Hunn, "State

district that shared borders with Wellston[8] and at several highly accredited and largely white districts in the vicinity[9] to encourage residents to fight any merger plans with the Wellston district. Rather than face political pushback, the Board opted to send all of Wellston's children to the Normandy School District, which both Lawrence and the Board said was just beginning to see significant improvements in student achievement. Given the data regarding the performance of poor Black children in highly segregated and underfunded schools, it is difficult to imagine that the Board actually believed that combining two failing districts comprised of poor Black children was going to improve the educational opportunities for the children involved or help the NSD reach full accreditation. Many would later argue that the Board was fully aware that the NSD would not survive the merger.

In spite of the unprecedented decision by a state board of education, which passed up any opportunity to desegregate St. Louis County schoolchildren, the merger of two failing and virtually all-black districts did not result in any lawsuits filed by civil rights advocates or federal intervention, which is likely what the Board was banking on. The NSD attempted to welcome the Wellston students into its schools, but the decision to merge the Wellston district with Normandy sealed the fate of children in both areas and cleared the way for the Missouri Board of Education action two years later, declaring the district non-accredited and setting in motion a state take-over. This, according to Lawrence, who resigned upon the Board's decision, is the "school reform of punitive disparity."[10]

Shortly after the Normandy School District and the Riverview Gardens District—also in North St. Louis County—lost accreditation in 2013, the Missouri Supreme Court upheld the state's Student Transfer Program, requiring unaccredited districts to pay transportation and tuition costs set by the receiving districts (ranging from $9,500 to $21,000 annually per student) for any student requesting to transfer to an accredited district. More than one thousand Normandy students (approximately 25 percent of the district population) transferred to schools in what were rhetorically represented as the 'authentic suburbs'—based on media reports of the transfer process and public hearings.[11]

Schools Chief Moving to Dissolve Wellston District Missouri Board Will Consider Proposal for Absorption by Normandy Schools," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 8, 2009.

[8] Wellston shares a border with the University City and St. Louis City school districts. At the time the Wellston School District was dissolved, the University City school istrict was teetering between provisional and full accreditation while the St. Louis City school district had a history of provisional accreditation and a state take-over.

[9] Clayton and Ladue school districts are predominantly white, high achieving school districts within a few miles of Wellston. Ritenour and Ferguson/Florissant school districts have diverse student populations and, while not performing at the level of Clayton and Ladue; they were not considered to be failing school districts and were fully accredited. Normandy school district had been provisionally accredited for more than fifteen years in 2011.

[10] Stanton Lawrence, "How Missouri Killed the Normandy School District," *Diane Ravitch Blog: A Site to Discuss Better Education For All*, June 22, 2014.

[11] See, for example, "Editorial: Time to Embrace the Best of the State's Plans for Normandy," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, The Editorial Board, June 20, 2014; Jessica Bock, "Francis Howell Officials Say 'No' to Normandy Students," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 21, 2014; Elisa Crouch, "Politics and Turmoil Surrounding School Transfers Intensifies," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 23, 2014; Nikole Hannah-Jones, "School Segregation, the Continuing Tragedy of Ferguson," *ProPublica*, December 19, 2014.

Consequently, the district ran out of money in the spring of 2014. A hotly contested emergency funding bill was passed by the Missouri legislature in March 2014 in order to keep the district open through the academic year. The battle over funding was largely framed as a debate about whether Missouri taxpayers should be responsible for bailing out 'failing urban schools,' which happened to be located in historically white suburban space. The district was subsequently restructured by the state board of education, which suspended all contracts, temporarily placed it outside accreditation standards, and renamed it the Normandy Schools Collaborative, prompting a new set of court actions and student transfer debates because it was technically (and strategically) no longer 'a district.' Prior to taking over the district, the state argued that students should be allowed to transfer and that the Normandy and Riverview Gardens districts should be required to pay the range of tuitions demanded by receiving districts. After the state take-over of the NSD, however, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) successfully argued that only students that had transferred in the school year following de-accreditation would be allowed to remain as transfer students. Tuition for those students was subsequently negotiated at a lower rate in several districts by the state.

Race, or more accurately, racism—whether couched in euphemisms or actively invoked—was unequivocally at the center of both formal deliberation and ad hoc discussions regarding the condition and codification of the NSD, including who would be blamed, who should determine the district's fate, who should pay for actions taken, and whose responsibility it is to educate "poor, urban kids" in St. Louis County.[12] The reactions of parents and other residents in North County, which were divided between those choosing to leave the district and those choosing to stay, as well as the reactions of residents in the receiving districts, were highly racialized. After attending a public hearing in the majority-white Francis Howell School District, which was slated to receive most of Normandy's transfer students via busing, one Normandy resident commented: "When I saw them screaming and hollering like they were crazy, I thought to myself, 'Oh my God, this is back in Martin Luther King days,' they're going to get the hoses out. They're going to be beating our kids and making sure they don't get off the school bus."[13] The statements by white parents that this resident was responding to included, "I now have to worry about my children getting stabbed? Or taking a drug? Or getting robbed? Because that's the issue"; "We don't want [these kids] at Francis Howell."[14] [15] Ironically, Francis Howell School District reported seventeen incidents in which a student had a weapon in 2013, as

[12] For example, views expressed at the Missouri Senate Education Committee hearing on bills SB624 and SB516, February 5, 2014.

[13] Quoted in John Eligon, "In Missouri, Race Complicates a Transfer to Better Schools," *New York Times,* July 31, 2013.

[14] Comments made at Francis Howell School District town hall meeting, attended by author, July 20, 2014. It should be noted that in spite of the many overtly racist statements made by white parents at public hearings, many people in the receiving districts condemned these sentiments, and when Normandy students showed up at Francis Howell schools in August 2013, several groups of students and parents made efforts to welcome them.

[15] It should be noted that in spite of the many overtly racist statements made by white parents at public hearings, many people in the receiving districts condemned these sentiments, and when Normandy students showed up at Francis Howell schools in August 2013, several groups of students and parents made efforts to welcome them.

compared to six reported by NSD, and Francis Howell had ninety-six drug incidents compared to eleven at NSD.[16]

Figure **4.1.** Residents speak at a state hearing on the fate of the Normandy School District, Nov. 11, 2013 (source: Laurie Skrivan/St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

In discussions that took place in the NSD area, the topic of race was highly vocalized by residents and played down by state administrators. At the public hearing held by DESE to introduce and defend the choices under consideration for the district, a long line of parents and students waited their turn to voice frustration and anger for "being set up to fail."[17] Speakers accused DESE of "putting chains around our ankles," perpetuating separate and unequal education, and intentionally splintering the Black community since those choosing to transfer were pitted against those choosing to stay in the district. Several speakers compared putting the fate of the all-black district in the hands of mostly white state officials to slavery, with one stating, "All that's missing is the whip," and several residents compared their grandchildren's experience in North St. Louis County to their own experience growing up in the Jim Crow South, based on similarities of forced segregation and being put in situations that guaranteed failure.[18] Impromptu arguments broke out within the audience between Normandy residents regarding whether the district should be taken over by the state or absorbed into other districts through busing. Parents and administrators from Francis Howell School District also felt compelled to show up and voice opposition to 'urban kids' being bused to suburban schools, citing support for 'community schools' and forming unlikely alliances with Black residents advocating for keeping their kids in their own communities. Local and national media picked up the controversy, including a *New York Times* article and slide show focused on the racial conflict and a PBS Web series that features the debate in a segment asking what has

[16] Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, District Discipline Incidents, Francis Howell R-III and Normandy (2013), available at http://mcds.dese.mo.gov/guidedinquiry/District%20and%20Building%20Student%20Indicators/District%20Discipline%20Incidents.aspx.

[17] Comments made at public hearings at the University of Missouri–St. Louis (which sits within the NSD footprint), at which the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education introduced its recommendations for how the state of Missouri should deal with underperforming school districts and heard comments concerning its decision. The author was present at these hearings on November 12, 2013, and February 25, 2014.

[18] Ibid.

changed since Brown v. Board of Education and the March on Washington fifty years ago.[19]

1.2 'Riots' in a St. Louis suburb

Shortly after the highly politicized 2013–14 school year ended and the newly reorganized Normandy Schools Collaborative took over, Michael Brown, Jr. graduated from Normandy High School on August 3, 2014. Based on media accounts of the Normandy Schools crisis and Normandy High School, Brown graduated from an 'urban' school with 'urban' problems. Five days after he graduated, however, Brown lay dead on what was reportedly a 'suburban' street in the same geography, shot by a white police officer in front of Canfield Green Apartments in Ferguson. Many of the same media outlets that cast the Normandy and Riverview Gardens school districts as urban areas suddenly referred to the area as "a quiet suburban community in greater Saint Louis" or described "riots in a Saint Louis suburb" when covering protests and militarized police responses that followed Brown's death. The rhetorical transformation of the area appeared to be intended to show a contrast between things that are expected to happen in some places but not in others. The fact that people had taken to the street and were met by a fully militarized police force had to be explained as something out of place.

As with the coverage of the schools crisis, representations of events in Ferguson since August 2014 rely on behavioral and spatial signifiers—i.e., riots (Black), suburbs (white)—to evoke a contrast of differentiated racialized stereotypes, often without mentioning race. Articles published in national media outlets mused about how something so good (Ferguson in its so-called heyday) had gone so bad. Some cited 'urban decay' and the 'ghettoization of the suburbs' as the reason so-called 'rioting' had moved to the suburbs, insinuating that Black people, and not the disinvestment and disparity that follows Black bodies, ruin nice suburban places and enact violence, although most violence in North St. Louis County is enacted by the state.[20] An article in *Time Magazine* entitled "How Ferguson Went from Middle Class to Poor in a Generation" appeared on the same day Governor Nixon ordered the National Guard to Ferguson and lamented "the demise of suburban Ferguson," warning that something similar could be coming to a community near all Americans. Among other things, the journalist stated:

> In 1990, Ferguson, Mo. was a quiet middle class suburban enclave north of St. Louis with a population about three-quarters white. In 2000, the town's population was roughly split between black and white with an unemployment rate of 5%. By 2010, however, the population was two-thirds black with unemployment exceeding 13% . . . . Demographic transformation came fast and stark to Ferguson, Missouri. So what happened?[21]

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[19] John Eligon, "In Missouri, Race Complicates"; "Still Segregated," episode 3 in *The March @ 50,* PBS Web series, produced by Shukree Tilghman, September 9, 2013, http://video.pbs.org/video/2365071680.

[20] See, for example, Peter Dreier and Todd Swanstrom, "Suburban Ghettos Like Ferguson Are Ticking Time Bombs," *The Washington Post*, August 21, 2014; Elizabeth Kneebone, "Ferguson, Mo. Emblematic of Growing Suburban Poverty*," Brookings Institute Blog*, August 15, 2014; Jonathan Rodden, "Is Segregation the Problem in Ferguson?," *Washington Post*, 8/18/2014; Jeff Smith, "In Ferguson, Black Town, White Power," *The New York Times,* Op-Ed Page*,* August 17, 2014.

[21] Denver Nicks, "How Ferguson Went From Middle Class to Poor in a Generation," *Time Magazine*, August 18, 2014.

The journalist identifies "fast and stark" demographic transformation as the answer to his question, "what happened?" (presumably to the "quiet middle class suburb"). He does not reference stark disinvestment in the community. Nor does he correlate 'its demise' with relentless and often violent hyper policing of Black residents for lost revenue. Instead, he equates 'decay' with the presence of Black people and their culture.

Controversies in the Missouri state legislature and in public debate over how to define and deal with underperforming schools are ongoing and show that North St. Louis County, which was built and marketed as a series of suburban communities, has lost its suburban status, except, as discussed above, when representations are intended to either lament that which was lost or highlight bodies-out-of-place. The physical space of this area has remained relatively unchanged, so it is clear that the processes by which suburban space became urban and the work these spatial distinctions perform exist within the realm of discursive and representational space.

The power of discourse to shape narratives presented as 'truth' has long been recognized and studied. Discursive power—as a representational field—exists in the ability of discourses to determine and define meaning. As Stuart Hall argues,

> It is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. It is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about that world meaningfully to others.[22]

Hall credits linguist Ferdinand de Saussure with forcing thinkers to view language as a social fact and insisting that language, as representation, is a practice.[23] However, Hall credits Foucault with linking discourse and power as the production of knowledge, and not just meaning.[24] For Foucault, discourse extends well beyond language. Discourses are the historically and contextually specific ways people interact with the world, view the world, and conduct themselves with other people.[25] As such, discourses are able to produce 'regimes of truth' due to the degree to which discourse controls practices and viewpoints and determine that which is seen versus unseen in society.[26] Pertaining to specifically racial discursive regimes, the processes that lead to 'racial formations,' as conceptualized by Michael Omi and Howard Winant, constitute racially and ethnically determined regimes of truth. Looking at specific narratives that work within racial regimes of truth, Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small have shown how contemporary representations of plantation life in the South reinforce the domination of white historical narratives that erase the

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[22] Stuart Hall, "Representation, Meaning, and Language," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices,* eds. Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans, and Sean Nixon (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 1997), 15–64:25.
[23] Hall, "Representation, Meaning, and Language," 34.
[24] Hall, "Representation, Meaning, and Language."
[25] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge, and the Discourse on Language*, trans. Alan Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1982).
[26] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Press, 1995).

experience of enslaved Africans, and therefore diminish Black experience in general.[27]

The discursive regimes at work in the Normandy schools crisis and the initial media coverage of Michael Brown's death reveal the ways by which bodies are attached to space and space to bodies, with significant consequences. These narratives produce a field of norms and hierarchies that "orchestrate, delimit, and sustain that which qualifies as 'the human.'"[28] These norms and hierarchies differentiate rights in, and of, space. As Judith Butler argues, the construction of the human is not a simple dialectic. Rather, it is produced

> through a set of foreclosures, radical erasures, that are, strictly speaking, refused the possibility of cultural articulation. Hence, it is not enough to claim that human subjects are constructed, for the construction of the human is a differential operation that produces the more and the less 'human,' the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable. These excluded sites come to bound the 'human' as its constitutive outside, and to haunt those boundaries as the persistent possibility of their disruption and rearticulation.[29]

The sets of foreclosures, radical erasures, and policing of cultural articulation, which create 'urban' subjects in suburban space, operate within the same discursive regimes that maintain the racial state of municipal governance, discussed in Chapter Two, where a disposable population is produced and contained within physical and jurisdictional space.

The case of North St. Louis County reveals how discursive space and physical space are mutually dependent and together establish fluid boundaries marking inside and outside, as well as what can and cannot happen both inside and outside of those spaces. In this way, subjects and identities are made and unmade through disruptions and rearticulations of meaning and space. Discourse, therefore, "is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized."[30] Although the discourses at work in North St. Louis County appear fluid in their ability to change and respond to new challenges, they inherently rely on the historical configuration of blackness (as opposed to difference), and the struggles these discursive fields engender are a continuation of the relentless insistence of specifically Black bodies to resist.

2. IMAGINATIONS OF SPACE

2.1 Imagining Suburbia

Dianne Harris, in her book on postwar suburbia, shows how the perceived and actual development of post-World War II U.S. suburbs for a specifically white middle class was not only highly orchestrated by institutional policy and real estate markets but also seared into the psyche, imagination, and normative assumptions of the American public through calculated promotion and representation that both produced and maintained

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[27] Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2002).
[28] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 8.
[29] Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 8.
[30] Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse," in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 48–78:52.

normative middle-class ideals as synonymous with white culture.[31] In this way, the suburbs became defined as white space in opposition to blackness, in spite of the fact that U.S. suburbs have always maintained surprising diversity. Extending this argument, Margaret Garb, in her book on housing reform in Chicago between 1871 and 1919, uses historical data to convincingly argue that the link between race and home ownership began much earlier than the post-World War II era: "Even at the turn of the [twentieth] century, a single-family house set on a tidy yard was fast becoming a mark of household health, respectability, and morality," where perceptions of respectability worked in relationship to whiteness.[32] The American obsession with the single-family house and the importance of property was institutionalized by New Deal-era housing policy and instilled over time in U.S. culture, which viewed home ownership as a fundamental right of white citizenship. The denial of home ownership to 'non-white' citizens through both exclusion and lack of facilitation resulted in vast disparities in individual and family wealth since property ownership and appreciation are fundamental tools for passing assets between generations.

In fields that study metropolitan space, scholars' recent coinage and frequent use of the term 'suburban ghetto,' which was subsequently picked up by popular media, is intended to describe what happens when the suburban imaginary (as opposed to the actual suburbs, which have always had degrees of diversity) loses its middle-class white status and becomes a container of poor 'non-white' people or specific ethnicities—as the ghetto has been theorized.[33] This illustrates the need scholars feel to qualify low-income 'non-white' suburbs as something 'other' than authentic suburbs.[34] In fact, anytime suburban space does not fit the imagination of white middle-class space, qualifications follow within scholarship and the popular media: e.g., the space is characterized as working-class suburbs (white but not middle class), affluent suburbs (white and upper-middle class),

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[31] Dianne Harris, *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

[32] Margaret Garb, *City of American Dreams: A History of Home Ownership and Housing Reform in Chicago, 1871–1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 205.

[33] The ghetto, as a stigmatized space of separation and exclusion, can be traced to Venice, where it was adopted in 1516 as a mechanism of Jewish containment and gradually came to represent stigmatized urban space across European cities. In American cities, the Jewish ghetto evolved into a space of ethnic marginalization in the late nineteenth century and eventually became synonymous with African American space. See Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), including Robert Park's introduction; Franklin E. Frazier, "Negro Harlem: An Ecological Study," *American Journal of Sociology* 43, no. 1 (July 1937): 72–88; St. Clair Drake, "Profiles: Chicago," *Journal of Educational Sociology* 17, no. 5 (January 1944): 261–71; St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton, *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945); Robert Weaver (secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), *The Negro Ghetto* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948).

[34] The term *suburban ghetto* has been used to refer to poverty and nonwhite ethnicity for at least four decades and has more recently become part of the urban lexicon. For examples, see Richard Koubek, "Wyandanch: A Case Study of Political Impotence in a Black Suburban Ghetto" (master's thesis, Queens College, New York, 1971); Mark Gottdiener, "Politics and Planning: Suburban Case Studies," in *Remaking the City: Social Science Perspectives on Urban Design,* ed. John S. Pipkin, Mark La Gory, and Judith R. Blau (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Alexandra K. Murphy, "The Suburban Ghetto: The Legacy of Herbert Gans in Understanding the Experience of Poverty in Recently Impoverished American Suburbs," *City and Community* 6, no. 1 (March 2007): 21–37; Ronald E. Wilson and Derek J. Paulsen, "Foreclosures and Crime: A Geographical Perspective," *Geography & Public Safety* 1, no. 3 (October 2008): 1–2; Brad Tuttle, "Suburban Ghetto: Poverty Rates Soar in the Suburbs," *Time,* September 26, 2011.

Black suburbs (middle class but not white), immigrant or ethnic suburbs (meaning non-European ethnic immigrants since European immigrants overwhelmingly settled the first U.S. suburbs), suburban ghettos (Black and poor), and barrio suburbs (latina/o and poor).[35] In the same way that whiteness is the invisible 'un-raced' racial norm, the non-qualified suburbs are assumed to be white and middle class. A quick review of the table of contents of the first and second editions of *The Suburban Reader*, which is organized chronologically, correlates to what a literature review of suburban space reveals, which is that economic qualifications of suburbs entered the discursive space in the late 1800s while ethnic, racial, cultural, and often racist qualifications appeared in the 1940s, at the same time challenges to housing discrimination and opposition to racial covenants were gaining political traction. By the 1970s, specifically racist language in suburban discourse had been replaced by cultural and ethnic qualifiers.

2.2 Imagining diversity

Both the first and second editions of *The Suburban Reader* provide necessary expansions aimed at representing the diversity of suburban space, studies, and histories. The second edition of the *Reader* (2016) cites Ferguson in its promotional descriptions and on the back cover, stating that it adds important insight into the breadth of knowledge regarding diverse suburbs. The only inclusion, however, that pertains to Ferguson is the reprinting of a one-page article written by the editorial board of the *New York Times* on August 12, 2014, retitled for the book as "Violence in the Suburb of Ferguson, Missouri, Sparks a National Crisis."[36] The brief introduction to the article claims that the editorial offers a concise context for the tragedy. Written three days after the death of Michael Brown, Jr., the article documents three days of protests and cites a history of racial segregation, overbearing law enforcement, and white political representation as impetus for unrest in the area. The editorial explains that the area was built as an inner-ring suburb that attracted Blacks because zoning laws did not preclude apartment buildings. This suggests that most Black people in this area are renters, in spite of the fact that the initial wave of Black residents to North St. Louis County consisted of homebuyers. The editorial board later states, "What is not in dispute is the sense of permanent grievance held by many residents (of Ferguson) and shared in segregated urban areas around the country." From this statement, we are left to believe that Ferguson is either an anomaly of grieved Black suburban residents or it has been recoded as urban space.

The article, as well as the introduction written by the *Reader*'s editors, also suggests that the overbearing law enforcement and documented racial profiling in Ferguson are directly connected to the racial disparity between residents and elected officials although, as described in Chapter Two, predatory policing and racial profiling in North St. Louis County are more prevalent in cities with all-black leadership. The *Reader*'s introduction to the article frames this area as representative of "diversification in the suburbs" (although the *New York Times* editorial board calls it urban) and points out that Ferguson is

[35] A review of literature on urban planning and urban history reveals the many ways non-white suburbs are qualified whereas predominantly white suburbs are not qualified as such in sub/urban scholarship.
[36] New York Times Editorial Board, "Violence in the Suburb of Ferguson, Missouri, Sparks a National Crisis," in *The Suburb Reader*, eds. Becky M. Nicolaides and Andrew Wiese, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2016), 550–551.

"transitioning toward diversity." I would argue that Ferguson is transitioning toward homogeneity since it has lost 70 percent of its white population, and the majority of suburbs in the surrounding area are between 80 and 98 percent African American. Perhaps unintentionally, the *Reader*, which claims to document the diversity of North American suburbanization from the 1700s, participates in the discursive regime of suburban qualification (and disqualification) and misrecognizes diversity as simply the presence of Black bodies. While it is important to not become caught up in definitive definitions of urban versus suburban, this representation of the crisis in Ferguson does little to interrogate prevailing assumptions about majority-black sub/urban space.

The suburbs of North St. Louis County create race-making and race-perpetuating 'situations'[37] based on imaginations of white suburbia. In addition to imagining the suburbs as 'white,' the suburban imaginary is also a gender-conforming 'situation.' As feminist scholars have shown, the suburbs produce and reproduce heteronormative assumptions about families and patriarchal hierarchies concerning the place and role of women.[38] Therefore, areas with majority-female heads of households cannot be 'the suburbs.' Racist assumptions concerning Black inferiority are also reinforced in Black suburbs because Black suburban residents lose real benefits and perceived status over time. In this way, Black people, as opposed to other factors, are held responsible for the risk associated with Black space and the 'rational' disinvestment that rhetorically recodes Black suburbs as something other than suburban. Journalists, politicians, and public sphere debates, such as those witnessed in the ongoing Normandy schools crisis, join urban scholars in attaching the connotation of 'subpar space' to Black bodies by re-qualifying suburban space as 'suburban ghettos' or as 'urban space.' By linking the loss of suburban status to the departure of white people, to new 'cultures of poverty,'[39] and to natural processes of 'benign neglect,'[40] spatial imaginaries are constructed and maintained that assume: 1) authentic suburbs cannot exist without the presence of white people; 2) authentic suburbs cannot coexist with Black culture; 3) authentic suburbs cannot exist without heteronormative families; and 4) policy *naturally* redirects resources to other areas by way of color-blind capitalist logics. The race-making situation of the suburbs, as evidenced in North St. Louis County, supplies an exemption to racialized spatial practice and policies while reinforcing racist assumptions through a cultural politics that trades in the criminalization of Black residents, in tropes of respectability, and in policies that intentionally diminish the basic rights of Black citizens. In turn, leaders who find

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[37] The race-making situation of the suburbs is discussed in Chapter Two and was initially conceptualized by Mary Jo Wiggins, "Race, Class, and Suburbia: The Modern Black Suburb as a 'Race-Making Situation,'" *University of Michigan Journal of Legal Reform* 35 (2002) 749–808.

[38] See, for example, Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Boston: MIT Press, 1983); Rosalyn Baxandall and Elizabeth Ewen, *Picture Windows: How the Suburbs Happened* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); Setha Low, *Behind the Gates: Life, Security, and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America* (Milton Park, UK: Taylor and Francis, 2003).

[39] See the discussion concerning the culture of poverty discourse in Chapter One, Note 101.

[40] Pertaining to race and urban policy, the term 'benign neglect' was coined by Daniel Patrick Moynihan in 1970, to whom the 'culture of poverty' thesis is also attributed. Within urban policy, the term has come to mean the intentional allowance of physical decay in order to eventually build something new. A version of this idea was re-conceptualized by the shrinking cities discourse in urban planning, which argues that abandonment is not necessarily a bad thing.

themselves charged with local governance in the un-favored 'urban' quarter of St. Louis County avoid dissolution by using powerful racialized imaginaries concerning suburban and urban space.[41]

These debates over how to define and study urban and suburban space, as well as whether North St. Louis County is urban, suburban, or something in between, go beyond simply qualifying physical geographies and beyond the relentless need urban scholars have to codify space. These distinctions reveal how space—as imagined, represented, and lived—is highly political and carries out specific types of work.[42] Space can be recodified over time or overnight, depending on the intended work spatial distinctions perform and the processes used to link social and cultural practices, as well as people, to space. The public revelation of extreme predatory policing in North St. Louis County and the Normandy schools crisis lay bare the degree to which race, space, and identity are mutually constituted in the everyday imaginations of people, the lived experiences of metropolitan space, and the outcomes that are produced in and through space.

2.3 Imagining North St. Louis County

The recodification of North St. Louis County—from suburban to urban, and sometimes back again—relies on geographical imaginations. An imaginative geography,[43] as Edward Said explains, "legitimates a vocabulary, a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding" of a place.[44] In Said's view, imaginative geographies establish and maintain difference—familiarity and otherness—of bodies in space and are integral to forming and understanding identity as well as power. Through representative discourses, or the stories told about places, dramatic boundaries are drawn and redrawn on physical space through imaginative processes.[45] In this way, Said argues, power reveals itself through analysis of geopolitical relationships. The view that individuals are assigned to particular places—which are determined through discursive regimes of power-knowledge—is similar to Michel Foucault's 'carceral system' because, as Derek Gregory contends, both rely on the discursive construction of exclusionary geographies.[46] Individuals are expected to be in some places but not in others, and disciplinary means are necessary to keep individuals and groups 'in place.'

The discourses that emerged around the 'urban' schools debate in North St. Louis County, as well as the imageries produced and mobilized for the purpose of policing-for-revenue, work within a continuum of rhetorically produced tropes of Black inferiority mobilized in North St. Louis County when Black families began moving to the area in great

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[41] The 'un-favored quarter' is in reference to Sheryll Cashin's conceptualization of the 'favored quarter,' in "Localism, Self-Interest, and Tyranny of the Favored Quarter: Addressing the Barriers to New Regionalism," *Georgetown University Law Journal* 88 (2000): 1985–2048.

[42] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell Press, 1992).

[43] George Lipsitz discusses the work of white and black spatial imaginaries in *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia: Temple, 2011).

[44] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 71.

[45] Said, *Orientalism*, 73.

[46] Derek Gregory, "Imaginative Geographies," *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1995): 447–85.

numbers following the Fair Housing Act of 1968. This period was also concomitant with paradigmatic shifts in the visibility (or lack thereof) of racialized practices within liberal multicultural and antiracist discourses. Moving from geographies of containment, which had been physically and discursively constructed within the city in order to confine and reproduce risk associated with Black citizens, Black residents disrupted suburban geographies of exclusion with their presence. The suburbs, which in reality have always had levels of diversity, were discursively (and physically) constructed in relationship to powerful imaginations of the 'American Dream' and inherent privileges associated with white citizenship and white property.[47] As Civil Rights legislation opened up neighborhoods and schools to Black families, new 'discourses of certainty' needed to be produced in conjunction with official antiracisms and emergent global political economies appearing in the wake of global post-colonial restructuring. Jodi Melamed observes, "[i]n contrast to antiracist struggles led by social movements, official U.S. antiracisms since World War II" (such as the desegregation of neighborhoods and schools) "have disconnected racism from material conditions" through control over constructions of rationality and discourses of certainty.[48] The prevailing viewpoint became that if something appeared to be 'economically rational' it was not racist. A case in point is a statement such as "I don't dislike black people, I just don't want my property values to go down."[49] This is the re-framed race-neutral racial order that establishes the discursive terrain by which Black residents moving to St. Louis County are denied the benefits of suburban citizenship through the reordering of material resources in St. Louis County in ways that are considered rational as opposed to racist.

Although the initial rhetoric and subsequent reports published in the early 1970s regarding what was happening in North St. Louis County demographically referenced race by referring to 'Negro' populations, these arguments and representations 'naturally' assumed, without specific explanations, that middle class 'Negro' space was risky space.[50] Clearly it had to do with numbers. If only a few of the most highly qualified and best-behaved model 'Negro' families moved into the suburbs, the inevitable 'desegregation' of space could be said to have occurred with 'limited' consequences to the white spatial logic. This is essentially how the idea was promoted by white liberals who helped pass the Fair Housing Act of 1968.[51] However, the statistical threshold of this logic was extremely low, and many blocks in North St. Louis County quickly became majority Black, prompting a new logic to take its place. The naturalization of risky 'black space' was critical to maintaining racial hierarchies because it depersonalized and obscured racist practice,

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[47] See, for example, Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review*, 106, no. 8 (1993): 1707–91; George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998); David R. Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 2007).

[48] Jodi Melamed, *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 1–2.

[49] Stated in an interview with an older white resident of Ferguson, MO.

[50] See note 53.

[51] Walter Mondale, a co-sponsor of the bill that led to the Fair Housing Act, framed many of his arguments for the bill by using the 'model Negro citizen' as the example of who would actually escape the ghetto and gain access to desegregated areas. See 90th Congress, First Session, *Congressional Record* 113 (August 16, 1967); 90th Congress, Second Session, *Congressional Record* 114 (February 6, 1968).

shifting responsibility back to so-called 'culturally inferior space.' The discursive naturalization of Black space as something to be avoided at all costs did not require explanation. It simply applied the historically produced attachments of risk and contamination associated with Black bodies to space at a time when class was supposed to be usurping race as an analytical category within urban scholarship and the state rhetorically 'embraced' antiracist projects. Furthermore, representations and imaginations of the dark ghetto provided an imaginative geography linked to Black culture that could explain the disruptions to the white spatial imaginary of suburban space as new suburban ghettos. As Derek Gregory points out, the ways in which anxiety, fear, desire, and fantasy produce, reproduce, and transform imaginative geographies through discursive practices go beyond simple classifications or reclassifications of space.[52] In North St. Louis County, economic rationality and 'demographic transition' provided a common narrative regarding the struggle over space; however, the experience and use of anxiety, fear, and desire in the everyday lives of residents combined with fantasy and imagination to fundamentally transform real and perceived geographies.

As documented by a frenzy of academic research and reports published between 1973 and 1976, outlined in Chapter Two, the push by middle-class African American families out of the urban core and into the suburbs created much anxiety and fear among policymakers and residents in St. Louis County. Municipal leaders attempted to curb white panic and slow what they believed would be an inevitable social and physical decline of the area.[53] Employing the same vocabulary of war used to promote racial zoning laws in St. Louis City in 1915, academic studies in the 1970's describe the area as 'falling' quickly to 'Negro invasion.'[54] The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) guidelines that established risk ratings for lenders perpetuated the war analogy. With racial homogeneity at the top of the risk assessment list, documents stated that neighborhoods "invaded" or "infiltrated" by African Americans had or would lose all value and "fall" to the "occupation" of blacks.[55] Another study stated, "The ineluctable sequence of *black penetration, to invasion, to succession* becomes predominant under certain circumstances."[56] Subsequent writing on this area continued the narrative

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[52] Derek Gregory, "Imaginative geographies," *Progress in Human Geography* 19, no. 4 (1995): 447–485.

[53] Bryan Downes, Joan Saunders, and John Collins, "Local Government Intervention in the Face of Mortgage Disinvestment: The Case of Normandy" (report, University of Missouri–St. Louis study, January 1976); Tom Dyer, "Factors in Suburban Blight: A Study of Housing in Northwoods, Pine Lawn, and Hillsdale" (report, study conducted by Rick Corry and Tom Dyer, University of Missouri–St. Louis, June 1973); Normandy Municipal Council, "Citizens' GOALS Project Report," Don Moschenross, director (November 1973).

[54] For example, one of the many fliers at the Missouri History Museum promotes racial zoning in St. Louis City in 1915, stating, "An entire block ruined by negro invasion. Every house marked 'X' now occupied by negroes. ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPH OF 4300 WEST BELLE PLACE." Ta-Nehisi Coates also uses this image in his article "The Racist Housing Policies That Built Ferguson," *The Atlantic*, October 17, 2014, leading to a number of comments stating that the 4300 block of BELLE would be better off today had racial zoning stayed in place: http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/10/the-racist-housing-policies-that-built-ferguson/381595/.

[55] FHA/HOLC rhetoric, as cited in Colin Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 89.

[56] Solomon Sutker and Sara Smith Sutker, *Racial Transition in the Inner Suburb: Studies of the St. Louis Area* (New York: Praeger, 1974), 32; emphasis added.

regarding the "fall" of communities brought about by "racial tipping"—the ratio of Black residents that will guarantee an area will eventually become all Black.[57] Using terms similar to those of a recent article in *Time Magazine* (quoted above) on the fall of Ferguson, a local observer remarked that by the end of the 1970s, "Ghetto spillover (stretched) almost all the way across the county in a northwesterly direction."[58] As also discussed in Chapter Two, the tipping point was low in many tiny municipalities in North St. Louis County, and the 'fall' came quickly. When the all-white Normandy School District was faced with the possibility of accepting Black students from all-black districts in 1971, long after the 1954 *Brown v. Board* ruling, they fought efforts and later joined other districts to sue the state to block student transfer plans. However, by the time the lawsuits were heard in the early 1980s, they found themselves on the wrong side of the argument and dropped the case—since over half of the student population was already Black.[59]

By the 1970s, the urban core was no longer the perceived sole container of Black space in St. Louis, although, as shown in Chapter Two, Black people had lived in St. Louis County and formed communities since before St. Louis City was founded.[60] This changing demographic makeup distinctly challenged the local suburban imaginary and spatial identity of many people who had grown up in the region. Known to ask the question "Where did you go to high school?" as a way to locate a person's social and economic status, St. Louisans place particular emphasis on spatial identity, a concern that harkens back to the area's history of political fragmentation. Because of the city's historically large Catholic population, parish boundaries were also important markers for identity. Three people (two white men and a white woman) interviewed for this research, who graduated from Normandy High School in the 1950s, at a time when the school academically outperformed virtually every other high school in the region, described the ways by which they had recalibrated their attachments and decoupled their identity from the space in which they had grown up. "I don't tell younger people that I went to Normandy High School because I just don't want to have to explain that it was a totally different school. It was a different universe," the woman stated. "Older people get it—get the history," she went on, "so I might tell older people." The two men also described the area now as "unrecognizable" because "you know, it's just not a place you'd want to go now," one of them explained. "When we have class reunions there's always the question, 'Do we even go back to the old neighborhood?'" All three people described an initial fight for, and subsequent relinquishment of, space in similar terms that Said observes regarding the construction of imaginative geographies as delineations of 'our space' versus 'their space.'[61] All three also

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[57] E. Terrence Jones, "The Municipal Market in the St. Louis Region: 1950–2000," in *St. Louis Metromorphosis: Past Trends and Future Directions,* ed. Brady Baybeck and E. Terrence Jones (St. Louis: University of Missouri Press, 2004).
[58] As quoted in Gordon, *Mapping Decline,* 25.
[59] For a thorough account of processes to desegregate St. Louis schools, see Kimberly Jade Norwood, "Minnie Liddell's Forty-Year Quest for Quality Public Education Remains a Dream Deferred," *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy*, 40 (2012) 1–66.
[60] As described in Chapter Two, Black residents of St. Louis City and County were instrumental in shaping the region and building communities. The history of Kinloch in North St. Louis County is one such example, although there are others, for example in Webster Groves, Rock Hill, and Meachum Park.
[61] Said, *Orientalism*.

expressed the ways in which anxiety, fear, and fantasies of what might happen discursively unified many people using 'us' and 'them.' As one man stated, "A choice had to be made by every one of us. Either we maintained what we had created for ourselves in spite of them, or we left. In the end we had no choice."[62]

While these residents believed they had no choice, David Harvey observes that 'imaginaries of spatiality' are

> of crucial significance in the search for alternative mappings of the social process and of its outcomes. . . . The moment of conversion of these imaginaries into discourses is therefore critical, not in the sense that it is determinate, but because it is at that relational moment that the imposition of and revolutions against institutions, power, and social relations become most apparent.[63]

Harvey goes on to argue that productive opportunities exist for alternative mappings of space at the intersection of differing ways in which space is imagined; however, in this case such opportunities did not exist The foreclosing of opportunity can also occur as the outcome of a 'relational moment,' as it did in North St. Louis County between 1970 and 1990. The impositions and revulsions of which Harvey speaks did reveal themselves at the intersection of new and old spatial imaginaries; however, more opportunities were lost than taken in the remapping of space and spatial identity during this period. The everyday experiences of racial anxiety, desire, and fantasy for Black and white residents of North St. Louis County revealed how rights and qualifications of 'suburban citizens' are not universal and how the politics of identity is a politics of space. The spatial logics of capital accumulation and private property are clearly at work in the transformation of North St. Louis County, but it is important not to overlook the discursive power of spatial imaginaries to perform much of the work in producing and reinforcing alternative geographies of exclusion.

3. PORNOTOPOLOGIES

3.1 Expectations of suffering

In addition to geographic imagination, expectation—as it relates to what should and should not happen in certain places and what will and will not be tolerated—has been an important factor impacting the experience of residents in North St. Louis County over the past twenty-five years. Hortense Spillers conceptualizes the expectation of suffering as the basis of exploitation of the Black body, which she describes as *pornotroping*. The pornotrope is that which is exploited based on the expectation, normalization, tolerance, and desire of sustained suffering. For Spillers, the Black body, like the object of pornographic desire, occupies a unique position between subjectification and objectification, between revulsion and desire, in ways that assume deviance yet also create unspoken and illicit desire through the process of subjectification. Historically, the

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[62] Key-informant interviews—Normandy residents.

[63] David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1996), 113.

representational power of the 'selected' white male subject was critically dependent on the dysselected slave subject, who was represented as powerless. This mutually dependent binary of subjection and freedom occupies the core of constructions of whiteness in contrast to blackness in subsequent historical and contemporary iterations. Spatially, representations of the white suburbs—as morally upstanding, clean, and offering freedom through convenience—also operate as a binary construction, in contrast to dark urban space—as culturally deviant, chaotic, and constrained.[64] Yet, in keeping with the pornotrope, the city is the perceived location of excitement, illicit entertainment, and cultural commodification—a place to escape the representational monotony of white middle-class norms and expectations.

Borrowing from Spillers's conceptualization of the pornotrope, North St. Louis County can be understood as a porno*topology*.[65] In the same way that Black flesh is dehumanized, subjugated, denied, and rendered deviant, yet possesses an eroticism and limited agency through its very subjugation, pornotopologies represent deviant space where suffering is expected and illicit desire is commodified and consumed by popular culture (i.e., in clothing, music, dance, visual arts, and other representations associated with ghetto and urban space). Pornotroping is integral to the perpetual tolerance of Black suffering and the acceptance of premature Black death as normative. Likewise, pornotopologies are spaces where suffering is not only tolerated but expected and where occurrences like the death of Michael Brown, Jr. are considered routine. For this reason, it was necessary to reimagine and redefine the Normandy School District as 'urban' since suffering, which is clearly evident in the lives of those attending Normandy schools, would be not tolerated within idealized suburban space. In other words, the white spatial logic[66] of the suburban imagination provides the basis for the 'crisis of the suburbs,' discussed in Chapter Three, which, when faced with suffering must either 'declare war' on 'urban subjects' or recodify the area as a place in which suffering is not only tolerated but expected. Understanding North St. Louis County as an area where suffering is expected explains how legal systems that blatantly violate constitutional rights on multiple levels, categorically exploit poor Black residents, and differentiate people through life chances can prevail seemingly unnoticed for more than twenty-five years.

3.2 Disposability

Like the pornotopology, Frantz Fanon's description of the space of the colonized can be applied to 'non-white' space in U.S. cities—as a place in which "it matters not where, or how," one dies. He writes,

The town belonging to the colonized people, . . . the Negro village, the medina,

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[64] It is important to point out an alternative conceptualization of 'blackness as freedom,' which is decoupled from, and not dependent on, the white/black binary, is at the center of the work and lives of many scholars, activists, and people of color working to disrupt processes of subjectification. Included among these groups of people are many of the core leaders of the Ferguson Protest Movement, discussed in Chapter Five.

[65] In the field of geography, topology has come to be understood as abstract, non-representational, and relational space, whereas topography represents and/or refers to actual physical space. I use topology (pornotopology) as opposed to topography very intentionally to signify the abstracted and relational nature of Black space.

[66] Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*.

> the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how.[67]

'Urban' space, when it is deployed as the container of 'dark' bodies, is the disposable space of the city, the pornotopology, inhabited by dark bodies and enjoyed by others—where anything goes but where residents are restricted and controlled. As such, spatial imaginaries of white and Black space reinforce a bio-political construct that works to divide the city into those who *should* live and those who *could* die.[68] The discourse of space is also a discourse of race—a dialectic between the making of a flourishing life on one hand and the expectation of suffering (and potential for death) on the other. As Foucault described it, discourse is

> a battle that has to be waged not between races, but by a race that is portrayed as the one true race, the race that holds power and is entitled to define the norm, and against those who deviate from that norm, against those who pose a threat to the biological heritage.[69]

The white spatial imaginary, which I also describe as a spatial logic, is the instrument of biopower that logically manages the threat posed to white space by Black bodies. It is a logic that divides people and space through cultural signification—black/white, consumable/non-consumable, civilized/ non-civilized—in order that space can be managed and controlled.[70] The white spatial imaginary, however, is not just policed by white individuals, as Chapter Three has shown. Many of the Black mayors interviewed for this research made distinctions between 'suburban space' and 'urban people,' consistently citing suburban norms as the reason people must be policed 'in space.'[71] In addition to municipal autonomy, discussed in Chapter Two, incompatibility of people and space came up repeatedly as the reason for excessive numbers of citations issued in this area and the reason that nothing needs to change. Deploying spatial signifiers, mayors and alderpersons, when asked to describe their cities, most often said, "We are a suburb with urban problems." Expectations of home ownership and property rights were also commonly cited. Patrick Green, who identifies as African American and is the mayor of Normandy, used cultural politics from both a white and Black perspective when he explained,

> People can use their house as a weapon by not doing what they're supposed to. Having a place to live is a privilege. A home is a privilege. It comes with responsibility. Our laws and ordinances are intended to protect the city when people don't uphold their responsibilities . . . . The question should not be, Why are police giving out so many tickets? The question should be, Why are so many people breaking the law? . . . The state says we can keep giving out all these tickets but now we're supposed to turn the money over (to the

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[67] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. C. Farrington (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991), 38–39.
[68] Michel Foucault develops this concept regarding biopower in *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976* (New York: Picador, 2003).
[69] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 61.
[70] Hannah Arendt links the construction of race to recognizing the human in those that are shockingly different. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harvest, 1966).
[71] Five Black mayors in North St. Louis County granted interviews for this research.

> schools). That's slavery, making you work for the land . . . . When they came to talk to us they accused us of being the number one city in the ticket scheme. That's like calling us niggers.[72]

The cultural politics of space deploys culture as a regulatory discourse to produce spatial imaginaries and social meanings that explain disparity as one of the 'natural consequences' of inferior Black culture through spatial logics. The discursive work of 'the suburban crisis' (i.e., "black folks don't know how to act in the suburbs," discussed in Chapter Two), is one example of how cultural politics depend on discursive production. Herman Gray has shown how discourses of crisis in a "time after race" rely on the cultural production of 'unruly black bodies' that threaten normative racial and masculine ideals of citizenship.[73] By combining a cultural politics of suburban citizenship while also capitalizing on the expectation of suffering in space qualified as 'urban,' residents of North St. Louis County are culturally, spatially, and bodily policed without any measure of accountability placed on policing practices. Furthermore, seemingly contradictory identities—suburban versus urban—are both claimed and deployed, sometimes interchangeably, in and about North St. Louis County, depending on the work they perform, the identities they mobilize, and the distinctions they are intended to make.

4. GOVERNMENTALITY

4.1 Degrees of citizenship

In a discussion linking race, identity, and citizenship, Aihwa Ong uses governmentality—the conduct of conduct[74]—as a framework to understand the simultaneous exercise of, and submission to, power as experienced by citizen subjects. Ong describes cultural citizenship as a form of governmentality by which subjects are constructed and determined by the techniques of power exercised over them.[75] For Ong, the question of who belongs and the rights established by a so-called universal citizenship are paradoxically attained through very particular and dialectical identities (e.g., worker/welfare recipient, homeowner/renter, male/female, etc.). The dual processes of self-making (identity) and being-made (subjectification) translate to degrees of rights as citizens, which are dependent on how one is constituted as a subject—either exercising or submitting to power. The interpretation of Foucault's delineations of power that Ong uses leads her to insist that the disciplinary forces of civic institutions and social groups make citizens on the basis of norms understood as 'civilized conduct.' A politics of civilized

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[72] Interview with Patrick Green, mayor of Normandy, November 30, 2015. Interview conducted by research assistant, Daniel Sachs.

[73] Herman Gray, "Culture, Masculinity, and the Time after Race," in *Toward a Sociology of the Trace*, eds. Herman Gray and Macarena Gomez-Barris (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 87–108.

[74] See Michel Foucault, *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France 1979-1980*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 12. "I have then tried to sketch out a bit of this notion of government, which seemed to me to be much more operational than the notion of power, 'government' being understood, of course, not in the narrow and current sense of the supreme instance of executive and administrative decision in state systems, but in the broad sense, and old sense moreover, of mechanisms and procedures intended to conduct men, to direct their conduct, to conduct their conduct."

[75] Aihwa Ong, "Cultural Citizenship as Subject Making: Immigrants Negotiate Racial and Cultural boundaries in the United States," in *Race, Identity, Citizenship,* eds. Rodolfo Torres, Louis F. Miron, Jonathan X. Inda (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999).

conduct and the making of 'good suburban citizens,' in contrast to 'bad urban conduct' is clearly at work in the rhetorical arguments used by leaders in North St. Louis County to justify state violence. Racism, which is historically rooted in a dialectical construct of civilization and its 'other,' is thus embedded in citizenship and the terms for belonging. Modern interpretations of civilization based on capital accumulation further set the terms for 'good citizenship' as functions of production and consumption. From this standpoint, being a good citizen means reducing one's burden on society and, as such, it is one's civic duty to be a good consumer. The discursive imaginations of white and Black space similarly establish spaces of consumption and investment as 'good space,' while spaces associated with disinvestment are inherently coded as inferior. In this way, degrees of citizenship are spatially determined and poor Black residents in North St. Louis County experience a differentiated 'suburban citizenship' determined through the policing of so-called suburban norms.

Ong's argument that citizenship plays out at the scale and in the realm of the particular is also relevant to the particularized discourses of 'good citizenship' in North St. Louis County. In addition to being policed through these discourses, residents of North St. Louis County make claims to both urban and suburban citizenship, as discussed later in this chapter. As such, they enact a discursive process of self-making while also being-made as subjects by discursive regimes enacted on them. This was clearly seen in the ways officials framed the Normandy schools crisis as well as in how residents of North St. Louis County navigated public discussions and the limited choices they were given. Many of the Black mayors interviewed for this research also use discourses of citizenship in a different way, to argue for the rights of Black citizens to determine their own destiny while at the same time overseeing the oppression of their poorest citizens by attaching 'middle-class' respectability politics to rights of citizenship. White mayors use discursive frames of middle class as well, often as a way to skirt questions of race. After James Knowles, the white mayor of Ferguson, told Tamron Hall on August 14, 2014, that there were absolutely no racial tensions in Ferguson, he followed it up by saying,

> The city of Ferguson has been a model for the region about how we transition from a community that is predominantly white middle-class to a community that is predominantly African-American middle-class.[76]

In fact, the number of residents living under the U.S. poverty level in Ferguson is more than twenty percent, and many of those living just over the poverty level would not consider themselves as 'middle-class.' Knowles has presumably read the census data for his city; therefore, the erasure of struggling residents, most of whom are Black, correlates to citizens that count and those that do not. As one resident put it, "you can draw a line around the middle-class neighborhoods in Ferguson and that's Mayor Knowles' city."[77]

In this sense, degrees of citizenship and belonging are indeed determined in the

[76] James Knowles, interview with Tamron Hall, MSNBC, August 18, 2014, http://www.msnbc.com/newsnation/watch/ferguson-mayor--theres-no-racial-divide-here-319506499946.
[77] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

realm of localized discursive practices. As an important part of the governance of self and other, discursive delineations that differentiate the rights of citizenship reveal how subjectivity and identity are closely linked. Using imaginations of urban and suburban space, cultural politics is central to both governance (from above) and governmentality (from below) in North St. Louis County. At the same time, these cultural politics also rely on expectations of suffering such that practices that would not be tolerated in most places are commonplace here.

4.2 Policing blackness in Pagedale

The most extreme example of how cultural politics plays out in governance and governmentality can be found in Pagedale, which aggressively passes and enforces what the city calls "quality of life" and "nuisance property" ordinances (discussed in Chapter Three). Whereas traffic violations make up the vast majority of policing for revenue practices in St. Louis County, non-traffic ordinance violations are taken to a new level in Pagedale.

Map **4.1**. Location of Pagedale within the footprint of the Normandy Schools Collaborative, formerly the Normandy School District (source: author).

The city of Pagedale covers 1.19 square miles and has approximately 3,300 residents. Built in the 1940s for primarily working-class Lutherans of German descent, the city was incorporated in 1950 and encompasses roughly 1,400 small homes, two commercial districts, an industrial zone, and a Lutheran cemetery. In keeping with the suburban imaginary, advertisements for new homes in Pagedale touted "clean neighborhoods, quiet streets and a fruit tree planted in every yard."[78] Almost immediately after incorporation, the city of Pagedale began to experience demographic and economic change. In 1962, the first of several factories in the city moved to outlying areas that offered attractive tax and infrastructure benefits.[79] Concurrent with the relocation of major employers, the momentum of the Civil Rights legislation and overcrowding in Black communities exerted new forces on suburban municipalities to open their boundaries to Black homebuyers, as discussed in Chapter Two. As with areas across the U.S., the push of Black families beyond the 'inner-city' and into the suburban context was met by much resistance from white residents, politicians, and real estate agents in Pagedale. Violence and threats toward individuals, veiled exclusionary policies, and blatantly racialized real estate and lending practices were common and aimed at keeping Blacks 'at bay.' Many incidences of vandalism and threats aimed at Black families moving in and whites 'selling out' were documented in Pagedale.[80] Realtors were mandated to sell the *right property* to the *right people* or risk losing their licenses. Neighborhood and municipal meetings were routinely called by white homeowners to discuss what could be done to thwart 'the Negro invasion.'[81] While some of the resistance was unapologetically racist, most arguments steered the debate toward economic factors and the right to protect the value of property.[82]

By 1980, the majority of white residents had left Pagedale, and the community was 79 percent African American. In 1982, the citizens of Pagedale elected the first all-Black, all-female leadership in the United States.[83] Since then, the leadership has been majority-Black and majority-female. Today the city of Pagedale has a population of 3,304 and is 94 percent African American, with a per capita income of $11,005. Six out of seven of the city's top leadership positions are held by Black women. Thirty percent of residents (39 percent of children) live under the poverty line.[84] As the first wave of Black homebuyers lost value in their homes through their mere presence, many perceived themselves as having been followed by the problems (and people) they sought to escape. Likewise, residents who benefited from lower rents and housing prices after the first wave of families moved in often resented those they identified as power-wielding "brothers and sisters" and believed

[78] Developer's advertising pamphlet circa 1948. Missouri History Museum, Normandy Files, Pagedale Folder.
[79] Greg Squires discusses the political factors and processes of industrial factories moving from suburban areas in U.S. cities to outer 'exurbs,' in *Urban Sprawl: Causes, Consequences, and Policy Response* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002).
[80] Key-informant interviews—Pagedale residents.
[81] As told to me in an interview on October 2, 2010, with a former University of Missouri extension employee who facilitated town hall meetings in the Normandy Suburbs during this era.
[82] Ibid.
[83] See Chapter Two, pages 83-84.
[84] U.S. Census data, 2010.

them to be closely aligned with white power structures.[85] As such, intersections of class and race were fully evident throughout the process of demographic inversion and continue to be revealed within the political spectrum.

It is clear from interviews that class status does not necessarily determine residents' outlooks regarding power, subjectivity, or identity. Pagedale leaders consistently point out that they are all Black and all poor.[86] A female resident who moved to Pagedale from the housing projects in the city in the 1970s, who has also held elected office, explains how middle-class identity in what was supposed to be a suburban area shapes the response of some residents toward others moving in, regardless of class,

> You take families that come from the projects, just like I did, and you put them in a house and they don't know how to act. That's what city living does. Nobody's taught them the difference. It puts them in a position to just run rampant and wild if they haven't been trained to live a certain way. Then when they come to the county they bring all that with them. That's what we gotta deal with. That's why we create laws and ordinances that protect our city because people have investments and we are trying to get our share from the county. We can't prove them right with what they accusing us of. It's *who* you're bringing in and what they're accustomed to. They come with what they're used to. Where they come from, they were doing what they want and nobody teaching them another way to do it. We have a better chance in the county with our little municipality of enforcing the laws that teach people how to live. It's the teachings that we have. When I came to Pagedale I didn't know how to take care of property or how to act in the county. Someone had to tell me—you don't be doing that here. I didn't know it wasn't permissible. When people know what they're doing and why they're doing it they start to say, "Well that's not bad at all, I got my barbecue in the backyard, I got my privacy and everything. I don't have to have all my kids in the street playing and be looking at my neighbor—all in their business."[87]

The attitudes expressed by this resident are shared by a number of people in Pagedale, including the leadership. Current municipal leaders, all of whom are African American and most of whom are women, maintain a *moral polity of blackness* defined and deployed paradoxically through the white suburban imaginary and an age-old politics of respectability. As discussed in Chapter Three, many residents feel that Black leaders are able to more overtly say derogatory things about Black constituents because they are Black and that white leaders elsewhere say the same things though veiled language. Many residents in Pagedale also stated that the majority-Black female leadership could "get away with" targeting gendered stereotypes and behavior, such as young single mothers and lesbian women, because they are women.

The disparate politics of older Black women who have been in leadership in places

[85] Key-informant interviews—Pagedale residents.
[86] Interview with mayor and city alderperson of Pagedale, May 2010.
[87] Pagedale resident, interview by author, April 11, 2011.

like Pagedale for more than thirty years and the young female protesters who emerged after the death of Michael Brown illustrate the many and often contrasting facets of gender and sexual identity and the power of discourse and cultural politics in determining 'regimes of truth.' The 'truths' put forward by the female leaders of Pagedale, who fought long and hard to gain and maintain positions of power, are very different from the 'truths' of the young women on the front lines of protest in North St. Louis County. The Black 'queered' ethics that young women protesters advance, as I explain in Chapter Five, pushes beyond gendered and sexual identity. 'To queer' politics, as opposed to 'queer politics,' is to turn politics on its head—to throw everything that is normative and assumed out the window and ask, "How can we re-imagine what needs to happen at this moment in time?" As the young women who led protests in Ferguson pointed out in various ways, the emphasis placed on respectability politics by Black men during the 1960s and 1970s, and carried out by Black women in the 1980s and 1990s in places like Pagedale, did not result in the social, political, and spatial equity promised by the liberal state. Rather, Black leaders found that not only were Black residents not able to fully participate in the 'American Dream,' they were held to higher standards under which they must find ways to compensate for the economic disparities leveraged against Black communities.

As described in Chapters One and Two, the suburbs have always been a place for ethnic communities to claim full citizenship and middle-class norms. Several scholars have described the quest for model-citizen status in and through the suburbs by various ethnic minorities, most often Asian Americans. Wendy Cheng describes how Asian and Latina/o Americans "had to either 'pass' as white . . . or evidence a 'proper' relationship to property as conceived as coextensive with a middle-class, white nuclear-family based vision of Americanness" in order to achieve provisional acceptance in the suburbs of Los Angeles.[88] In the case of African Americans, however, the specific and long history of racism and their initial status 'as property' in the United States denies Black residents the 'proper' symbolic relationship to property and also requires that they make up for economic losses resulting from the risk attached to Black bodies. For this reason, the moral polity of blackness is not just an issue of wielding moral authority or claiming suburban status. As discussed in Chapter Two, the policing of residents based on tropes of Black deviance is critical to the very survival of the city, which uses policing as a revenue-generating source to make up for the vast disinvestment experienced when Black residents moved in. Through ordinances intended to discipline behavior construed as Black, the suburban imaginary is enforced more stringently than would be considered acceptable in predominantly white neighborhoods, and the city is in the business of subject-making.

Pagedale found itself at the center of a class action lawsuit in 2015 brought by the Institute for Justice, a libertarian public-interest law firm based in Arlington, VA, on behalf of residents. Spurred by protests in Ferguson and the reports that followed, the complaint filed in United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri accuses the city of violating due process and excess-fines protections ensured in the U.S. Constitution by turning its code enforcement and municipal court into "revenue-generating machines" to

[88] Wendy Cheng, "The Changs Next Door to the Diazes: Suburban Racial Formation in Los Angeles's San Gabriel Valley," *Journal of Urban History* 39, no. 1 (2012): 22.

go after residents.[89] The complaint calls for an injunction against the city's reliance on such fines. The complaint focuses on property violations as well as both overt and veiled racialized prohibitions found in Pagedale city ordinances, such as: "No sagging pants"; "No loud music or excessive bass"; "No more than two people assembling in public space without a permit"; "No barbequing in front or next to a house"; "No congregating on a porch"; "No mismatched curtains"; and so on.[90] An older Black man from Pagedale shared his experience:

> The police came to our house to issue a noise violation because we were playing music. It was on the weekend. While they were there, we were charged with my girlfriend not being on the occupancy permit, since she was staying there. We plead guilty to that but we were also charged for stupid stuff. I asked one of the officers about his tattoo and he gave me a ticket for 'disturbing the peace' because I casually asked him what it was. Three officers were there and the captain was telling the other officers what to write tickets for—like they were in training for writing tickets about stupid stuff. I refused to plead guilty to disturbing the peace for asking about a tattoo and for not keeping our barbeque in the right spot. When we went to court, they set a date for the trial—there's going to be a trial about it. Other people at court didn't question their tickets for stupid stuff. They paid the $75 and left. It's a matter of principal. If they want to spend their money on trials over asking about a tattoo and where I keep my barbeque. So be it.[91]

The contrast between the statement made by the woman who framed policing as upholding suburban norms and this statement by a man who is apparently being taught how to live in the suburbs reveals how constructions of identity and subjectivity play out in this context. These two discursive frames of everyday life in Pagedale show how residents explain what is happening from two distinctly different perspectives, but neither clearly reveals how outside narratives, which led to vast disinvestment in the city and subsequent efforts to restore economic viability, make it necessary for residents to narrate their experiences in these ways.

Long before the Institute for Justice became involved in Pagedale in the aftermath of Ferguson protests, residents of Pagedale were sharing their stories with anyone who would listen, with little success at eliciting interest. The consistent story I heard over a ten-year period was of a city continuously fining, harassing, and sometimes jailing residents for minor traffic and non-traffic infractions. Equally prevalent were stories that involved the threat of demolition over non-safety-related code violations and that illustrated how the city is especially aggressive when it comes to property violations. The city admitted to me that many properties on their demolition list do not pose a public safety threat and are

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[89] See Valarie Whiner, Vincent Blount, and Mildred Bryant, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. City of Pagedale, http://ij.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ECF-1-Complaint-FILE-STAMPED-11.04.15.pdf.

[90] As recorded in Pagedale municipal ordinances (past and present).

[91] Key-informant interview—North County residents.

merely "a nuisance" to the city.[92] Residents facing code violations, which include peeling paint, windows without screens or a torn screen, loose siding and mismatched curtains are usually given thirty days to remedy citations. Properties that do not comply are cited again and owners with multiple citations can be jailed, and their homes may be placed on the demolition list. Many residents lack the resources to address repairs immediately and bear the added burden of fines and fees for violations as well as jail time. One eighty-four-year-old resident who has lived in Pagedale for forty-seven years and is part of the lawsuit received a letter ordering her to fix a dozen violations, none of which were safety issues but were beyond her limited retirement income. She was told that "all windows need screens and window treatment such as blinds and or matching curtains, slats, etc.," and ordered her to repaint her porch and paint her building foundation, as well as "touch up paint or repaint entire house, cut back weeds and treat fence line with brush killer."[93] Much in the same way large urban areas became the front lines of the 'war on poverty' through the criminalization of the poor and homeless (as discussed in Chapter One), municipalities like Pagedale have capitalized on the concept of 'broken windows policing' to rid the city of undesirable properties and fill budgetary gaps at the same time.

Most cities in St. Louis County issue many more traffic violations than non-traffic violations; however, the opposite is true of Pagedale, where non-traffic violations have been higher than traffic violations for eight out of the last ten years. Several factors explain why this is. First, Pagedale is carrying out a land grab through the municipal court. Vacant lots of demolished properties are automatically turned over to the city, placed in a land banking trust, or turned over directly to the non-profit housing and community-building organization, Beyond Housing, which builds new housing for low-income families participating in their home ownership and renter's programs. Through this process and with an ironic twist, poor people in the St. Louis region benefit from the very poor in Pagedale, who lose their property in order that "the more deserving poor" can find housing.[94] Leaders of Pagedale and others argue that turning unattractive 'nuisance' properties into attractive new homes for low-income people participating in comprehensive programs through Beyond Housing benefits more people than it hurts because property values are brought up in the process and families are supported in other needed areas to ensure their success.[95] While the programs offered through Beyond Housing take an important approach to circumventing poverty, the logic rhetorically promoted in this process justifies stripping very poor residents of their homes based on an aesthetics of suburban norms. Interestingly and ironically, this logic uses the rights of private property to deny the rights of private property, which is why a libertarian public interest law firm took notice of this case.

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[92] Interview with mayor and city alderperson of Pagedale, May 2010.

[93] See Valarie Whiner, Vincent Blount, and Mildred Bryant, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. City of Pagedale.

[94] The concept of 'the deserving poor' is part of the culture of poverty discourse, which sets about to distinguish the working poor and those deemed poor through no fault of their own from groups associated with laziness or lacking in moral and cultural values.

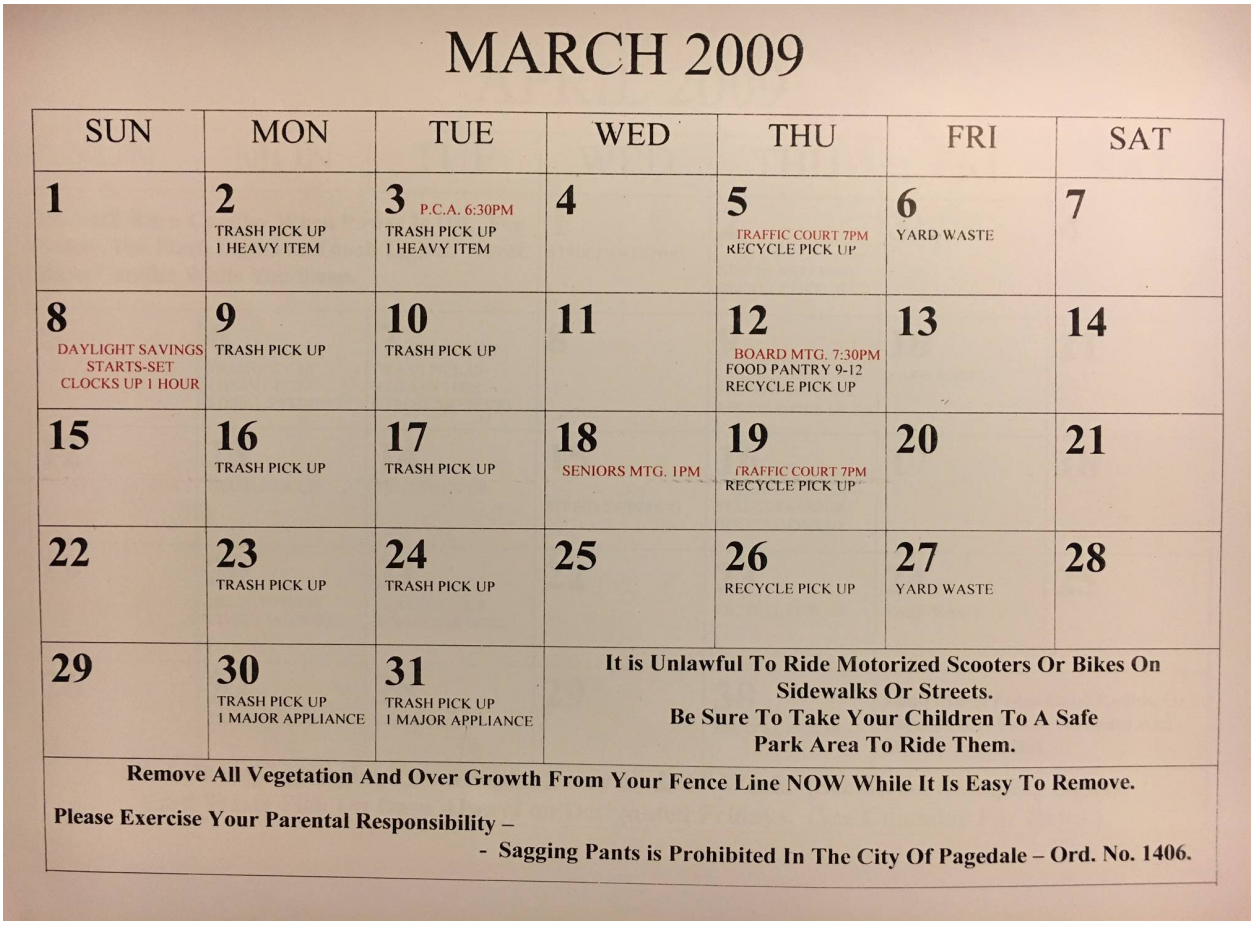
[95] Common refrain of Pagedale leaders to the author when working in Pagedale, 2004–2010.

Pagedale leaders are quick to use narratives of respectability and aesthetics, such as the one stated above, to support a cultural politics of policing. Property is a major theme. One leader stated, "If you don't know how to cut your grass then you shouldn't be living in a house." When I relayed this statement to a resident who had received a violation for her grass being too long, she said,

> If they don't know how to serve their residents and take care of all the vacant lots they own where the houses are gone, then they shouldn't be running a city. They have vacant lots all over this city that they've taken away from people and they don't even cut the grass on the lots. Then they come out and measure my grass with a ruler.

Like the woman who said that people from the city don't know how to act in the county, leaders clearly state their role in educating "folks from the ghetto" as to how to live in the suburbs. Those that comply "won't have no problem with us," while those that do not "shouldn't be messing up our town and should go back to the projects."[96] The likelihood of white leadership making similar statements without recourse is slim although equally racist statements by white administrators in Ferguson were documented by the Department of Justice. Those administrators have since been fired. The larger narrative of responsible home ownership, safety, aesthetics, propriety, and respectability is common among both Black and white municipal leaders in North St. Louis County to justify practices, but it is especially blatant among Black leadership in Pagedale and other majority Black communities.

[96] Interview with a Pagedale alderperson, March 12, 2010.



MARCH 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 TRASH PICK UP 1 HEAVY ITEM	3 P.C.A. 6:30PM TRASH PICK UP 1 HEAVY ITEM	4	5 TRAFFIC COURT 7PM RECYCLE PICK UP	6 YARD WASTE	7
8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS STARTS-SET CLOCKS UP 1 HOUR	9 TRASH PICK UP	10 TRASH PICK UP	11	12 BOARD MTG. 7:30PM FOOD PANTRY 9-12 RECYCLE PICK UP	13	14
15	16 TRASH PICK UP	17 TRASH PICK UP	18 SENIORS MTG. 1PM	19 TRAFFIC COURT 7PM RECYCLE PICK UP	20	21
22	23 TRASH PICK UP	24 TRASH PICK UP	25	26 RECYCLE PICK UP	27 YARD WASTE	28
29	30 TRASH PICK UP 1 MAJOR APPLIANCE	31 TRASH PICK UP 1 MAJOR APPLIANCE	It is Unlawful To Ride Motorized Scooters Or Bikes On Sidewalks Or Streets. Be Sure To Take Your Children To A Safe Park Area To Ride Them.			

Remove All Vegetation And Over Growth From Your Fence Line NOW While It Is Easy To Remove.

Please Exercise Your Parental Responsibility –

- Sagging Pants is Prohibited In The City Of Pagedale – Ord. No. 1406.

Figure **4.2** Page from the city of Pagedale calendar. Each month features different ordinances (source: author).

4.3 Humanitarian imperialism

Pagedale has been the focus of commercial and residential revitalization efforts through its partnership with Beyond Housing for over fifteen years. As part of these efforts to improve public perception, attract outside investment, and boost economic stability for the city and residents, leaders have implemented a zero tolerance policy for 'weak links' within the city boundaries. As one resident put it, "your house could be falling down around you from the inside and your kids could be starving but as long as you put your last dime into new paint and matching curtains and cut your grass, the city don't care."[97] Another Pagedale resident stated "they are putting so-called needy families in brand new homes but if you're really poor, the message is 'Get out.'"[98] This raises a question regarding how non-profit NGOs with sincere missions to address poverty and assist poor families can, in some instances, aid, abet, and benefit from oppressive practices aimed at the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society. Similar to the ways in which E. Franklin Frazier's work, discussed in Chapter One, was used to draft the 'culture of poverty' discourse that directed decades of federal, state, and local policy afterward, this case illustrates how non-profits that earnestly seek to alleviate oppression, and which have clearly helped many families, can also promote messages of respectability and

[97] Interview with a Pagedale resident, October 12, 2015.
[98] Interview with a Pagedale resident, August 11, 2015.

responsibility that explain who succeeds and who fails within their model of community development. It also reveals the many contradictions faced by those trying to transform communities and combat poverty. Beyond Housing's community participation approach relies on residents to be 'engaged citizens,' both discursively and in practice. Given the limitations of institutional structures and the democratic ideals behind this approach, responsibility for failures is inherently placed on those who fall through the cracks. The difficulty in engaging an aggrieved community while also partnering with entities viewed as oppressive tends to result in narrow outcomes of engagement. [99]

During the several years I spent working with the leadership of the city of Pagedale and the non-profit Beyond Housing, as a faculty representative of Washington University, I witnessed the contradictions that arise when forces align to 'help residents,' with varying definitions, methods, and metrics concerning that objective. Because the leadership of Pagedale is democratically elected and Black, the university did not question whether leaders were acting in the best interest of their citizens. Moreover, due to the measurable impacts that Beyond Housing has had in this geography and its commitment to holistic intervention, the university also did not question specific methods or practices carried out by the non-profit. Over the course of my extended time in the community and throughout the process of conducting a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of a Beyond Housing project in Pagedale,[100] it became evident that discursive representations of the community by people in charge were often out of sync with the experiences of residents. In fact, residents began to share many of the stories described above and in Chapter Three regarding constant harassment and what many felt were abuses of power by the city for the purpose of extracting money and obtaining property. By extension, residents assumed Beyond Housing directly benefitted from these practices. In spite of these discoveries, the HIA report promoted the discourses of healthy eating and active living, suggesting that if environments were produced that were attentive to those two indicators, it was residents' responsibility to be healthy and that the vast disparity in life expectancy would disappear in their zip code. That is not to say that food security and walkable communities are not important; however, if residents are afraid to leave their houses for fear of being fined by the city, they will not benefit from those efforts.

These conflicts became difficult to navigate personally. As a principal investigator on the HIA, I found measurable positive impacts within the metrics of health, food security, and economic well-being that would result from the development proposed jointly by the city of Pagedale and Beyond Housing. At the same time, veiled as well as explicit efforts to rid the city of the most economically undesirable residents, along with the experiences shared by the same residents and the constant stories of predatory policing, posed considerable concerns regarding how the city, and potentially the non-profit, were oppressing the most vulnerable citizens while gaining much attention for their 'good

[99] Based on interviews and interactions with leadership and staff at Beyond Housing, 2004–2010. It should be noted that Beyond Housing has had a considerable positive impact on this area, and its leadership is committed to alleviating suffering and improving the lives of residents in North St. Louis County on many levels, including housing, health, education, and economic literacy.

[100] See Christine Hoehner, Jodi Rios, et al., "Page Avenue HIA: Building on Diverse Partnerships and Evidence to Promote a Healthy Community," *Health and Place* 18, no. 1 (January 2012): 85–95.

works.' While critiques of neoliberal urban practices, discussed in Chapter One, assume that cities will act in the interest of the few and not the many, such critiques become more complicated when agencies like Beyond Housing earnestly seek to better the lives of many poor people. Beyond Housing's continued alignment and vehement defense of the leadership of Pagedale, even as blatantly egregious practices were publicly exposed by the media post-Ferguson, was personally surprising, yet it reveals how the politics of community transformation mirrors the contradictions found in humanitarian discourse and practice, what Jean Bricmont calls humanitarian imperialism.[101] From this standpoint, one is helping individuals and families with one hand while strengthening the structures that create underlying problems with the other. The other discursive frame used in this area is triage. When I asked a close friend who has worked as a social worker in North County for many years if non-profits there help the poor at the expense of the very poor her response was, "absolutely." She followed this statement up by lamenting that non-profits are constantly trying to establish an evolutionary threshold for those they can help and those that are "beyond help." In order to make and justify difficult decisions, non-profits use well-established discourses and cultural politics to distinguish the worthy poor from the unworthy poor, or what Chandan Reddy calls "the dialectic of exceptionality and disposability."[102] This may also explain why an organization with a clear mission and track record of assisting poor families would also be aligned with a government that stratifies its residents through cultural politics and racialized narratives of risk. In this sense, the non-profit does not appear to compromise its values because the city establishes the metrics for differentiation.

Looking back at past research and documents from my time working in Pagedale, I came across a spreadsheet that one of my graduate students had produced in 2008. The leadership of Beyond Housing had requested assistance from a design student with what was termed a "housing audit" in the municipality. Without questioning it very much, I sent a student to meet with the person overseeing the request and tasked him with doing what was asked. When the spreadsheet was completed, it was filed away in a digital file labeled "Pagedale Housing Audit." When looking at this document recently from a very different vantage point, I was dismayed to discover that I had assisted in the very practices described in Chapter Two. The audit was sponsored by Beyond Housing, and the list of ninety homes to be audited was provided by the mayor of Pagedale. The homes were listed as vacant, and the student was asked to perform a physical audit of each property to determine if it should be demolished for a vacant lot, demolished and rebuilt as a Beyond Housing project, rehabbed as a Beyond Housing project, or remain as is. The results of the audit showed that more than twenty of the properties listed as unoccupied had families living in them. The student color-coded the spreadsheet, making notes regarding the

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[101] Jean Bricmont, *Humanitarian Imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2006). Many have critiqued humanitarian discourse and practice: see, for example, Mahmood Mamdani, *Saviors and Survivors: Darfur, Politics, and the War on Terror* (New York: Doubleday, 2009); Conor Foley, *The Thin Blue Line: How Humanitarianism Went to War* (New York: Verso, 2010). One example of the critique of early social work organizations and the discourses that accompanied them is Tony Platt, *The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

[102] Cited by Walter Johnson in "What Do We Mean When We Say, 'Structural Racism'?," *KALFOU* 3, no. 1 (Spring 2016): 36–62:58.

requested classifications. After rediscovering this document, I went back to look at the ownership history of the ninety properties and found that only eight of them were still in the same ownership as in 2008. Since 2008, Pagedale had taken over eighteen, Beyond Housing had acquired six, and the St. Louis County land trust had gained control of two. At the same time that people were pointing out the houses on their blocks that they claimed had been "taken away" from their neighbors by the city and Beyond Housing back in 2008, it turns out I was aiding in this process because I had not questioned the narrative that was presented to me.

5. SELF-MAKING

5.1 Space and identity

In addition to the contradictions that arise in processes of subject-making in North St. Louis County, seemingly contradictory identities—suburban versus urban—are both claimed and deployed, sometimes interchangeably, by residents of North St. Louis County, depending on the work they perform, the identities they mobilize, and the distinctions they are intended to make. This is clearly evident in the attitudes, opinions, and spatial practices of residents in North St. Louis County. Residents interviewed for this research (N=105), who were randomly intercepted in various locations across the geography, were asked a number of questions regarding their perceptions of North St. Louis County as suburban or urban; how they define urban versus suburban; if, and how, they viewed differences between Black experience in St. Louis County versus St. Louis City; what their experience has been with policing practices; and whether or not they support municipal consolidation measures. Among other things, these interviews show distinct differences with regard to perceptions of space—as urban or suburban—between Black residents (N=85) and white residents (N=20). Differences were also evident in the ways both Black and white residents quantified and codified space and their perceptions of whether, and how, Black experience differed between St. Louis County and St. Louis City. While gender did not stand out as a significant factor, the age of respondents did appear to correlate with specific responses.

The distinctions respondents made about urban and suburban space were significant. When asked whether they believed North St. Louis County was urban or suburban, 65 percent of Black respondents stated that North St. Louis County is urban, while 100 percent of white respondents defined it as suburban. Interestingly, when white residents living outside of North St. Louis County (but in the region) were interviewed in a separate study (N=16), most (78 percent) defined specific areas in North St. Louis County as urban.[103] Regarding why North County is urban, one older Black man (aged 66–75) from Normandy stated what many Black respondents shared in various ways:

> The neighborhood was suburban when I moved in, now it's urban. It's because the people have changed, and the diversity. There are more blacks in urban places than whites.

Another respondent, a Black woman (aged 56–65) from Pagedale, like many respondents, equated urban and suburban with changing class status. She said,

[103] Key-informant interviews—North County residents.

> This area is urban, it's not suburban at all. In our neighborhood, people don't have enough money to be suburban. . . . People in the suburbs do things because they want to while in an urban area they do things because they HAVE to.

A middle-aged Black woman from Ferguson associated suburban space with the quality of services and equated changes in services with racial changes:

> I was the second African American on my block in Ferguson twenty-seven years ago. When I arrived it was suburban and the services were really high quality. As the racial makeup changed, the services got much worse.

A young Black man simply said, "This area is urban because no white people live here at all."

These descriptions suggest that, in the perception of these respondents, space can easily change, or be recodified, from urban to suburban and back again, depending on who lives there and what they are doing. This supports the argument that space is codified depending on the messages being sent regarding class and race and that it can change quickly, depending on who controls the narrative. The data also showed that space is actively racialized and that Black residents view themselves as contributing to the reclassification of space (i.e., "black people live here [so it is urban]," or "white people live there [so it is suburban]"). The data also showed that, according to respondents, once an area is qualified as 'the ghetto' or 'the hood,' as many described North St. Louis County, it must be urban.[104] This is an important finding because it corresponded with Black residents' lowered expectations for the space in which they live.

Regarding *suburban space*, Black respondents across age and gender groups most often said things like "it's quiet," "it's not as busy," "white people live there," "it's wealthier," "it's cleaner," and "it's more close knit." Similarly, regarding *urban space*, Black respondents cited things like "it's busier/noisier," "black people live there," "it's poorer," "it's the hood," and "it's more crowded." When asked to define and describe the differences between urban and suburban space, Black residents overwhelmingly cited experiential, demographic, and behavioral characteristics—things that can change quickly—rather than physical qualities of space, such as density, building typology, or green space.

White residents of North St. Louis County were more likely to base definitions of urban and suburban on physical definitions—things that do not change quickly—such as density, residential/commercial uses, and amount of open space. When asked to define suburban space, white residents most often said things like "there are single-family homes," "it's residential," "it has more open space." Unlike Black respondents, none of the white respondents directly cited race in their responses. Regarding urban space, white respondents said things like "there are apartment buildings," "things are closer together," and "you don't need a car." White residents interviewed for this research largely lived in communities that have recently shifted to majority Black, such as Ferguson, but live in

[104] This paragraph is based on data collected from resident interviews.

predominantly white neighborhoods. These residents were also more likely to cite changes in the community and unrest as things they dislike about living there. They did not, however, describe the area as urban, presumably because they themselves still live in the community and identify as 'suburban citizens,' citing more permanent features as evidence of suburban conditions. This hypothesis is based on the fact that whites living outside of North St. Louis County were more likely to describe the area as urban, citing different types of physical evidence such as abandoned buildings, defunct commercial districts, and trash. While the sampling of white residents both inside and outside of North St. Louis County was relatively small, responses suggest that once white residents move out of the area, they perceive it as urban rather than suburban. Age is also a determining factor as older Black residents living in the area for more than ten years (N=15) were more likely to describe their community as suburban and to cite "outsiders moving in" as one of their dislikes. Black residents under the age of fifty-five overwhelmingly stated "the police" as the thing they disliked the most about living in North St. Louis County.[105]

Another significant distinction between Black and white respondents is the perception of Black experience in the county versus the city. Ninety-four percent of Black respondents across age and gender said different experiences did exist, and of those, virtually all stated that it is easier for Blacks to live in the city than in the county. Black respondents cited better experiences with the police, not being stopped on a regular basis, not being harassed for everyday activities, and "blending in" as the most common reasons for why it is easier for a Black person to live in the city than in the county. The specific question "Do you think African Americans have a different experience in the city versus the county?" led to comments such as "oh yeah, it's definitely easier in the city," "yes, you don't get stopped and harassed in the city," "they leave you alone in the city," "out here [in the county] you gotta watch what you do more. Just basic things like walkin' down the street. It's not that way in the city." Many people went into detail. For example:

> Young Black man from Bellfontaine Neighbors (18–25)
> Young people in the city can walk around freely without being worried about being stopped because they look like they are up to no good. In the county, if you walk in a group with your friends you have to hope that there isn't any cops around. They will stop you and ask you what you are doing and where you are going.
> Middle-aged Black woman from Cool Valley (46–55)
> Black people in the city don't have to deal with nearly as much as you would if you lived in the county. They are way more petty in the county. They have too many petty laws out here, whatever law they can make to get money out of you they will. In the city they just don't care. Both experiences are tragic.
> Young Black man from Northwoods (18–25)
> Definitely. I've been trailed by police in the county so many times I can't even count. Not here in Northwoods because the officers know me, but in other parts. The county uses people for revenue. The city police watch for actual crime.

[105] Ibid.

Young Black man from Ferguson (18–25)
On a certain level, things are nicer in the county. Everybody wants to come to the county until they deal with the police here.
Young Black woman from Hanley Hills (18–25)
The city is trying to maintain order. The county is trying to make money. In the city you are not treated as badly by the government.

The opposite was true of white respondents, of whom 75 percent stated that there was no difference for Blacks between the city and the county. Of the 25 percent of white respondents who believed there was a difference, virtually all said it was easier for blacks to live in the county, saying things like "it's nicer out here," and "there's less crime."[106] One white man from Ferguson between the ages of forty-six and fifty-five, stating something similar to several other white respondents, said,

> Yes, blacks definitely feel safer here. It's safer for their sons and daughters. I've never met anyone who is unhappy. St. Louis City can be a terrifying place. You don't have to worry about that here even over on Canfield. I hang out over there a lot.

Similarly, a white woman from St. John between the ages of fifty-six and sixty-five said,

> I'm sure they feel safer here in the county than in the city. They can get a better education and they have all these nice parks they can use. St. John has its own police department but I'm also within walking distance to five other municipalities that all have their own police departments too.

I found it interesting that white residents could speak so definitively regarding Black experience yet their perceptions were more or less the opposite of Black residents regarding how African Americans experience the county versus the city.

5.2 Space and Experience

Based on responses by both Blacks and whites regarding the relative difficulty or ease of living in the city and the county, as well as differing opinions regarding what they liked and disliked about living in North St. Louis County, the primary factor for differing opinions appears to be experiences with the police and expectations of behavior and norms between city and county. Virtually all Black respondents described multiple forms of harassment by the police in St. Louis County that either they, or people they knew, had recently experienced. These experiences shape their attitudes toward where they live and the stories they tell others and themselves about this place. Their experiences also shape how they view what they have sacrificed versus what they have gained by living in the county and the expectations they have in both places. Many stated that they wished to move back to the city but could not due to lost investment in their home or their reliance on a friend or family member with whom they lived.[107] Experiences with the police elicited the longest and most impassioned responses from Black

[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.

residents. Some people were angry and some were shaking when they shared their stories. While there are many experiences cited below, there were many more shared in the interviews.

Black man from Berkeley (18–25)
It's modern day slavery again. They're putting people in jail and snatching them up for petty things that don't harm other people—but they're getting paid to fill cells.

Black man from Hazelwood (46–55)
I've had horrible experiences with driving in North County. I don't even get tickets when I get pulled over because they can't find anything to ticket me for. They just pulled me over and harassed me. People don't even go to the county solely for that reason.

Black woman from Velda City (62)
They are crazy about writing tickets out here—just giving tickets to people for nothing. My 85-year-old grandmother got one like that. It's to fill up the courthouse and fill out the books.

Black man from Florissant (26–35)
You've got be 100% cautious around here. It's not a good feeling driving around like that. You feel that anxiety. In Country Club Hills I missed a court date so when I came in they held me and locked me up. It was embarrassing. So much pressure here, it'll make a grown man cry. It'll break you down like cancer.

Black man from Ferguson (66–75)
I've lived here for nine years and I own my home. I've had very bad experiences with the police. I'm actually suing the Ferguson police department right now. They came to my house because they wanted to speak with my son. They knocked on the door and said they had a warrant but they didn't. They threw me down on the floor and handcuffed me. They found my son and tased him. It turns out the Berkeley police wanted to talk to my son so the Ferguson police just came in like that. I got a lawyer and went to court and they dropped the charges because they never had a warrant.

Black woman from Normandy (26–35)
My son was in the hospital and I got a ticket for a "water closet." No one at the court knew what that was and I'm still paying on it. I was locked up for a day and a half for a water closet and my son was in the hospital. Also, the police maced my dog when they came on my property. They said they had the right to do that.

Black woman from University City (56–65), regarding North County
I was walking with my grandson to his day care at our church in North County one morning. He was wearing his rain boots and after I dropped him off I thought, "What if he wants to play outside and he needs his shoes?" So I turned around (in the church parking lot) to go home and get his shoes. The police stopped me and the officer said I had made a "sudden move." In the county they are looking for black people. In the city black people blend in.

Black man from Normandy (56–65)
My wife drives a 2015 Taurus, I was driving it and I got stopped for driving while black. The officer said my sticker wasn't high enough on my license plate. I told him that the sticker was put on by the dealer when we bought the car. I actually called the dealer and he confirmed it but I still got a ticket. So I walked to the police station and spoke to the chief. I explained how I got the ticket and he tore it up. It's a good thing I know how to talk to the cops or that could have turned out differently.
Black woman from Ferguson (56–65)
I had a bad experience with Calverton Park. My son was stopped there on his way to work and I was called. He was cited for 'improper lane usage' after the cop put his lights on to pull him over! He hadn't actually done anything wrong until he was pulling over. It was just a 'random' stop.
Black woman from Pine Lawn (20)
In Pagedale, I was accused of speeding when a police officer came up behind me and followed me late at night with his lights off. He was right behind me for a long while and I didn't know he was a cop. I thought he was someone with bad intentions so I sped up to get home quicker. Then he pulled me over for speeding. He kept harassing me about how he lost his pen, as if I had taken it. He kept asking me questions about his pen. I called my dad and kept him on speakerphone. It really scared me.
Black woman from Venita Terrace (56–65)
My boyfriend used to come over and he would get tickets constantly for parking too often in the community. We went to court and they told us that he would continue to get tickets and he should stay in a hotel. We're still paying for those tickets. I wanted to do community service but I couldn't because I was working a job. . . . There's only certain hours you can do it.
Black man from Hanley Hills (56–65)
They definitely target you on small issues out here: trash, grass, stickers. It keeps you on pins and needles in order to keep things straight all the time. I got a ticket for paying my trash bill (to an independent company) thirty days late. I actually paid it before getting the ticket so I went to the court and showed them all the paperwork that I had paid it and they dismissed it. Other people were there were paying $75 and $100 fines for not paying their trash bills.
(His female partner added): They've got someone working at the city who calls the trash company to find out who hasn't paid on time and they send them a ticket. That's just lazy, unfair, and unjust. People could use that money to pay their trash bill but instead they have to give it to the city for a fine.

While almost every Black respondent had a personal story regarding policing and their expectation of being stopped, white respondents in general had a positive view of the police. They said that the leaders and the police had their best interest in mind and they stated public safety as one of their main priorities. White residents most often cited racial tensions and change as what they liked least about

living in North St. Louis County. One white respondent who had lived in an unincorporated area of North County for forty-seven years said the thing she least liked about living there was "the perception that I live in the ghetto."

Regarding leadership, Black respondents overwhelmingly disagreed that municipal leaders act in the best interest of their community while virtually all white residents said the leaders of their municipality were doing a good job. Black residents cited money and greed as the only reasons for the amount of citations and court fees handed out in North St. Louis County while white residents largely agreed with the narratives of municipal leaders that public safety is the sole reason for the types of policing that take place.

> Black man from Greendale (26–36)
> I think the public safety argument is a complete lie. How does not taking out your trash when it's not full put the public in danger? And then when there is an actual issue, law enforcement are nowhere to be found. They only fine us to put money in their pockets. I truly believe that.
> Black woman from Woodson Terrace (46–55)
> I don't buy into it when they talk about public safety. Hell yeah it's about money. At any given time you can see someone pulled over, almost all the time. I've seen it for over ten years—they bank on it.
> Black woman from Dellwood (46–55)
> Where is the danger to public safety all those leaders are talking about? All I see right now are bogus tickets being given to people in the area for crazy reasons. I believe they give these tickets to fund themselves, yes I do. How else are they going to get all that military equipment they use on us? WE pay for it.

White respondents generally agreed with the public safety argument that leaders repeatedly make. Echoing statements made by several other white respondents, a white woman from Pasadena Hills between the ages of fifty-six and sixty-five said,

> I think the leaders are just interested in keeping the city safe. There are high standards for homeowners and they keep things real nice. They have all of our best interests at heart. You have to hit people in their pocketbook if you want to make an impact and get their attention. They use money to get people's attention but it's all about safety and keeping this a nice place to live.

Similarly, another white woman between the ages of fifty-six and sixty-five stated,

> I've worked with companies that have contracts with the police so I have good experiences. I believe the policing is done for public safety or because someone is a suspicious person. I believe that it's for public safety. Police seem to serve the public good. None of them are very well-paid and the job comes with danger. I have to believe they want to make a difference. But you can have bad apples in every profession.

Unlike the many first-hand experiences shared by Black respondents above, this respondent's opinions were based on what she 'had to believe,' since that is what she most often hears. Another white respondent, a sixty-six-year-old man from

Calverton Park, expressed his assessment, which, like many others' assessments, used a cultural explanation. He said,

> I've never been targeted because I'm not black. I have a hard time believing it's about hatred. It's because they get more calls from those communities. I know police and they're trained to take control and sometimes force needs to be used. I was stopped with my son in his car and the officer gave me the opportunity to say why I was speeding. That impressed me. I ride a Harley and when cops approach me in my leather it's my role to put them at ease. Black culture does the opposite. They get belligerent immediately. If one guy has a knife and the other has a gun, you know who'll win.

There were of course exceptions, and some viewpoints of both Black and white residents did occasionally fall outside of the norm. For example, when I asked a white woman from Bel-Nor between the ages of forty-six and fifty-five if city leaders have motives beyond safety when policing residents, she stated,

> I doubt their motives are all that conscious or stated. They don't really think about it. I think the people setting policy don't understand the context of people's lives that are being affected. There's a disconnect. The people affected are basically invisible to them.

Not surprisingly, Black respondents were overwhelmingly in favor of municipal consolidation while white residents were almost entirely opposed.[108]

Tables **4.1-4.6** Selected questions and responses to interviews (N=105) in N. St. Louis County. The answers listed (or something similar) were offered by the respondents and were not multiple choice. Answers are listed in order of frequency. Total respondents: Black N=65, White N=20.

Q: Do you consider North St. Louis County to be Urban or Suburban?

Answer	Black (65)	White (20)
Urban	42	0
Suburban	17	15
Mixed	6	5

Q: Do you think African Americans have a different experience in North St. Louis County than in St. Louis City? If so, why?

Answer	Black	White
Yes: It is easier for Blacks in the City than in the County	59	1
Yes: It is easier for Blacks in the County than in the City	0	5
No: No difference	6	14

[108] Ibid.

Q: What do you like about living in North St. Louis County?

Total	Reason offered by respondent (not multiple choice)	Black	White
33	It's quiet	33	0
12	Nothing	12	0
8	My house	7	3
4	My neighbors	2	4
4	The police	0	6
4	Community events	1	4
4	It's safe	4	0
4	Everything	0	4
3	My neighborhood is gated	1	2
1	The parks	0	1

Q: What do you dislike about living in North St. Louis County?

Total	Reason offered by respondent (not multiple choice)	Black	White
28	The police	28	0
10	My neighbors	8	2
8	It's racist	8	0
6	Unrest	0	9
3	It's disconnected (no community)	2	1
3	There's no shopping, stores	5	0
3	Nothing	0	4
3	It's dark	1	2
3	There are no sidewalks	3	0
3	Things are changing	0	3
3	There's no transportation, need a car	3	0
2	Crime	1	1

Q: How do you define SUBURBAN space?

Total	Quality offered by respondent (not multiple choice)	Black	White
30	Quiet/Peaceful	29	1
16	Wealthier	16	0
13	White people live there	13	0
11	Clean	11	0
10	Not dense/single family homes	7	10
10	Residential	2	8
9	Close knit	7	2
9	Safe	8	1
9	Not diverse	6	3
8	Classier people live there, more upscale	8	0
8	Better schools	5	3
4	Need a car	4	0
4	More families	2	2
2	People own their house	2	0
2	More older people	2	0
2	Bigger yards	1	1

Q: How do you define URBAN space?

Total	Quality offered by respondent (not multiple choice)	Black	White
18	Busy/lots of activity	18	2
16	Black people live there	16	0
15	Poorer	15	0
14	Congested/Crowded	9	5
11	More crime	10	1
11	Diverse	7	3
10	Police don't harass people	10	0
10	Dirty	11	0
9	Apartment buildings	2	7
6	Good transportation	5	1
6	Less space	1	5
4	Commercial	2	2
4	More young people	4	0
3	People don't dress well, not upscale	3	0
2	Cheaper	2	0
2	Vacant	2	0

5. CONCLUSION

The link between white bodies and imaginations of suburban space, and the requalification of space when Black bodies arrive, is clear from both Black and white respondents. Black residents clearly state this distinction in racial terms. For Black residents, the benefits of suburban citizenship are elusive, and their primary experiences in North St. Louis County involve being policed at home, on the street, and in their cars. Based on their responses, Black residents perceive North St. Louis County as 'urban' due to their presence and feel they are viewed as disposable. Excluded from protections of the law, viewed as intruders, and blamed for the loss of 'the quiet suburbs,' Black residents are disproportionately 'included' in the law's discipline and punishment and held accountable for repayment, as discussed in Chapter Two. The processes of abstraction that recode this area as 'urban' in order to rationalized suffering, as Ruth Wilson Gilmore observes, "produce effects at the most intimately 'sovereign' scale" and geographically differentiate rights within jurisdictions.[109] The intelligibility of personhood is at stake in this process and reveals what Orlando Patterson calls the "inalienability problem."[110] Patterson points out that the slave subject could never fully move from property to personhood because the 'freed slave' could never attain the power that the master held. Freedom, for the former slave, was simply a reconfiguration of the relationship with the one with power. Similarly, in North St. Louis County, the ability to live in 'the suburbs,' which were initially out of reach for Black residents, did not provide the assumed benefits of suburban living. Rather, it reconfigured their relationship with those in power and, as it turns out, reconfigured the geographical imaginations of the physical space as well. Just as the slave could buy her freedom but never gain actual freedom due to the illegibility of personhood, Black families

[109] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography," *The Professional Geographer* 54, no. 1 (February 2002): 15–24:16.
[110] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 209.

that bought homes in suburban St. Louis County have not accessed 'suburban living' because they are not recognized as people with the same degree of rights.

North St. Louis County remains solidly suburban, however, in the perception of residents who claim suburban identity and reap the benefits associated with suburban space. This reinforces Sara Ahmed's claim that domestic and public space provide proximities from which white bodies can extend their reach, or not.[111] White residents can decide when to claim this area as suburban and expect certain benefits, but when white bodies disappear, so do the benefits. Although white respondents never mentioned race, they tended to code this area as suburban until they moved, at which point the area became urban in their absence. In contrast to Black respondents, white respondents used many different ways to signify race without ever naming it. This careful use of language illustrates how color-blind racism and 'post-racial' discourse are practiced. It also testifies to the power of liberal humanism to narrate and obscure racialized conditions.[112]

While most Black respondents said North St. Louis County is urban, they also stated that it was easier for Black people to live in St. Louis City, which they also identified as urban. This reveals that recodifying North St. Louis County as 'urban' has not made it easier for Black residents to live there. It also suggests that the recodification of historically white suburban space produces disruptions that lead to specific phenomena and experiences for Black residents that do not occur in spaces that are historically associated with Black people, since Black respondents clearly state that it is easier to live in St. Louis City. While Black 'urban' space carries with it an expectation of suffering (as discussed above), so-called urban space in general has also been shown to have a higher threshold of tolerance for diversity and difference,[113] and, as many respondents described it, Black people are expected to live there. But the intersection of 'urban people' and 'suburban' space creates a contradictory set of expectations, as well as varying degrees and experiences of suburban citizenship. The transformation of North St. Louis County, or at least parts of it, from suburban to urban space—in the discursive spaces of public debate and in the minds of the residents themselves—, has meant a lowering of expectations for Black residents living under draconian practices, such as debtor's prisons, which come to be viewed as normal. As a middle-aged Black man from Pine Lawn shared,

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[111] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 112.

[112] The post-racial critique emerged in the past thirty years in response to neoliberal practices and policies that seek to mask, devalue, or dismiss the existence of systemic racism and its effects. See, for example, scholars that take on questions of color-blind racism: Michael Brown et al., *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society* (Berkeley: University of CA Press, 2003); Howard Winant, *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); David Theo Goldberg, *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell Press, 2009); Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and Racial Inequality in Contemporary America*, Third Edition (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Press, 2010); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012).

[113] See for example, E. Terrence Jones, "The Municipal Market in the St. Louis Region: 1950–2000," in *St. Louis Metromorphosis: Past Trends and Future Directions,* ed. Brady Baybeck and E. Terrence Jones (St. Louis: University of Missouri Press, 2004).

> It was worse until the Mike Brown incident and then it became know what was happening to people. It shouldn't have been happening in the first place—so much that people got used to it. But they did get used to it.

This is an important observation given that several recent reports, such as the one published by the Manhattan Institute in 2012, have declared spatial segregation as essentially over.[114] While demographic statistics may suggest that residents of color in the United States are not categorically bound to some areas and excluded from others, North St. Louis County shows that space is not necessarily experienced or inhabited in the same way by all people and groups. Based on the metrics used by many demographers, North St. Louis County could be viewed as a major victory for African Americans given that they were initially banned from this area and now represent the vast majority of residents. Given the reality of experience evidenced above, North St. Louis County could also be viewed as an example of bait-and-switch policy in which urban residents claim benefits in the suburbs only to find that they are not only 'urban' once again, but also held financially responsible for the loses they have incurred.

Constant harassment, exploitation, fear, anxiety, and frustration, were experiences shared over and over in the stories of Black residents living in North St. Louis County. The discursive field that creates the physical environment where millions of dollars are collected annually through the policing of blackness relies on the configuration of Black bodies as disposable, on one hand, yet Black bodies are absolutely necessary to the flows of capital and the preservation of property based on a political economy of risk. Because suffering is not only tolerated but expected in the pornotopology of North St. Louis County, the recodification of space from suburban to urban also means that not only do Black residents expect that they will be treated badly, people outside of this area can ignore practices that would not be tolerated in other locations. In this way, physical and discursive spaces intersect to produce a cultural politics that rationalizes both "fast" and "slow" state violence.[115] In short, the commodification of suffering relies on the production of a disposable population from which resources can be extracted, and those that exact violence on Black bodies can do so with impunity. In North St. Louis County, discursive spatial regimes control, select, organize, and redistribute power relations and material outcomes based on the risk historically attached to the Black body. However, there are generative discursive and physical sites of struggle and liberation that also work within the long history of Black political resistance to produce something in excess of containment, regulation, and punishment. These sites of struggle and freedom are discussed in Chapter Five.

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[114] Edward Glaeser and Jacob Vigdor, "The End of the Segregated Century: Racial Separation in America's Neighborhoods, 1890-2010," *Manhattan Institute Civic Report*, n. 66, January (2012).

[115] Rob Nixon conceptualizes slow violence as the processes of structural racisms and the threats that create vulnerable communities, in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE
THE QUEERING OF PROTEST IN FERGUSON, MISSOURI

> In this here place, we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. . . . O my people, out yonder, hear me, they do not love your neck unnoosed and straight.
>
> —Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

On August 9, 2014, the spectacle of violence visited on the body of Michael Brown, which lay in the street for four and a half hours while blood flowed from his head "like a river," was a reminder of the extreme violence residents of North St. Louis County navigate every day. On this day, however, the shots that tore through Brown's flesh and took his life released another flow and another flesh into the street. Unlike the victimized body of Brown, this flesh insisted on the reconfiguration of how blackness is understood, demanded the right to live without fear, and revealed the radical work of Black women in the advancement of liberatory projects.

1. A DAY IN AUGUST

In the late morning just before noon on August 9, 2014, eighteen-year-old Michael Brown, Jr. walked with a friend down Canfield Drive in a quiet residential area of Ferguson, Missouri.[1] The stretch of Canfield Drive that Brown and his friend Dorian Johnson were walking on that morning is flanked on either side by the Canfield Green Apartment Complex. Made up of seventeen three-story buildings dotted across thirty-seven acres of green space, Canfield Green sits with several other similar apartment complexes built in the 1970s and 1980s on either side of Maline Creek. The narrow tract of land, which appears to be grafted onto the more contiguous boundary of the city, was added when Ferguson attempted to annex the Fortune 500 company Emerson Electric. The surrounding areas were allegedly included to make the annexation of Emerson "appear more benign."[2] After ten years of court battles in which Emerson Electric fought the annexation, the boundary was formally adjusted in 1965.[3] The physical landscape, density, and racial and socioeconomic makeup of

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[1] Originally founded in the 1850s as a small town outside of St. Louis, Ferguson was later developed and expanded as a commuter suburb for white working- and middle-class families moving out of St. Louis City. It is now one of the larger municipalities in the northernmost part of St. Louis County, known locally as 'North County,' described in Chapter Two. Ferguson has maintained a higher percentage of white residents relative to other cities in North County over the past forty years, something that many white residents proudly state. In spite of the demographic appearance of greater diversity, the neighborhoods of Ferguson tend to be highly segregated between white and Black residents.

[2] This was one of the arguments made by Emerson Electric and North Hills Home Sites in the case brought against Ferguson and the City of Normandy, which claimed that the annexation of this area by both cities was unlawful. A description of the case can be found at http://www.allcourtdata.com/law/case/emerson-electric-mrg-co-v-city-of-ferguson/cw7C9mbE.

[3] The geography, politics, and identity of Ferguson are directly shaped by race. The city's one hundred and fifty-year history with the neighboring city of Kinloch, which was incorporated in 1890 and is the oldest historically Black suburb west of the Mississippi River, influenced the physical, social, and economic landscapes of Ferguson from its very beginning. These factors include street patterns designed to avoid physical and visual connections to Kinloch; physical barriers such as walls, landscaping, and railroad tracks located to cut off Kinloch residents from access to shopping and other amenities in Ferguson; the formation of the Ferguson School District for the purpose of separating white children in Ferguson from Black children in Kinloch and to

Ward Three, where Canfield Drive is located, contrasts with both the tree-lined neighborhoods of single-family homes and the notable presence of white families in Ward One and the more integrated fabric of Ward Two. In fact, many people in the region, including residents of Ferguson, stated they did not know Canfield Drive was located within the municipality of Ferguson until events brought focus to the area.[4] This small tract is also the only area within the Ferguson boundaries that is not part of the Ferguson-Florissant school district.

1.1 "Like a demon"

Michael Brown, Jr. had just graduated from Normandy High School, to which he had been bused, when he and Dorian Johnson were walking down Canfield Drive to the home of Brown's grandmother in the nearby Northwinds apartment complex. At approximately noon they were approached by police officer Darren Wilson, who was driving a marked police SUV. Wilson had just left the home of a nearby resident with a 911 emergency when he encountered Brown and Johnson.

> Darren Wilson
> I see them walking down the middle of the street. And first thing that struck me was they're walking in the middle of the street. . . . And the next thing I noticed was the size of the individuals because either the first one was really small or the second one was really big.[5]

Wilson rolled down his window as he drove by the two and told them to get out of the street or be ticketed for a pedestrian infraction that was frequently cited by the Ferguson police department, described as 'Manner of Walking.'[6] The two were visibly irritated and responded that they had almost reached their destination and would soon be getting to the other side of the street. By all accounts, Wilson began to drive away but then stopped abruptly and quickly backed up his vehicle to where Brown and Johnson were walking. Wilson testified later that he called for backup prior to reversing because he had "a sense about the situation." Brown approached the SUV as Wilson stopped next to them and is said to have closed Wilson's door or was in the way as the officer tried to open it. It is unclear from accounts which individual initiated physical contact first; however, Wilson claims to have grabbed Brown's arm as he reached through the window. Johnson stated that Wilson reached out of his window and grabbed Brown.

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prevent the election of Black school board members; political districting designed to separate white and Black voting blocs; and a history of outspoken 'white pride' among residents regarding sustained homogeneity in the city.

[4] Transcripts of testimonies given after August 9 also show that St. Louis County officials refer to people leaving Canfield Drive as "driving back to Ferguson," indicating that county officials do not perceive the Canfield Apartments to be part of Ferguson.

[5] *State of Missouri v. Darren Wilson*, Grand Jury Transcript, v. 5, September 16, 2014, p. 207. https://www.scribd.com/doc/248128351/Darren-Wilson-Testimony#fullscreen&from_embed

[6] This was the most common non-moving violation residents of North St. Louis County cited when interviewed (N=126).

Darren Wilson

> And when I grabbed him, the only way I can describe it is I felt like a five-year-old holding onto Hulk Hogan. . . . Hulk Hogan, that's just how big he felt and how small I felt just from grasping his arm.[7]

All accounts agree that Wilson's gun went off while Brown was near the vehicle and Brown ran several steps away and then turned with his hands up.

Darren Wilson

> When it went off, it shot through my door panel and my window was down and glass flew out of my door panel. I think that kind of startled him and me at the same time. . . .[8]

> He looked up at me and had the most intense aggressive face. The only way I can describe it, it looks like a demon. . . . He comes back towards me again with his hands up. I tried to pull the trigger again, nothing happened. . . . When I pulled the trigger again, it goes off. . . .[9]

Wilson was asked by a juror at this point how many times the gun went off in the car, to which he replied,

> It went off twice in the car. Pull, click, click, went off, click, went off. . . . When I looked up after that, I see him start to run and I see a cloud of dust behind him. I then get out of my car.[10]

What happened in the next few seconds remains disputed by Wilson, Johnson, and other witnesses but ended with Brown, who was unarmed, dead, and face down on the center line of Canfield Drive with at least six bullet wounds, including two to the head. Witnesses, including Wilson, stated that less than a minute elapsed between the initial encounter and Brown's death. According to autopsies performed by both the state and the family, the first four shots that hit Brown were thought to be non-life threatening. The last bullets entered the top of his skull indicating that he was leaning or falling forward at the time he was fatally shot. Several witnesses stated Brown was falling to his knees because he had already been shot multiple times when the last shots entered the top of his head from ten to fifteen feet away. Wilson claimed that Brown was empowered by being shot four times and had his head down because he was about to "run right through[him]":

Darren Wilson

> I remember looking at my sights and firing, all I see is his head and that's what I shot. I don't know how many, I know at least once because I saw the last one go into him. And then when it went into him, the demeanor on his face went blank, the aggression was gone, I mean, I knew he stopped, the

[7] *State of Missouri v. Darren Wilson*, Grand Jury Transcript, v. 5, September 16, 2014, p. 212.
[8] *MO v. Wilson*, Grand Jury Transcript, 224.
[9] Ibid., 224–225.
[10] Ibid., 226.

threat was stopped. . . . After that is when I got back on the radio and I said, "send me a supervisor and every car you have."[11]

According to Wilson, backup arrived soon after Brown fell to the ground, but he never called for medical assistance. The sergeant told Wilson to go sit in his car, which he refused to do because he feared the crowd that was forming. The sergeant gave Wilson the keys to a patrol car and Wilson drove to the station alone. The sergeant's testimony claims that when he arrived, Wilson was in his own car, and he told Wilson to take his (the sergeant's) car and drive back to the station. The sergeant also stated that Wilson had specifically told him that he was unaware that a burglary had taken place prior to shooting Brown although in his testimony to the grand jury, Wilson claims that the sole reason he continued to engage Brown and Johnson was because they fit the description of the burglary suspects, and Brown was carrying Cigarillos.[12]

Darren Wilson

I remember him saying, Darren, sit in the car. I said, "Sarge, I can't be singled out. It is already getting hostile, I can't be singled out in the car. . . .[13]
I hear yelling, I hear screaming, as I'm walking back to my car. . . . It's just not a very well-liked community. . . .[14]
That's not an area where you can take anything lightly.[15]

'Police-involved shootings' are not uncommon occurrences in American cities, with at least 1,146 reported in 2015.[16] They are also not outside of the norm in the St. Louis region or in St. Louis County, where Wilson killed Brown.[17] For example, one month prior to Brown's death, a white police officer shot and killed Christopher Jones, another unarmed Black man, less than two miles south of Ferguson in the city of Pine Lawn. Jones was pulled over for speeding in a routine traffic stop (routine in the sense that Pine Lawn issued an average of 1,500 traffic tickets every month in 2014). He fled on foot, apparently due to outstanding warrants, and the officer gave chase, shooting Jones in the back of the arm. The bullet entered his ribcage and pierced his heart, killing him instantly.[18]

Details of this shooting were similar to those of Michael Brown's death. The Pine Lawn police department immediately publicized prior alleged crimes to justify Jones's death, although the officer initially stated he was only aware of the infraction of speeding at

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[11] Ibid., 229–230.
[12] The accounts in this section were based on analysis of transcripts from the grand jury investigation that ended in the non-indictment of Darren Wilson as well as interviews of witnesses given to the media in the days following the shooting.
[13] *Mo v. Wilson*, Grand Jury Transcript, 236.
[14] *Mo v. Wilson,* Grand Jury Transcript, 237–38.
[15] Ibid., 239.
[16] http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/the-counted-police-killings-us-database.
[17] A review of news articles between 2010 and 2014 reports multiple police-involved shootings in the St. Louis region, although prior to 2014 there was no central data base in the U.S. that independently collected statistics for police-involved shootings.
[18] As reported to the Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator by the municipal court of Pine Lawn for 2014. See Table 93, https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=83260.

the time he stopped Jones. Similarly, the Ferguson police chief released a grainy video of Michael Brown allegedly stealing a pack of Cigarillos from a nearby convenience store, suggesting a correlation between the theft and the stop. Wilson, however, changed his statements and testimony, sometimes indicating he was aware a shoplifting had taken place when he encountered Brown, while other times stating he did not know about it. Released on the same day Darren Wilson's name was publicly announced, many believed the video was intended to criminalize Brown, distract the media, discourage public empathy, and quell the ongoing protests that had erupted following the shooting.[19] As with Brown, who was said to be surrendering at the time Wilson fired the lethal shot, reasons for the use of deadly force were also in question in Jones's death, since it appeared Jones was running away and, like Darren Wilson, the officer that shot Jones emphasized the size of the individual as the primary reason for fear and the use of deadly force.[20]

In fact, both events follow a familiar pattern: An unarmed person of color died at the hands of a white police officer; details of the shooting were contradictory and highly contested; public opinion fell along racial lines; the police officer changed his story at least once; the victim's character was immediately called into question by police; the police officer stated that the victim's size was threatening; representations of the area in which the victim lived were attached to pathologies associated with blackness and urban space; and the police officer was not charged with wrongdoing.

1.2 Producing bare life

In the aftermath of Brown's death, the rhetoric that emerged both in the media and in Wilson's own testimony focused largely on Brown's character and actions prior to his death and on Wilson's perception of Brown as a threat due to his size and his 'demonic demeanor,' as interpreted by Wilson. These discussions regarding whether or not Brown was deserving of death, whether Wilson acted rationally, and whether Wilson was statistically justified in having biases against large young Black males all exemplify the tools of a biopolitics that has power over life and death.[21] These tools include categorizations of what is 'human,' degrees of sovereignty, and states of exception.[22] The logics at work in the way Brown's death was publicly discussed accept and normalize the premise that some populations could die whereas others should be made to live.[23] What was in question in public discourse following the shooting was not why residents of North St. Louis County believe that anything, including death, could happen to them on any day,

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[19] See, for example, Adam Serwer, "Why did Ferguson police release the convenience store video?," *MSNBC News*, August 15, 2014; Greg Botelho and Don Lemon, "Ferguson police chief: Officer did not stop Brown as robbery suspect," *CNN News*, August 15, 2014; Erin McClam, "Chief Defends Release of Robbery Surveillance Video," *NBC News*, August 15, 2014.

[20] The Associated Press, "No Charges Filed in Fatal Pine Lawn Police Shooting," *The Washington Times*, November 11, 2014.

[21] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, eds. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey, Reprint edition (New York: Picador, 2003); *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell, Reprint edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[22] See, for example, Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, First edition (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[23] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 247.

but rather which category Brown and Wilson should be assigned—the one in which death is possible at any time or the one that must be made to live. The rhetorical and literal criminalization of Brown after the fact in order to rationalize his death and subsequent actions taken by authorities mirrors the daily criminalization of Black residents in North St. Louis County as discussed in Chapters Three and Four. This cultural politics of racial differentiation, which is rooted in historical tropes of pathological deviance and the risk associated with Black bodies, works in tandem with a politics of respectability and is used by local leaders to naturalize an environment where any Black body can be stopped at any time and face fines, jail time, or the very real fear of many residents, which is exemplified in the outcome of an everyday stop for 'manner of walking'—death.

The events of Michael Brown's death mirror the stories of the relentless hyper-policing of Black residents of North St. Louis County and the justifications used by local officials (described in Chapters Three and Four). The everyday experiences of Black individuals in North St. Louis County largely consist of navigating geographies where their every action and sheer physical presence are subject to discipline for the purpose of funding municipal governments and managing political economies of risk that rely on perpetual states of exception at the local level.[24] Within these systems residents themselves pay for the very tools that deny them full rights of personhood and citizenship; the residents are thereby placed under the constant threat of state violence whose purpose is to extract resources based on the false pretense that Black residents "refuse to learn how to act in the suburbs."[25] While there are many examples of how residents push back against these practices, the hopelessness over the double bind many residents referred to in interviews over the past ten years can be viewed in relationship to the concept of 'bare life'—when one is technically alive but unable to pursue a flourishing life.[26]

North St. Louis County illustrates how bare life is produced across multiple scales of governance and governmentality—especially at the local level and within routine everyday practices.[27] Here, both macro and micro praxes work within larger histories and scales of racialized violence, including trans-Atlantic slavery and colonial/imperial expansion, which rely on the management and profitability of marginalized groups. In keeping with these histories, Black bodies are treated as less-than-human, money-generating reservoirs that legitimize and fund the structures of oppression—in this case, municipal entities that fail to provide basic public services except for ever-expanding police forces. As many have argued,

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[24] I am using the 'state of exception' to represent the state's power to suspend the rule of law. See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[25] Based on interviews with municipal leaders between 2005 and 2015. Over the course of ten years, I carried out interviews with municipal leaders in North St. Louis County focused on formal and informal policing practices in their communities.

[26] Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.

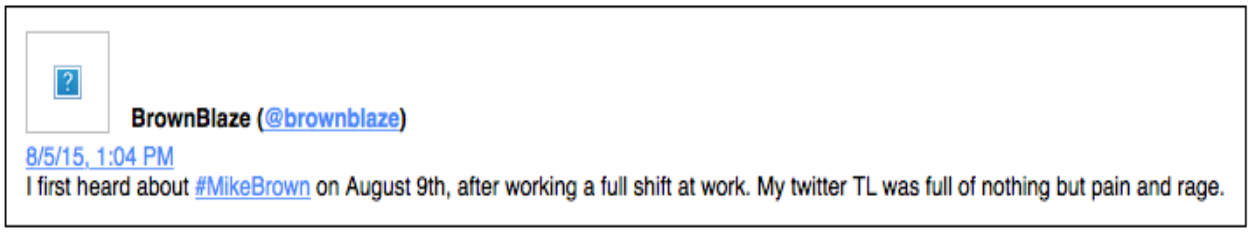
[27] Whereas governance denotes direct sovereign power, Michel Foucault defines governmentality as 'the conduct of conduct.' He states, "by 'governmentality' I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument." Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78,* trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2007), 108.

no system of domination is totalizing, and resistance operates in contradistinction to hegemonic forces.[28] Nevertheless, the difficulty in breaking the cycle by which residents are blamed and made to pay for circumstances beyond their control is a practical conceptualization of bare life and its production.

1.3 "After a few days, we never went home."

It was Saturday and many residents of Canfield Green Apartments were home with their windows open as morning turned to afternoon. Children played outside and some people were on their porches when they heard shots fired. People quickly came out into the street and the green spaces close to where Brown's body fell. As people tried to make sense of what had happened, police officers arriving at the scene were cordoning off the area. Several witnesses of the shooting told people congregating that Brown had his hands above his head at the time he was shot.[29]

Various accounts of what had happened circulated quickly through the crowd as well as on social media, and #Ferguson and #MikeBrown began trending on Twitter.



For over an hour, Brown remained uncovered with an increasing trail of blood moving down the street as his body bled out.

[28] See, for example, Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); *Black Movements in America* (New York: Routledge, 1997); *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning: Blacks and the Regimes of Race in American Theater & Film before World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

[29] Based on interviews with three Canfield Green Apartment residents and two people that arrived after hearing about the shooting (Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents).

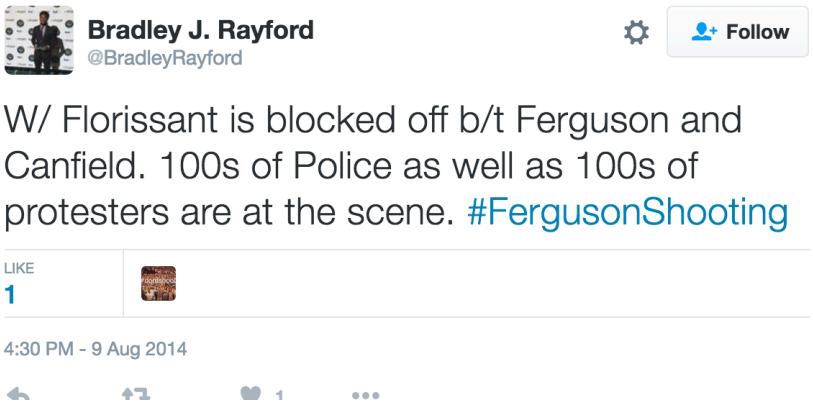
The image was captured and uploaded to social media by countless cellphones. As time went on, more people began arriving from across the St. Louis region, as did law enforcement officials. The Ferguson and St. Louis County police departments struggled to secure the area, and many people later reported that it was unclear who was in charge. Bystanders reported that animosity between the police and the crowd was high and escalated as officials left the body exposed and threatened to arrest anyone asking for information.

> Marlene
>
> There was a lot of yelling going on between both sides. People wanted to know why this boy was lying in the street and the police acted like we had no right to be in our own front yard. Still, they wanted us to see it. There's hundreds of kids live in that area. Do you know how traumatic that was? He was out there the whole afternoon. This was a lynching, for real.

The arrival of Brown's father and later his mother added to the level of emotion and frustration in the crowd, and many people were shocked by what they described as a lack of empathy toward Brown's mother by police officers at the scene as she begged to be near her son. Some residents stated, "they treated her like a criminal."[30] People were

[30] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

increasingly agitated by the length of time Brown's body remained on the hot pavement, where one older man stated, "you could've fried an egg if you'd wanted."[31] It turned out to be four and half hours that Brown's body stayed on the pavement.



Cheyenne
We heard it on the radio that somebody was killed just down the street. So I guess that mother's instinct in me, I went down there and I was not prepared for what I saw. And, you know, I was not prepared for people's reactions either. Children crying, people just asking, "Why this boy have to die?" And all that. Seeing the body lay there for all those hours. So that was a big deal, right then. And it just sparked something in me that I knew I had to come back. I didn't know what I was coming back for but I knew had to keep coming. I kept coming back each night. After a few days, we never went home.

Reverend Sekou
It was right before school started and there was a bouncy castle across the street from where he was lying. So there were 5-year-olds saying, "Mike's laying in the street!" They brought out the police dogs before they brought out an ambulance. They tried to put his body in the trunk of a car. The community was like, "You put that body in the trunk of a car and ain't nobody leaving here alive." So they put his body in an SUV. That was undignified.[32]

Brown's family was not allowed to accompany his body when it was moved at around 4:30 that afternoon. Left behind, his mother, Lezley McSpadden, dropped rose petals over the place where her son had died (soon driven over by patrol cars) after police tape was removed.

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[31] Ibid.
[32] As quoted in an interview with Sarah Van Gelder and published in "Reverend Sekou on Today's Civil Rights Leaders: I take my orders from 23-year-old queer women," *Yes! Magazine*, July 22, 2015, http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/black-lives-matter-s-favorite-minister-reverend-sekou-young-queer.

Figure **5.1**. Michael Brown's mother, Lezley McSpadden, drops rose petals at the site where he died after the body was removed (Associated Press).

The crowd soon claimed the street again and constructed an improvised memorial of flowers and stuffed animals over Brown's blood as an outpouring of grief and as a refusal to allow authorities to erase what had happened in that space. According to witnesses, police officers allowed their dogs to urinate on the stuffed animals and attempted to dismantle the memorial that evening.[33] The memorial—as a site of memory, denigration, and resistance—would become a contentious symbol between residents and the city of Ferguson as officials repeatedly ordered the police to take down the memorial only to have residents rebuild it every time. The constant contestation of the memorial's right 'to be in the street' and the disregard for what it represented was a haunting reminder of how and why Michael Brown died and the rights of residents to occupy the street in their everyday life or in legal acts of protest. It was also a reminder of how long histories of planning policy determined the limits of public space and circumscribe the landscape in ways that cordoned off entire groups of people.

The ephemeral space of the memorial, however, became a worldwide symbol of how life and love claim both sacred and profane spaces that transcend spatial policy. While a 'compromise' was eventually reached that placed a permanent plaque in the street and removed physical objects, the space in the street between two buildings and under a tree where Michael Brown died was transformed through the vigilance of remembering—a refusal to forget—what happened in that space. The rituals and remembrances that occur in and through this space invoke the traumas, rituals, and memories of generations past, linking Black subjects across time and space through the meaning attached to a site and a landscape—what Nadia Ellis has described as a 'territory of the soul.'[34] In this way, the haunting of space connects diaspora subjects in both beautiful and horrific terms, and forgetting is outside of the realm of possibility. As Avery Gordon observes, haunting is

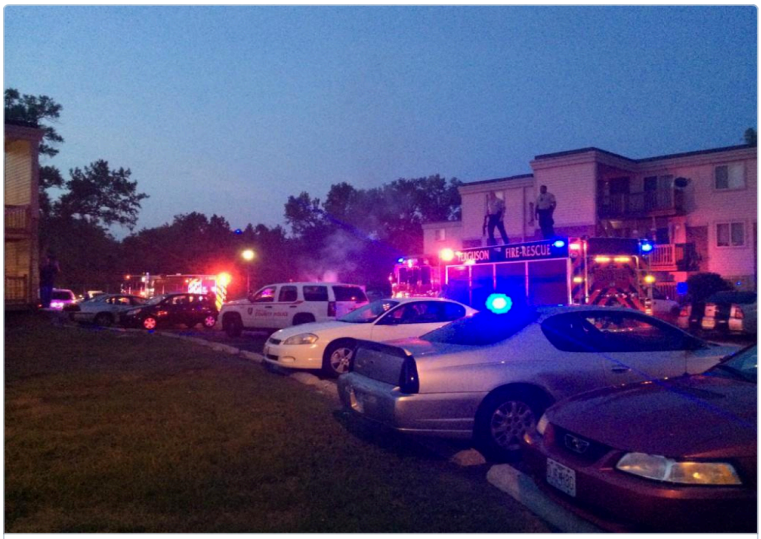
[33] Key informant interviews—Ferguson residents.
[34] Nadia Ellis, *Territories of the Soul: Queered Belonging in the Black Diaspora* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

more than just a connection to the past. Gordon explains, "haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life, especially when they are supposed to be over and done with."[35] According to Ferguson authorities, racist practices did not lead to Michael Brown's death; however, the memorial that continued to reappear on Canfield Drive, and the memory of his punctured body, haunted these claims like a specter. "These specters appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer contained or repressed or blocked from view."[36] It was clear within hours of Michael Brown's death that the specter of denigrated Black flesh would haunt this region and expose those things that had been obscured for many years, but would not remain concealed any longer. Haunting moves beyond trauma and into the realm of the something-to-be-done.[37]

Figure **5.2**. The Michael Brown Jr. memorial on November 28, 2014 (source: Scott Olson/ Getty Images).[38]

The police left Canfield Drive around 10:00 p.m. on the night of August 9, and the crowd eventually dispersed. The next evening, a group estimated at around one hundred attended a hastily organized candlelight vigil, including many who had witnessed Brown in the street the day before.

[35] Avery Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," *Borderlands* 10, no. 1 (2011): 2.
[36] Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," 2.
[37] Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," 3.
[38] This photo appeared in a story by Michael Pearson, "Police Spokesman Facing Discipline After Calling Brown Memorial 'Pile of Trash,'" CNN, December 28, 2014.



Antonio French
@AntonioFrench

Follow

People are gathering at the site where #Ferguson police killed 17-year-old #MikeBrown. Police have swarmed the area.

6:25 PM - 9 Aug 2014

430 76

St. Louis American (@StLouisAmerican)

8/10/14, 9:03 AM

A peace vigil is being planned for later on today at the Canfield Apartment complex. Trying to verify time. #Ferguson #MikeBrown

As night fell, a smaller group moved from the site of the shooting to nearby West Florissant Road, a commercial thoroughfare a few blocks away. Protesters blocked traffic, chanting, "Hands up, don't shoot," and isolated acts of looting by a few people took place, although the event was reported as "rioting in St. Louis suburbs."[39] The Ferguson and St. Louis County police departments responded by issuing a curfew and dawning riot gear. Numerous tanks appeared in the street and the area was described as a war zone. Many people, including reporters, were arrested on the charge of unlawful assembly if they stopped moving. Continued protests, arrests, and militarized police responses, which included repeated use of tear gas and the firing of rubber bullets into the crowd, escalated over the following days.

[39] See, for example, David Li, "St. Louis Suburbs Erupt in Rioting after Cop Kills Unarmed Man," *The New York Post*, August 11, 2014.

Figure **5.3.** Police in riot gear on August 15, 2014 (source: AP Photo/ Jeff Roberson).

Hoping to deescalate tensions between Ferguson police and protesters, Governor Jay Nixon ordered the highway patrol to take over police actions on August 14. Tensions continued to escalate as even more people came out to protest in both Ferguson and Clayton, the county seat. There was particular animosity aimed at St. Louis County prosecutor Bob McCulloch, who refused to bring charges against Wilson.

'Sixela Yoccm'

> The whole Mike Brown incident was straight out of a horror movie. When I saw the still photos on Facebook of blood leaking out of his head like that, two days later I was in the street. I didn't go straight to Ferguson though. I went to Clayton where they had protests going on trying to get Bob McCulloch to do something. From that point on, I was ignited.

Tensions were also heightened by the disparaging remarks McCulloch and other officials, including the mayor of Ferguson, were making about the protesters, whom they referred to as thugs and rioters. Police appeared to be intentionally antagonizing and mocking the protesters by covering up their nameplates and wearing I AM DARREN WILSON wristbands.

Mr. Moff

> I'm yellin' directly at the police officers because they treat us like criminals and call us thugs for just being here. . . . A Black kid is never allowed to have a bad day but a cop can always be a racist.

As national media circulated images of clashes between protesters and riot police against a backdrop of tear gas and boarded-up buildings, Nixon ordered the National Guard to Ferguson on August 18. That night seventy-eight people were arrested in Ferguson, most of them for failure to disperse. Meanwhile, the mayor of Ferguson insisted there were no racial tensions in Ferguson.

Ferguson Mayor James Knowles on August 19, 2014

> There is no racial divide in the city of Ferguson—that is the perspective of all residents in our city—absolutely…. This community is absolutely supportive of what we've been doing and what we're doing moving forward…. Black or white, we're all middle-class citizens who believe in the same thing. [In spite of Knowles's claims that all Ferguson residents are middle class, in 2013 thirty-one percent of people in Ferguson were living under the national poverty level. Virtually all of those living in poverty were Black.][40]

1.4 "Like an animal"

The people I spoke with who witnessed Brown in the street recalled specific ways in which the image of his body conveyed their own vulnerability—as people out of place. Almost all of them expressed feelings of being spoken to directly through the image of Brown's body and flesh: "This could be you," for example. "That will be you if you get out of line," a young Black man living in Canfield Green Apartments remembered feeling. Most people I talked to spoke about a haunting they could not get out of their mind that was heightened by the sight, perceived smell, and silence of Brown's flesh literally expanding in the heat for hours on the hot blacktop.[41] Like the haunting of the space in which Brown

[40] Mayor James Knowles in an interview on August 18, 2014, with Tamron Hall, host of MSNBC NewsNation, http://www.msnbc.com/newsnation/watch/ferguson-mayor--theres-no-racial-divide-here-319506499946.
[41] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

died, the haunting of Brown's heaped flesh in the street was a visible reminder of the violence many people experienced long before his body lay in the street.

> William
>
> I wake up thinking about him just lyin' there. He was like that dog that been hit that you gotta walk by to get to where you going. It was over a hundred fucking degrees out there and you knew his body was decomposing fast right before your eyes but they just like left him there. They didn't even cover him up for like over an hour.

Many witnesses repeated in multiple ways that Brown had been treated "like an animal" with little recognition or respect for his humanity. The words human and humanity were used by most of the people who shared their experience.

> Chuck
>
> Darren Wilson referred to Mike Brown as everything but a human being. He was a demon. He was the Hulk. He was a monster. And then he said "I would do it again." He is a proud killer. At the very least when asked that question he could have said, "I wish it had gone down differently."

"Roadkill" was another metaphor that people used consistently—across age, gender, and race—to drive home their realization that Brown's body was no more important than "a dog lying in the gutter."[42]

> Ms. Jones
>
> They pick up raccoons that been hit by cars on West Florissant faster than they got that boy off the street. He was somebody's baby. His mama was coming unglued seein' him lying there behind the tape and they was just yelling at her to manage the crowd like it was her fault.

In addition to the immediate experience of Brown's body in the street that day, people also spoke about how such images worked in tandem with other experiences that demonstrate their less-than-human status in Ferguson and other communities in North St. Louis County.[43] Several people articulated a disturbing irony they had long felt but only actually seen confirmed on that day: their experience of being targeted, harassed, and regarded as less-than-human in contrast to the inhumanity they saw practiced by those in charge. "I just finally woke up when I saw that," said one young woman I met standing in front of the Ferguson police department. She went on, "When people talk about police brutality, you think about young Black men gettin' killed like Mike Brown. But I realized this is what I live every day."[44]

> Kiera (pseudonym)
>
> So before the Mike Brown thing happened, I was living in North County for like eight months. And in that time I got pulled over eight times. Never once did I walk away with a ticket. It was always, "Oh, your license plate is dirty," or something stupid they gave for pulling me over. You know, they keep

[42] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

killing people that they didn't even need to encounter in the first place. Every time I wonder if I'm going to walk away alive. . . . We talk about the people who are dead a lot. But we don't talk about the people who are alive and living this every day because they don't value our lives.

The anger and rage exhibited by Ferguson protesters in response to the events of August 9 and the purposeful inaction by officials that followed was an illustration that, "whatever the name used, whatever the latest expression, decolonization is always a violent event."[45] It was a reminder that those who are oppressed have the capacity to resist and to claim a different future and, as such, it instilled fear in those who had maintained a certain order in the area for many years. The affect of anger was lumped together with isolated instances of looting and the destruction of private property along West Florissant Avenue although, as protesters pointed out, "protesters weren't looting and looters weren't protesting."[46] On the multitude of evenings that damage to property did not accompany protest, police still dispersed crowds with tear gas and rubber bullets, yet protesters were the ones represented as violent by officials, the media, and even Black spokespeople. The affective expression of anger and frustration apparently could not coexist with the idea of peaceful protest in the minds of many. The protesters' actions of defiance and vocal expressions of anger were linked to the death of Brown, and they were wholly blamed for the unrest in the streets, which was cited as an example of what is wrong with the country.

Reverend Al Sharpton

Can you imagine [Michael Brown's parents] are heartbroken? Their son taken, discarded and marginalized. And they have to stop mourning to get you to control your anger, like you're more angry than they are? . . . And now in the 21st century, we get to where we got some positions of power. And you decide it ain't black no more to be successful. Now you want to be a nigger and call your woman a ho. You've lost where you've come from. We've got to clean up our community so we can clean up the United States of America.[47]

Mary (pseudonym)

And that's been like the response of a lot of people who don't like the protests. They say this isn't peaceful because there are drums, and there's shouting, and things are getting interrupted. Because to them peaceful means quiet, and silence, while other people endure violence. It's like yeah, here's the thing, "I'm not choking you right now. I'm not physically hurting you. So this is peaceful."

1.5 Beyond bare life

The death of Michael Brown and the treatment of his body afterward illustrate the concept of the *homo sacer*—one who cannot be ritually offered but whom one can kill without incurring the penalty of murder—which is a critical component of Agamben's

[45] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 1.
[46] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.
[47] Transcript of Al Sharpton's eulogy at the funeral for Michael Brown, Jr., August 25, 2014. http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2014/08/al-sharpton-eulogy-michael-brown-funeral.html.

theory of bare life and the production of disposable populations.[48] The various ways in which Brown's death was attributed to his character and the failure to bring any charges against Darren Wilson illustrate the distinctions between the one that *should live* (making live) versus the one that *could die* (letting die), which are key concepts in Michel Foucault's theorization of biopower, from which Agamben borrows.[49] The Department of Justice report on the Ferguson administration and police department after Brown's death reads as a story of how life and death, the worthy and the unworthy, were, and are, managed as distinct populations. The laws and ordinances that establish the grounds by which to police (sovereign power) combine with the everyday practices imposed to discipline bodies (disciplinary power) and the production and management of differing populations based on protected and disposable groups (biopower). These factors together make North St. Louis County a particularly useful example of how Foucault's analytics of power work at the most local of levels, including the relationship between these three forms of power—sovereign, disciplinary, and bio.

The way in which many residents of North St. Louis County view Brown's death—as a phenomenological demonstration of state power over determinations of life and death through violence and terror—illustrates Achille Mbembe's extension of the biopolitical to that which he calls necropolitics, or *the politics of death*.[50] As residents reiterated over and over, Brown's death was not an exceptional event even if 'police-involved shootings' of unarmed citizens do not occur every day. Rather, the treatment of Brown represented the lived experience of a perpetual state of exception used to normalize violence, terror, and the possibility of death that residents live with on a daily basis. Certainly, many residents of Ferguson I spoke with viewed politics in North St. Louis County as a form of war, which is essential to Mbembe's conceptualization of the politics of death. As Brown's body lay in the street that day, Mbembe's questions, "What place is given to life, death, and the human body (in particular the wounded or slain body)?" and "How are they inscribed in the order of power?"[51] reveal the link between the exceptional and mundane reading of Brown's death. The 'inscription in the order of things' is the connection between actual death and social death. First credited to Orlando Patterson, the concept of social death operates as an important frame for many scholars who study processes of racialization and the intelligibility of personhood.[52] Through his reading of Richard Wright's work, Abdul Jan-Mohammad looks at how living under the constant threat of state-tolerated (if not state-sanctioned) violence, and in particular lynching, limits the agency of the 'death bound subject' to how and when death will occur.

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[48] Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," Libby Meintjes, trans., *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11–40.
[51] Mbembe, "Necropolitics," 12.
[52] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982). For other conceptualizations of social death, see Sharon Patricia Holland, *Raising the Dead: Readings of Death and (Black) Subjectivity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography," *The Professional Geographer* 54, no. 1 (February 2002): 15–24; Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).

Viewing the death of Michael Brown as exceptional—something that does not happen every day—runs the risk, however, of obscuring the quotidian and enduring structures of power. Overemphasis on exceptional sovereign power forecloses openings for resistance. As Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt explain, "[A]pocalyptic visions—both scholarly analysis of sovereign power and the popular accusations of fascism—close down political engagements with power. There are no forces of liberation inherent in such power that, though now frustrated and blocked, could be set free."[53] While people interviewed fully supported efforts to stop the killing and injury of Black men at the hands of police officers, many residents and protesters felt that framing Brown's death as something exceptional, and primarily directed at young Black men, overshadowed the violence of everyday practices carried out by local and county actors. These shared experiences—of Brown's body in the context of everyday violence endured by many—opened up the spaces of corporal resistance in which protesters engaged after August 9, resulting in a unique subjectivity produced through lived experience and bodily resistance. The shared subjectivity of the Ferguson protesters exists within a larger identity born of the long history of Black struggle and resistance, but, as many people expressed, that subjectivity is also unique in terms of the specificity of everyday violence practiced in North St. Louis County and the specific ways events and resistance took shape in the days that followed. While biopower—power *over* life—limits the possibilities for residents in North County, described above, Ferguson resistance represents the corollary power of biopolitics—power *of* life—which produces alternative subjectivities rooted in freedom. As Negri and Hardt point out, "The biopolitical event is always a queer event, a subversive process of subjectivization that, shattering ruling identities and norms, reveals the link between power and freedom."[54]

To consider Brown and those living under the 'racial state of municipal governance' as merely bare life, however, denies that relations of power are dependent upon possibilities for resistance, specifically the resistance of physical bodies. Michel Foucault makes this point when he states, "if there were no possibility of resistance, there would be no power relations at all."[55] The paradoxically liberating capacity of lived flesh to resist and the ability of embodied knowledge of suffering to move beyond discursive enclosures of rights and personhood lie at the core of Alexander Weheliye's powerful critique of the limits of biopolitics, bare life, and related theories of modern political violence. Lived flesh and embodied knowledge are especially important with regard to theorizing modern racial projects. In *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*, Weheliye argues for "the existence of alternative modes of life alongside the violence, subjection, exploitation, and racialization that define the modern human."[56] This argument asserts the possibility of the fully inhabited flesh, including its capacity to experience such things as pleasure, desire, pain, and even death, to redefine living-as-human in ways that transcend the limits of both biopolitical and liberal humanism critiques,

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[53] Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 5.
[54] Negri and Hardt, *Commonwealth*, 63.
[55] Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom," *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1998), 292.
[56] Alex Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 2.

especially the conceptualization of bare life, which leaves the body suspended in a condition of utter abjection.

Weheliye does not disagree that the logics of racialization render certain populations more disposable (less-than-human) than others and expose marginalized groups to multiple forms of violence. However, he asks if suffering manifests in the capacity to imagine alternative worlds and reveal freedom "that most definitely cannot be reduced to mere recognition based on the alleviation of injury or redressed by the laws of the liberal state."[57] He also asks how this freedom "might lead to other forms of emancipation, which can be imagined but not (yet) described."[58] The analytical shift that Weheliye proposes—from one that looks for totalizing power over life to one that expects new ways of being-in-the-world to be born out of lived suffering and everyday experience—moves the liberatory project from one focused on resistance, agency, and the equalization of rights to one that fundamentally displaces what Sylvia Wynter describes as "the genre of the human or 'Man.'"[59] Ultimately, that which "does not aspire to create a different code for what it means to be human merely sketches a different map of Man's 'territorializing assemblages'"[60] with territorializing assemblages understood as forces that are historically, geographically, and experientially inscribed upon the flesh. This "hieroglyphics of the flesh" is "both the cornerstone and the potential ruin of the world of Man" as it legally marks the less-than-human but also stands as an "extrajuridical law of motion" with registers of freedom that surpass anything that might be imagined within the ordering of Western Enlightenment rationality.[61] What followed in the days after Brown's death evidenced the possibility for suffering to reveal alternative modes of freedom in ways that reconfigured the power of blackness as a register of freedom and resistance.

Residents strongly believed that officials at the scene on and after August 9 intended to send a message to them through a spectacle of terror.[62] This belief is consistent with long and well-documented histories of state violence enacted on Black bodies for the purpose of keeping other Black bodies in line, as well as with the many stories Black residents told regarding everyday practices intended to create anxiety and fear within the population. Regardless of intentionality, trauma was clearly inflicted on a historically traumatized population, not to mention the violence that met protesters in the street as they peacefully protested. Officials, however, could not have anticipated the effect such terror would ultimately have, or the reverberations that would be felt across the globe.

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[57] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus,* 15.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 23, quoting Wynter in Greg Thomas, "PROUD FLESH Inter/Views: Sylvia Wynter," *ProudFlesh: New Afrikan Journal of Culture, Politics, and Consciousness* 4 (2006).
[60] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 23. Weheliye is referring to Wynter's critique of feminism but is extending this argument to a critique of theories that claim a liberatory politics.
[61] Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 44.
[62] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

2. "AND THEY DID NOT BACK DOWN"

> "I did not know about the Black Lives Matter organization until they came here last August. They made their first bus ride here. That's when I was introduced to Alicia and Patrisse. It's confusing to people because there is this organization called Black Lives Matter that is said to have started the slogan and then you have this movement that would not have happened had it not been for the people in St. Louis and Ferguson standing up. . . .
>
> I feel like it takes away from the effort folks in this city put into this movement. The whole movement is now credited to an organization somewhere else rather than the people that stood up here. And folks at the organization are not willing to clarify that the movement and the organization are two separate things. They've claimed that recognition. . . .
>
> So it's confusing if you don't know the history of that organization or the history of how this movement unfolded in Ferguson. Years from now when we're retelling the story of what's come to be called BLM, I want people to say,
>
> > 'And then on August 9th, 2014, people came out of their houses in St. Louis and unyieldingly stood in the streets of Ferguson and they did not back down to the violence directed at them. And then more people came, and more people came, and it turned into a nation-wide movement.'
>
> You don't want to read, 'August 9th came and then after that, the organizers of Black Lives Matter started a movement.' You know?"
> —Brittany Ferrell, Co-Founder, Millennial Activists United

2. 1 Queering protest

Interviews with people who came out to protest the killing of Michael Brown revealed that a shift occurred in their thinking after that day regarding the meaning and means of Black struggle—from one that demanded equal rights through and under juridical law and social recognition to one that emphasizes unapologetic blackness and the Black body as a force capable of liberating society *from itself*.[63] Echoing Aimé Césaire's

[63] The protesters interviewed for this research were chosen either because they were perceived as leaders within the movement or because they had been consistently present and part of the movement for more than a year following Brown's death. They came from many different backgrounds and experience that cut across race, age, and gender. The majority of interviews were set up and conducted by Angel Carter, who is also viewed as a leader in the movement and is an accomplished writer and researcher in her own right. Many protesters already held college degrees when Michael Brown was killed, and many more were in the midst of higher education while holding down jobs. Some were struggling with numerous challenges and just trying to make ends meet. Many had always lived in St. Louis, but a few had specifically come to St. Louis in order to participate in the movement. All of those interviewed stated that participating in the movement had changed their outlook and the course of their lives in ways big and small. Some lost their jobs or put their education on hold because of the movement. Many lost relationships with family members and friends. Several said they were dealing with serious anxiety, and most spoke about trauma they experienced through protest. Virtually

recalibration of who is 'uncivilized' in the colonial equation,[64] one young woman recalled, "It's clear who the animals were that day," and several people reiterated her observation in various ways.[65] For many, struggle was no longer an effort to obtain equal rights or be recognized as human. Rather, the struggle entailed revealing the violence of normative constructions, a violence waged against blackness but also viscerally felt anytime bodies exist outside of naturalized practices. Revealing violence also required practicing freedom in the face of all forms of oppression. This is a Black queer ethics, which moves beyond civil rights strategies and takes as its primary focus the practice of freedom situated at the heart of embracing blackness. Foucault asks, "what is ethics if not the practice of freedom?"[66] In this case, the practice of freedom is intrinsically tied to the haunting of Black suffering, which reveals that which can no longer be denied.

A Black queer ethics is a political engagement. As such, it is a politics which, as Cathy Cohen describes it, "does not focus on integration into dominant structures but instead seeks to transform the basic fabric and hierarchies that allow systems of oppression to persist and operate efficiently."[67] Moving queer politics beyond the realm of sexual identity requires Black lesbian feminists' intersectional interventions, which acknowledge the interconnected and interdependent relationships of systemic oppressions.[68] This queering of politics builds on iterations of queer politics that, as Michael Warner argues, are capable of challenging persistent and sometimes invisible heteronormative and racist attitudes and practices embedded in modern social structures.[69] Queer, in this sense, moves beyond an identity linked to sexual orientations and subcultures and refers to a utopian imagination of what could or should be in the world, while revealing what actually is. A 'queered' politics mobilizes utopian longings and reveals everyday failures in society in order to challenge patterned visions of the world and taken-for-granted approaches to familiar conflicts. Queering politics occurs in, and is made visible by, the public sphere. The shift that mobilized radical imaginaries of what should be, in the face of what was, in North St. Louis County occurred in the public sphere and resonated "because of the implausibility of the modern state's representational claims."[70] In this case, it was the implausibility that the liberal state would deliver justice and equality under, and through, the law. This, according to Roderick Ferguson, is a critical component of queer of color critique: to reveal the

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all stated that they had gained a new community. Some had found love, and at least two—Brittany Ferrell and Alexis Templeton—were married as a result of meeting through Ferguson resistance.

[64] Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).

[65] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson residents.

[66] Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for Self," 284.

[67] Cathy J. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics," *GLQ* 3 (1997): 437–65:437.

[68] For example, the Combahee River Collective, a Black feminist organization active in the late 1970s, began its philosophical statement with, "The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppressions and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking." See Combahee River Collective, "The Combahee River Collective Statement," *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. Barbara Smith (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 264–74:264.

[69] Michael Warner, "Fear of a Queer Planet," *Social Text* 29 (1991): 3–17.

[70] Michael Warner, *Publics and Counter Publics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 215.

inherent contradictions that exist in the idea that the liberal nation-state and capital are sites of resolution, perfection, and progress.[71]

Beyond revealing contradictions that exist within state policy and normative practice, a transformative queer politics, which José Esteban Muñoz argued is something to be sought that is not yet here, also reveals contradictions in the assumptions and practices of non-normative anti-oppressive projects.[72] Cohen brings up an example of this by asking what would happen if queer activists considered the lives of women of color who are heterosexual but whose sexual choices fit outside of what is considered acceptable or worthy of state support—the so-called welfare queens.[73] To this point, the performativity of angry, empowered, and *visible* Black female flesh and queer eroticism practiced by Ferguson protesters unsettled the frame of the pathologized Black straight female epitomized by the image of the welfare queen used against Lezley McSpadden, the mother of Michael Brown. Quick to exploit the words of a bereaved mother at the scene of her son's death, the media used her statement "Do you know how hard I worked to keep that boy in school and see him graduate?" (among others) to represent McSpadden as a stereotypical young single mother (although she is married), struggling, and failing, to keep her son out of trouble in the chaotic streets of the Black ghetto, which happens to sit in the suburbs.[74] Much of the support for Darren Wilson, and the police more generally, rhetorically blamed McSpadden for her son's fate, and public discourse focused on debating whether or not she was a good mother.[75] Straight, queer, trans, and otherwise non-conforming protesters provided a very different image of Black women and Black visibility, although many protesters interviewed spoke of the trend of the media to interview "messed up" angry Black men with no shirt on as spokespeople for the movement.[76] Black female leaders intimately understood the importance of resisting cultural representations of themselves and their bodies and using their own voices and images to tell a very different story. Some expressed frustration with McSpadden and the Brown family for embracing what they viewed as a respectability politics that works within current systems of power and expectations of gender, sexuality, and blackness; however, they were also vocally critical of the demonization of McSpadden..

Many protesters interviewed spoke of attempts that were made to understand the breadth of experience across the spectrum of those involved in the protests, which included those who completely rejected respectability politics and also those who took a

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[71] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).
[72] José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 185.
[73] Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens," 443.
[74] While most of the media outlets that ran stories overtly blaming Brown's mother for his death are not ethically deserving of citation here, it is important to note that they are numerous and reflect a segment of the U.S. population that is increasingly more vocal.
[75] The 'comments' section following several articles in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that featured Ms. McSpadden in the weeks following Brown's death reflected heated debates over her culpability and competency as a mother.
[76] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson protesters.

pragmatic stance toward certain social norms. Those interviewed stated that sometimes spaces were opened up such that different or even unperceived experiences of oppression and ways of viewing the world were made visible. At other times, individuals shared that such spaces were shut down and foreclosed by some who believed that extending a focus beyond a narrowly defined 'Black struggle' would undermine any progress that was to be made. Homophobia, sexism, and age were the most obvious impediment people cited regarding an intersectional queer politics; however, experiences of class, racial mixing, intermarriage, faith, geography, and education, among others, were also cited as issues that created contradictions within the movement. What Ferguson protesters did overwhelmingly agree on was that politics of respectability, conformity, and assimilation were not viable modes of achieving freedom.

> Tia (pseudonym)
> The thing that made Ferguson different, as a sustained movement, is that people woke up to the fact that this is not about police brutality. The killing of young black men is just a symptom of the disease that's always been there. Queer people and especially queer women have made people realize that conformity will never work. They bring a perspective that challenges all that.
>
> Brianna (pseudonym)
> This is not a case of a bad apple or a boy that needed to pull up his pants to not get shot. The system did exactly what it was designed to do. When will they see changing the laws hasn't gotten us nowhere? We don't have to act like they tell us to act just so we can live. Black people gotta stop livin' their lives like that and stop apologizing for other Black people. I don't need to apologize for nothin'. We're not [77]the ones with the problem.
>
> Angel
> Some people don't want to change what they think or what they do in this movement. They think that by adding more Black politicians, or Black institutions, or Black business people, that's radical. But it's not. We're pushing back by looking at history and saying, "just slapping 'Black' on it does not make it radical." Trying to solve old problems with old solutions is not radical. Assimilating and conforming to a racist system does not get us anywhere. It doesn't work.

The people interviewed stated that Black women and queer people of color were the unequivocal leaders of resistance in St. Louis following events in Ferguson. Through action, debate, and the narration of their own lives *and flesh,* the women- and queer-of-color protesters that make up the core leadership offer unwavering critiques of intersectional domination and racialized practices—in St. Louis County, across the country and the world, as well as within the Ferguson protest family itself.[78] The essential yet often

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[77] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1.

[78] These observations are based specifically on interviews with women of the Ferguson Protest Movement between September 2015 and January 2016 and with people involved with the movement between August 2014 and September 2015, as well as discourse analysis of several thousand statements made by protesters via Twitter during the same time periods.

overlooked work of Black women and queer-of-color activists and scholars, who have deeply felt both the suffering and liberatory capacities of inscribed flesh in their everyday lives, reveals the contradictory logics embedded within constitutional democracy as well as within the practices of people claiming to speak for Black, Brown, and queer communities. Through all forms of communicative acts, including the unapologetic presence and performance of their own fleshly bodies, these protesters took no prisoners in calling out actions and words that do not support *being human as praxis* and by pushing back against anything not about the unbounding of Black identity.[79]

In writing the words 'young,' 'queer,' 'Black,' 'women,' and 'protesters,' I might be characterizing certain leaders in the Ferguson Protest Movement or I might be listing five abstract identities, each of which is accompanied by specific types of daily traumas and exclusions. To identify with, and be represented as, all five descriptions (in many cases leaders also identified as 'poor') is to have intimate awareness of how it feels to be exempted from democratic norms and recognitions. For this reason, these young women did not read the killing of Michael Brown or the treatment of his body as exceptional but as everyday based on an intimate experience of their own bodies with everyday forms of violence. Such experiences seem to have enabled them to carry out the work of protest in very specific terms and, based on those terms, to have become transformative leaders at that particular moment in time.

> Alisha
> At every action there's always a Black woman leading it. And there's probably a Black woman on the bullhorn. And a Black woman planned it. That's definitely different from before. People are really challenging what humanity looks like, what leadership looks like, who can do what, and why…. Black women have been pushing back forever but in this movement they finally have their voice.
> Brittany
> If queer folks and the LGBTQ community were not involved in this movement it would look different. It just would. I don't know, man. It would just look completely different. A lot of times the LGBTQ folks out here are the heart and soul of the fight. It was an absolutely critical piece of gaining national attention in the way we did that. There was just a different tone because we were there. There was no backing down like in the past. We're beyond that.
> Valerie (pseudonym)
> From my experience, the women in the movement have been very strong. And a lot of times, the women have been the ones to "get it done." It didn't matter what the call was, they did it. As far as the men in the movement, I haven't seen anything like that. I don't see them doing much of anything other than making callouts to people…. Or they also like to make very private things public and glorify themselves.

[79] Katherine McKittrick, ed., *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

Mary (pseudonym)
The most creative, passionate, talented, strongest individuals in the movement are lesbian, gay, trans, bi. The people that engaged me. That made me understand there was something I could do other than just watch. The people who speak across the spectrum. The people who understand how complex this issue really is. That it's really not about this single incident—that was just the catalyst for a much bigger platform. And they do it in a way that is not polite. They have faced enormous pushback within the movement family. And they won't sit down. They won't shut up. They're like, "You know, you're gonna need to deal with us. You're gonna need to deal with all facets of blackness. You don't own it. I'm really grateful that they're forcing the conversation. They're refusing to walk away.

Alisha
I think queer women haven't just contributed to the movement. They are the movement. Literally, without them you do not have a movement. They are there in leadership, in numbers, in hard work. They contribute to the conversation in a way nobody else can, because they constantly remind you to check yourself.

Estelle (pseudonym)
The queer women in the movement understand strategies that cut to the core of what is at issue. They are the ones that put their bodies in harm's way the most. They made white people feel the most uncomfortable because they are totally unapologetic about who they are and they're going to get right up in your face and make you feel their presence there. Sometimes in intentionally shocking ways. It's a strategy thing they understand. These women are the antithesis to Black patriarchy and honestly, that rubs a lot of the men in the movement the wrong way. This is one of the first times where race and queerness and transness and non-sexism have been front and center and that makes it beautiful.

The work that emerged from events in Ferguson ultimately revealed the inhumanities normalized through contemporary iterations of liberal humanism embraced by the politics of the *All* Lives Matter counter campaign, as well as the limits placed on blackness and gender from both inside and outside of the movement. Many Ferguson protest leaders refused to tolerate heteronormative and cisgendered assumptions and attitudes, especially attempts of Black masculinity to dominate the space of blackness or the space of resistance. This core group continues to seek ways in which to destabilize all grounds upon which clear claims to identity are staked. In this way, a queering of protest was lived out through the Ferguson Protest Movement—not because many of the emergent leaders identify as queer, but by virtue of persistent and embodied critiques of power across scales that made visible a continuum of violence, trauma, erasure, and shame that, as Christina Sharpe points out, precedes and exceeds the Black body, and in particular, the Black female body.[80]

[80] Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

Diamond
Before anybody even knew about anybody's sexuality, we were out there, in front of the men. Making sure everybody was okay, standing our ground and making our voices heard. Putting our bodies in front of tanks and making people uncomfortable. But then we started pushing conversations about how this is not just about young Black men getting killed. We were all hurt when they didn't come out for the Black Women's march. Hurt, because we come out to lift up you guys, make sure you guys are okay, make sure you guys are loved on and supported, and stuff like that, but you guys don't do the same for us? That was hurtful. But we still come out fighting for you…. We're not going to pick and choose who to fight for. We're fighting for everybody.
Alisha
Queer and trans folks of color, particularly trans women, have, from my personal observation done the most to lift up the "No one's free until everybody's free" perspective. You have to ask yourself, why are queer and trans Black women leading this movement? Because they get how toxic all forms of oppression are and they communicate that. Some of the most amazing and strongest leaders in this movement are Black trans folks.
Alexis
People are now having conversations about intersectionality and that is really important because it means that we have to be inclusive of all Black life. When people say they love their LGBTQ brothers and sisters but [then they say], "they just ate the food with poison in it that the straight people knew better than to eat," that's damaging to the whole concept of blackness. Because people started looking at us like we were toxic. Like we're spreading the poison. And that's dangerous, because it's actually violence against people even if they don't mean to hurt anybody.
Tia
Part of what puts people at intersections are the multiple oppressions so we are silenced and we are dismissed in certain settings but we keep having these conversations. Being a Black person that sits at intersections really helps this work. It should not be persons-who-sit-at-intersection's responsibility to start these conversations but of course we're more likely to since we see internal oppression.
'Sixela Yoccm'
I feel like queer people have been critical to this movement……. And I think it's because they tackle the issue of self-love. You shouldn't let people tell you how to be. You should be comfortable with who you are and let those that can't accept you be uncomfortable with that fact, not you. That's what queer people bring. Also challenging the straight Black men.
Jamell
[Queer leaders] not only helped to sustain the front line…, their life experience helped to redefine blackness. And in a movement where the unconditional love of blackness, and the right for blackness to be all that it can be, are most important, redefining what blackness is and what

blackness includes has been an unfathomably tough job. And that's one thing the LGBTQ community, uh, I admire them for. Because it's not easy when you have to deal with oppression from the system and oppression and resentment from the people you are fighting with and for. They bring a more human side to the movement. A more inclusive and honest side and it provides the door for every single Black person to feel connected and important.

As with any struggle, the burden of protest is not carried equally by all protesters. Women, and especially queer women, sacrificed greatly due to the necessity for constant engagement and the oppression they experienced from within the movement itself. People sought to silence their voices both inside and outside of the protest space, particularly those who either claimed heteronormative and masculine identities or those, like people in the media, looking for the faces and personas of past liberation movements. As Angel points out, "Black women are not only holding down the front lines, they are also maintaining jobs and parenting well at the same time." She added, "Women, like Brittany for example, are constantly being disrespected and dealing with comments from men. Brittany's got a lot of curves, you know what I mean? She's constantly dealing with men sexualizing her on top of everything else." There was also persistent pushback by men against conversations that expanded the terms of protest beyond a focus on straight Black men and their treatment by the police.

Diamond

Unfortunately, Black women are still trying to make our place. Oftentimes women are not really seen as people. And it's so ironic because the whole point is supposed to be claiming our humanness. The men are constantly putting themselves in front of cameras, in front of the media, in front of organizations. If it weren't for the women out here, this movement wouldn't be sustained. In fact, the women were the ones that stood out there and weren't moved. When the men ran, as tear gas was thrown, the women stood their ground, like we're going to protect the men, we're not going anywhere. We not only stood beside them, we stood in front of them. People seem to have amnesia and forget that. They don't want to admit their ass was saved by a lesbian cuz I will never be "their woman."

Antwan (pseudonym)

So, it's very frustrating to see how one side is saying "You're trying to include far too many people and you're not focusing on those most important—young black men getting killed by the police." And the other side is saying "No, we're trying to encompass as many people as there actually are. We're trying to show everybody that you don't have to leave one part of your identity at home." Narrowing Black identity is not helping anybody. Really that's the fundamental problem on both sides.

Cameron (pseudonym)

And Black women have been at the fore of this movement, but when it's time to talk about the work that's being done, it's revisionist history. I've seen Black men say stuff like, "Yeah being on the front lines and we had to get the women and children out of the way." To be honest, in many ways, in

many cases, it was the opposite. Black women went up to young Black men and told them "You need to go home." Cuz they were in the way of getting anything done. I've never been checked by so many Black women and I grew up in a house full of women. They'll say "That's patriarchy running your mouth right now."

Brittany

As a woman, people think they can talk to you anytime they want. You need to do whatever they say right then. And your input matters very little because you're calling out certain toxic behaviors by a certain group of folks like men and they don't see a problem with themselves. They see it with you. They say, "oh, well, if you are saying men are trash or men are treating women in a certain way maybe you should ask why we treatin' you that way." "If you hate us, why you here anyway?" Or, "Mike Brown was a man and that's why we here."

Alexis

I've definitely had to carve out my own space and just claim my right to be here. I had to go and literally snatch the fucking bull horn from the men. I literally had to stand up in meetings and say to dudes, "Shut the fuck up because you don't know what you're talking about." I really had to be assertive. I had to turn into the stereotypical strong Black sister in order to be considered a leader in this movement. Not because I wasn't leading before but because they didn't want to acknowledge what I was already doing.

This movement is about rejecting everything white people say we have to be in order to be recognized, to be citizens, to be humans. Then these clowns go and post a photo on Instagram saying shit like, "Women hast to act like queens in order to be treated like queens." Or to be respected you need to put yourself up on a pedestal that some Black man is gonna kick out from underneath your ass anyway. We're here because that shit has got to get put down if we're gonna get anywhere with this.

Alisha

The most frustrating thing about this whole experience is definitely Black men and their lack of understanding of Black women. Like you know what we're going through as a people but you still think you should be on top and keep me down. When it's time to put bodies on the line you're fine with me risking my life while you talk to a reporter. But outside of protest I should be subservient to you.

E.J.

So the LGBT and the rest of whatever letter they keep adding, community, they definitely did their part in the beginning. Because, you know, they're Black. In the beginning, it was like, as long as you're Black, that's all that matters because this is about Black liberation. But once you're like trying to make this more than a Black thing. Like where are you going with that? Like we're all just doin' the work. I was never down on no LGBT or whatever those letters are, that was actually doing work. You're doing this because

you're Black. Like you could get killed because you're Black. All these other identities and shit ain't gonna get you any more killed.

2.2 Vulnerable bodies

While an appreciation for intersectional conversations and the way difficult discussions shaped the movement were stated over and over by those interviewed, some people did not appreciate these conversations and were frustrated by the issues women and queer protesters brought up. Several straight Black men complained at length that discussions amongst protesters veered too far away from a focus on Mike Brown and police brutality against young Black men. These interviews highlighted many of the issues and contradictions brought up by women regarding oppressive attitudes and practices within the movement and foreground how multiple processes of identity formation and experience are always at work within groups that are historically and politically misrecognized as a single unified group. Recognizing these multiplicities of Black identity, as Stuart Hall asserts, signals the "end of the innocent notion of the essential black subject."[81] These differences and tensions—which can be viewed as inherent within, and productive to, the spaces of struggle—consistently came up, as discussed throughout this chapter.

The interviews with men who identified as straight and cisgendered were, on average, at least twice as long as all other interviews although the same questions were asked. In several of these interviews, the men spent much time arguing that their work was underappreciated and that tensions between men and women or between straight and queer people "were just never an issue." These interviews, however, are full of contradictions similar to the contradictions that queer theory aims to reveal. The vulnerability of certain bodies and not others, the vulnerability of flesh, was a central theme but approached from completely different vantage points for straight men versus queer women. The assumed availability of the women's bodies, for instance, was consistently challenged by young women protesters and was a consistent theme of frustration in interviews. Many straight men, however, claimed to respect the women yet also indicated that women were supposed to act in a certain way in order for respect to be granted. The men complained that queer women did not appreciate the hyper vulnerability of young Black straight men's bodies, like that of Michael Brown's, and that, by expanding the focus beyond young Black men, women were putting their lives at risk. The ways by which these protesters defined, experienced, and represented vulnerability, risk, and attachment (of and to their own bodies and the bodies of others) ultimately determined how they imagined the world and their future. These factors also shaped how they viewed their own participation in the protests.

Darwin (pseudonym)

I don't think queer people added anything to the conversations. You know, that was just never part of it. Why should I care who you sleep with? We don't need to talk about that. But I guess they brought more leadership because, you know, that community is already organized. They've been

[81] Stuart Hall, "New Ethnicities," *Black British Culture Studies: A Reader*, eds. Houston Baker, Manthia Diawara, and Ruth H. Lindeborg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 163–72: 165.

protesting for years. I guess because their leadership has been the most stable, they're important in that way.

But there's never been any dynamics between the queer people and the straight people. It just doesn't come up. You know, I think I have the best perspective on this because I'm one of the few males that been out there the whole time. I mean, in the beginning there were a bunch of males out there. Now there's a limited amount. And I'm here to tell you that being involved in it together with women was never an issue. Not one time did someone come up to me and say, "Man, I ain't doing this because a woman said it." It just never came up.

The only time a problem arose was when a woman thought she was being disrespected but they weren't actually. Not one guy ever complained about taking orders from a woman. Sometimes they thought the women were a little mean about the way they said things. But never about their ability to lead. Like I'm the first one who ever said this is a woman-led movement. No one said it before I did. No one. I was telling the media when they were constantly interviewing me on camera, I said, "Well, the women are smarter, they're stronger, and they're sober." And that's the truth.

And then people come down here and they see us fighting and they see girls holding hands and they see guys at meetings talkin' bout their boyfriends. They like, "What's going on here? I thought people were out here protesting for black folks." You gotta think about that.

Mitchell

Some people think gays get treated differently where honestly I don't think they do at all. Before all this shit happened I had never even talked to a gay person. I'd never even met one I knew was gay. So when I would see gay people they would think I had a problem with them because I didn't talk to them. I just don't have anything to say to them. I don't have a problem with them.

Like Charles Wade and DeRay McKessen, they're openly gay and I've talked to them plenty. I went to eat with them even. But that don't make me gay. I don't have no problem sharing that I'm not gay. I don't see why people bring all that extra shit in because that's when you start confusing people. We're gonna confuse the kids. They ain't gonna turn this into "Gay Lives Matter." What the hell. Now you're putting something on them they didn't even come here for. For you to do that to a kid? That's fucked up because you're taking advantage of them. You're confusing them. We should be leading kids in the direction we want them to go. And that's not the direction.

My mom did it right. But I have a gay cousin so I'm like more open to this stuff. Like I'll talk to gay people. I've got friends that won't even talk to them. I was kind of like exposed to it comin' up so I feel more comfortable talking to them. But you still got people that's not going to be as open as I am. You're not going to see no straight guy go talk to a lesbian. That's just not going to happen. They're not going to go up to a lesbian and be like, "Hey

how 'bout that Royals game last night?" We've got bigger issues than gay rights. We've got young Black men dyin' for no reason.

E.J.

But then they started talkin' bout all this intersectionality and whatever shit. Like there's different kinds of oppression. Like what happened with the Civil Rights Movement when people started forgetting what it's actually about. Like the energy started shifting over to like the LGBT shit. And the feminists and all, they started sayin' like we got to recognize all this other stuff. I thought I was out here for Mike Brown. Who is paying you all to say that? Because they gotta be paying you. Because you weren't saying that shit in the beginning. Okay you are what you are but don't derail the movement trying to shift this to some other shit that it's not actually about. I am fully against that. I don't need to listen to this feminist shit. Did you know feminism was started by white women? And white women and Asian women ain't got no respect for Black women. Black women have a way different struggle so don't be usin' all this feminist talk.

I'm still learnin' how to not to say "bitch" or "hoe" too much when I talk 'bout a woman 'cuz you're not supposed to say that nowadays. They get offended. This is a new world. Nobody really taught us how to work together. I definitely have had numerous conversations with many feminists that say, hey, don't call us bitch, don't say female. Call us women. But when they're doin' wrong and I call 'em on it, I say, "Woman, get your ass back over here." And they're like, see, that's misogyny. I'm like no it isn't. Or like a female decides she wants to be promiscuous. If she's a feminist, I can't call her a hoe. As long as she claims feminism, she can do whatever she wants. What's that about? That's why I can't go along with the feminist thing. They just make shit up as they go along. That's what the police do too. That's what the government does. They act like the government.

2.3 Body schemas

It became clear from observing the affective space of protest fostered by the Ferguson protest movement, and from interviews with protesters, that many believed the body—as lived, perceived, performed, and seen—to be an act of protest in and of itself. Furthermore, the reorientation of bodies, toward one another and toward spaces of belonging and exclusion, was viewed as critical to the process of transformation—of people and practices—and reimagining the world. In this way, body schema—the orientation of the body to the world—seems important. As theorized by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, body schema is the way in which the body conforms to the logic of the world and the way in which "intersensory significance become possible."[82] For Merleau-Ponty, bodies possess a universal schema of perception making possible one's consciousness of 'being in the world.' While Frantz Fanon embraced the idea of body schema, which he defined as the intelligence of the body that transcends the intelligence of the mind, he rejected the notion that body schema is universally experienced by all human bodies in the same way.[83] For

[82] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 380.
[83] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008).

Fanon, body schema *reveals* the logic of the world. As such, race is not an ideology to be debated but rather an embodied experience—schema—that becomes part of body knowledge and the body itself. For those who are 'raced', the natural body schema of which Merleau-Ponty writes, is interrupted. Likewise, racism is not so much a set of laws and regulations as it is the bodily response of people 'toward others' that is felt at the core of the one who is 'othered.'

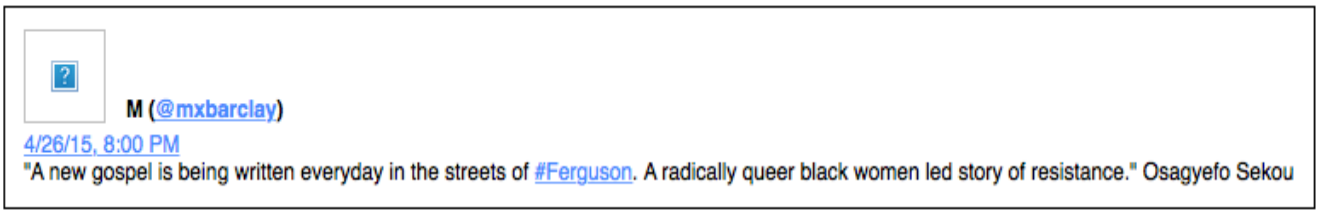
For this reason, Fanon argues that there exists a "historico-racial schema," which, for the 'non-white' individual, bears the full weight of the white gaze.[84] Fanon's conceptualization of racial phenomenology has been used to argue that race is beyond being just a construction of society that can be deconstructed. Rather, as constructed, race is lived every day through the body's relationship to the world and actualized through "movements, gestures, tacit knowledge, and perceptual apprehension" of the body.[85] Fanon makes clear what all marked bodies understand—that the flesh of racialized bodies deeply feels and lives race. Similarly, Sara Ahmed observes that once race is "'in' bodies," it determines the proximities and distances of the body and what it "'can do.'"[86] The women and queer leaders of the Ferguson protest movement understand that transforming their experience in the world must occur at the level of corporal schema, which requires the reorienting of bodies toward one another and a recalibration of proximities that determine what their bodies can and cannot do.

In this way, Ferguson resistance responded directly to what Frantz Fanon describes the fixed state of blackness produced by and through the white gaze.[87] Many of the protest leaders interviewed deny static identities of blackness and gender reproduced through hetero normative and hyper masculinized expressions of Black identity, as well as refusing the politics of Black respectability associated historically with Black intelligentsia, middle-class social structures, mainstream political actors, and the Black church. From this perspective, blackness must always challenge classifications and possess a fluidity capable of breaching boundaries intended to mark and contain. Young female protesters refused to 'be for others' and insisted on a fully encompassing and dynamic experience of blackness and gender as a liberatory project. Not only did these young women leaders refuse to "stay in line and make (themselves) scarce," they did quite the opposite by making themselves highly visible, naming the enemy, and creating "a scandal" fundamentally rooted in a sense of the erotic and the profane.[88] Through their experience in the world, they claim themselves as "flesh of the flesh…palpitating with the very movement of the world."[89] The immobilizing white gaze that objectifies the Black body epitomized by Fanon's recounting of "Look, a Negro!," is transcended, if momentarily, by the fully inhabited and lived

[84] Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, 91.
[85] Tyson E. Lewis, "But I'm Not a Racist! Phenomenology, Racism, and the Body Schema in White, Pre-Service Teacher Education," *Race, Ethnicity and Education* (2016), 10.
[86] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), 112.
[87] Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*.
[88] Ibid., 94.
[89] Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. Rosello and Pritchard (Northumberland, UK: Bloodaxe Books, 1995), 115, quoted in Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 104.

experience of Black flesh pushing back.[90] Black women and queer and trans people of color were at the forefront of destabilizing the objectifying gaze and traditional forms of protest.

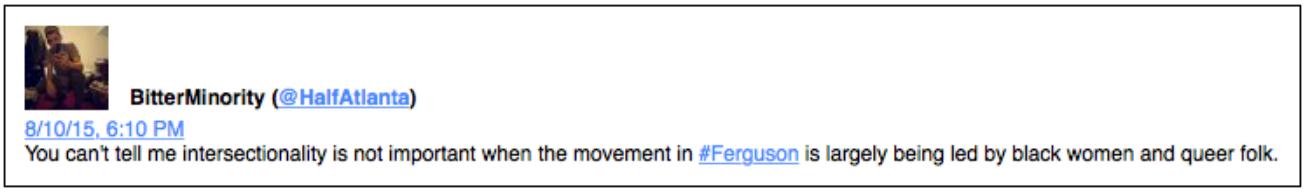
> Kathryn (pseudonym)
> Queer women in this movement are so unapologetically who they are and so fiercely advocate for recognition of all identities. They don't accept anything less than liberation of all Black lives and I think they've made that very clear. They are very visibly leaders and I think you see that historically as well that queer and trans women of color are always there leading. They're not always recognized and they are very very commonly erased.
>
> Brittany
> Ferguson rapidly heightened my sense that you're either going to accept me while I advocate for Black folks unapologetically as my whole self whether I'm in a fucking suit skirt or I'm wearing sweatpants or leggings and a t-shirt and gas mask. We don't have to have any type of relationship. Ferguson really helped me to develop that unconditional assertiveness I had been working on.



[90] Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, 89.

Jonathan

You can't have a conversation about Ferguson and not talk about the LGBTQ community, the black LGBTQ community specifically. . . . The ones doing the most daring actions, and the loudest ones that hold people accountable, and the ones actually doing the work—they're the LGBTQ leaders.



Chuck

This is very much a Black women-led movement and I judge that based on who is getting arrested the most. We're in a place where we can get it right this time and we have to acknowledge the role of women. We have to fight patriarchy, and heterosexism. My growth has come through the women in this movement. The queer women in this movement. It's a matter of listening. The LGBTQ women have been incredible teachers.

3. UNAPOLOGETIC BLACKNESS

The affective environment of protest was something consistently brought up by protesters. As Diamond shared, "We make people uncomfortable by being very comfortable with who we are."[91] In addition to consistently linking Brown's death to specific histories and cultures of predatory practices in North St. Louis County and insisting on repeated discussions within the field of protest regarding intersectional oppressions, protest leaders called out misogyny and homophobia within the movement and spoke at length about the importance of placing their bodies directly on the front lines of the war waged against them in ways that were intimately felt by those deployed to negate them and those indifferent to their experience.[92] While protesters maintained a commitment to non-violence throughout the twenty plus months of active protest after August 9, 2014, the very intentional use of their bodies to create discomfort and disrupt the status quo of daily life in the St. Louis region were important factors in the specific nature of sustained resistance. This usually was carried out as the spectacle of fleshly bodies stopping flows in the street or on the highway—much the same way that Michael Brown's body, as spectacle in the street, had revealed to many "that which is rotten in the law."[93] Somewhat traditional locations of protest were also utilized, such as shopping districts and malls, restaurants, and sports venues, where protesters created performative environments that were affectively described as unapologetically Black, "in your face," and intuitively and courageously carried out "in the moment" in spaces that represented capitalist consumption.[94] The consistent integration of performativity, confrontation, spectacle, intervention, and love of self, came to define ongoing protest in St. Louis.

The emphasis on embodied experience and spectacle utilized by Ferguson protesters gestures back to the experience and spectacle of embodied violence suffered by Brown, which initially sparked this movement. The desecration of Brown's body in the street, witnessed by thousands through social media, is directly reminiscent of the embodied violence suffered by Emmett Till and witnessed by thousands who attended his funeral or saw highly circulated media photos credited as catalysts to the Civil Rights Movement. In both cases, the image of a body held the power to mobilize people and emotions. In both cases, the mothers of the murdered boys were critical to initiating a response to unjust death that might otherwise have passed quickly. In both cases, the eventual acquittal of those that caused the deaths initiated renewed resistance and invigorated national efforts and debates around Black struggle. The decision and the motives to create a spectacle of embodied violence, however, were quite different in each case. Demanding that the casket be left open and the media let in during the funeral for her son, "so all the world can see what they did to my boy," Mamie Till Mobley understood, or at least hoped for, the power of the image to mobilize action.[95] As discussed above, many people who saw the image of Brown's body in the street believed that Ferguson officials intended to send a message

[91] Interview with Diamond Latchison, September 11, 2015.
[92] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson protesters.
[93] Walter Benjamin, "A Critique of Violence," in *Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Peter Demetz, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 278–300: x.
[94] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson protesters.
[95] Quoted in *Jet Magazine*, September 15, 1955.

regarding what happens when residents get out of line, much in the same way the murderers of Emmett Till intended to send the same message. Had officials in charge of the scene in Ferguson fully considered the power of the image to initiate action, as Mamie Till Mobley had done, it is doubtful Brown's body would have remained in the street for four and a half hours. The power of the image, however, was not lost on Ferguson protesters and went far beyond the single image of Michael Brown's body.

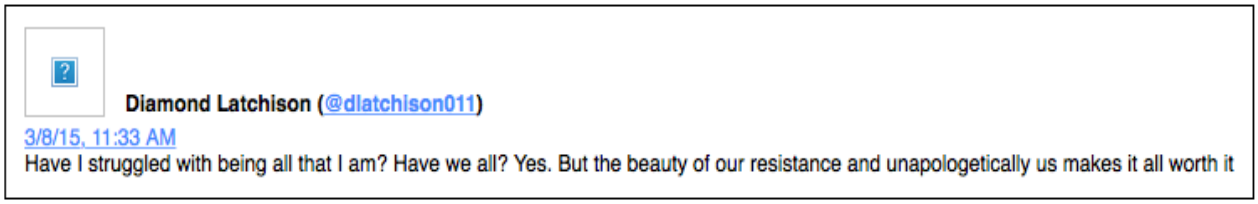
3.1 New uses of the erotic

Some thirty-five years after Audre Lorde delivered her paper entitled "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,"[96] Black women in Ferguson vividly demonstrated the uses and power of erotic expression, which had long been used against them. Occupying the deepest margins as young, queer, Black, and female, these individuals claimed leadership positions by relentlessly refusing to deny the full spectrum of "physical, emotional, and psychic expressions of what is deepest and strongest and richest"[97] within them, which included refusing to deny who, and how, they love. Whether on the front line of highly charged actions, speaking in public forums, or interacting within the protest family, these women embody Lorde's definition of the erotic as *work,* reclaiming their bodies, their language, their sexuality, their anger, and their passion as sources of power and knowledge in ways that shocked many politicians, officials, Black clergy, and those they described as "respectable Negros."[98] In the same way, they also challenged assumptions about Black identity within the movement. With the erotic knowledge that Lorde describes as a lifeforce, these female and queer leaders provide the lens through which to see and scrutinize *all* those things that do not lead to the freedom to live and love fully.

Quotidian expressions of the erotic, as Sharon Patricia Holland forcefully points out, are actually a useful place to study everyday racism because they trouble, reveal, and often reinforce the Black/white binary of racist practice in the most intimate registers of routine practice.[99] Recalling how Christina Sharpe conceptualizes monstrous intimacies, which include such things as shame, sexual violence, desire, and confinement, Holland likewise asserts that race and racism live within the space of everyday intimacy.[100] Working between critical race studies, queer theory, and feminism, Holland's project, *The Erotic Life of Racism*, works to show how racism, personal choice, and erotic pleasure can no longer be easily disaggregated, if they ever were. As Holland states, "we can't have our erotic life—a desiring life—without involving ourselves in the messy terrain of racist practice."[101] Holland ascribes to the possibility that blackness is not only the thingness of the thing—that which produces erotic value for whiteness absent its own erotic life. Rather, Holland seeks to free blackness from the theoretical frame of 'thingness' by reorienting the gaze to inside looking out. She complicates blackness, as do the Ferguson protest leaders, as a fluid and dynamic experience of both subjectification and liberation that simultaneously and inherently reflect the lived realities of racial construction in the most basic ways. By insisting that people

[96] In Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches by Audrey Lorde* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007).
[97] Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 56.
[98] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson protesters.
[99] Sharon Patricia Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).
[100] Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects.*
[101] Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism,* 46.

confront all possibilities and iterations of the lived Black body, Ferguson protesters release 'the uses of the erotic' as Lorde imagined them.



Mary
Making people feel comfortable is not a priority for people in this movement. That's such a large piece of it. Other people call it anger but really it's not about anger. The entire movement is direct confrontation. Not violence, but confrontation. People are confronted with unapologetic blackness. Black bodies that come as they are. It could not be more confrontational.
Gloria (pseudonym)
The thing about Ferguson was it was so 'in your face.' We are going to make them feel the discomfort, see our pain and anger finally. We are not just a face in the crowd and we are not going to be moved. If they locked up 15 of us, 50 more would show up the next night. We stayed in their faces making them confront who we are. It wasn't just mass protest of people walking in the street like you see in other cities. It was that too, but what really defines this movement is the way we made everyone aware that we are unapologetically who we are and they've got to deal with that.
Vanessa (pseudonym)
All we have to use is our bodies, and we use them. Using our bodies unapologetically. Putting them in places they are not welcome. Making people feel the distance by putting our bodies where they are not supposed to be. Acting the way we're not supposed to act. Breaking all of the codes of conduct. Protest as performance of Black bodies. This is our blackness and we will not be contained. That's what it is.
Brittany
When I think of the Ferguson movement, I think of resistance. I think of people just doing away with the status quo, you know. It's just that, a lot of young unapologetic resistant young people and it was that resistance that, that got us to where we are today. It was that resistance. It was that rebellion Ferguson was deeply built on top of resistance and, uh, where we are today is we still have ... I mean we sparked the nation into resisting. It's not just Ferguson resisting anymore, it's the whole entire nation, young people.
Mary
The Ferguson protesters are confrontational. More confrontational than anything I've seen in protest. Now or in the past. Ferguson is interruption. It was volcanic and it was not structured or organized. It was leaderless or leaderful, depending on how you look at it. Ferguson was and is completely

> flat out "We're done." "We're rejecting everything we've been told we're supposed to do or be."
> I've learned from this movement that there is great value in making people uncomfortable and I'm learning to confront. I'm still a white grandmother but I'm now comfortable with diverse strategies and methods. There's a big difference between standing on a corner with a sign that you'll just drive right by than with saying, "Oh, you know what? I think we'll stop your car."

As it turns out, the erotic is an ideal location from which to not only identify everyday oppressions but also a place from which to launch sustained resistance. Taking Lorde's definition of erotic work—the full habitation of psychic, emotional, and physical spaces that transcend "states of being that are not native to [oneself], such as resignation, despair, self-effacement, depression, self-denial"[102]—beyond the boundaries Lorde imagined, the women leading resistance in Ferguson view the act of protest as a site of visibility in which troubling visions of Black love, love of blackness, and unmediated Black flesh and erotic desire work to unsettle normative hierarchies of propriety, control, and power. These young women were, and are, well aware of what Nicole Fleetwood has articulated as 'troubling vision' in which "the visible black body is always already troubling to the dominant visual field."[103] In fact, they very intentionally leverage the uncanny visibility of blackness in, and through, protest. Whereas Fleetwood looks at the specific work of Black women artists and cultural producers "whose work is reliant on the very problem their bodies pose as visible and corporal bodies,"[104] Black women leaders of the Ferguson movement represent an ongoing praxis that similarly embraces and deploys the problem posed by the troubling presence of the Black female body. In the case of these protesters, Fleetwood's theory of 'excess flesh'—the strategic uses of the Black female body—goes beyond visual culture and is literally embodied in enactments of resistance, erotic expression, and protest as performance.

3.2 Excess flesh

While the hypervisibility of Black female flesh reveals the "simultaneously invisible and always visible" condition of blackness, enactments of excess flesh in the performative field of protest highlight power relations often obscured by, and through, the commodification of blackness—as something marked by difference.[105] Using strategies of what Fleetwood describes as 'excess flesh,' young leaders turn the fetishization of the Black female body back on itself through the vocative field of self-making in ways that disrupt scopic relations of subject and object.[106] The representation and subsequent claiming of

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[102] Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 58.
[103] Nicole Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, and Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 6.
[104] Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision,* 106.
[105] Stuart Hall, "What is the 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?," in *Black Popular Culture,* ed. Michelle Wallace and Gina Dent (Seattle: Bay Press, 1992), 21–33.
[106] I am referring to the 'scopic' and 'vocative' fields as theorized by Jacques Lacan, in "The Split between the Eye and the Gaze." The scopic field is similar to what Frantz Fanon called 'being-for-other,' which is the consciousness of 'being seen' by 'the gaze' of others in ways that impact or fix one's own identity. The vocative disturbs the subject/object relationship by giving the object agency such that it claims its own subjectivity by

bodies that exceed the norms of "proper corporeal containment," what Juana Maria Rodriguez calls "racialized excess," is already read as queer and beyond that which is viewed as useful or productive.[107] However, it is in the space that is created between the body and the law—between performance and power—where the productive tensions reside.

> Angel
> The movement was very much about the Black female body. First, because it was mostly Black female bodies that were out there. It just was. Black women's bodies were the ones in abundance. They were the visible bodies—the most powerful imagery was of the Black woman. . . . Black women who were historically denied their womanhood.

This performativity-as-protest is similar to the performative politics that Judith Butler describes as a response to a politics of precarity—the differential allocation of precarious existence.[108] Butler states, "In this way performativity works within precarity and against its differential allocation. Or, rather, performativity names that unauthorized exercise of a right to existence that propels the precarious into political life."[109] The opportunities to propel the precarious into political life through ludic and erotic performance is something Rodriguez also highlights when looking at queer Latina sexual politics and how discomfort, politeness, and degrees of legibility appear on the spectrum between law and performance.[110] This question of legibility, formally and phenomenologically, is fundamentally important to the Ferguson Protest Movement.

> Kelly
> What's unique about the Ferguson Protest Movement is it's in your face. Like, "Naw, we ain't goin' home. Like we're going to stay out here, and we're going to fight until everybody is free." And I feel like the Ferguson Movement is here to show the respectability part of how inequality and racism works today.
> Mitchell
> This movement is all about constant direct action. In your face direct action. Fuck the police direct action. I've gone to a lot of other protests in other cities 'cuz people invite me or send me a ticket and shit. But it's not like that in other cities. It's different here. Like we do not have the time to be sympathetic here.
> Chuck
> You know the reason why this movement is not polite? It's because white people's ignorance isn't polite. Everybody is done being polite. And that's what the queer women leaders do very intentionally. They make themselves

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'looking back' in the direction of the gaze. In Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1978 [1968]), 67–78.

[107] Juana Maria Rodriguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 2.

[108] Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Malden: Polity Press, 2013).

[109] Butler and Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, 101.

[110] Rodriguez, *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings*, 5.

heard regardless of whether people want to hear them. They know from their lived experience that you have to shut things down, shut people down, to get heard. People will say "Until you speak and do things in this way we're not going to hear your message." And then they're saying, "Well fuck you, hear this message." . . .

People will also say things like "I don't think Mike Brown or Freddie Gray are the best messengers because of who they were." Fuck you and your messenger. I think they're perfect damn messengers. Well you know what? We tried data. We tried polite reports. We tried writing books. We laid it all out nice and polite in ways that were clear as day. We tried every mother fucking polite way and you didn't mother fucking listen, okay?

Alisha

Like claiming really simple things become revolutionary. Simple things that are just supposed to basic human things are revolutionary for a lot of Black people and this movement is teaching me that I can be revolutionary in that respect. Like having a bank account is revolutionary. Self-care is revolutionary. Black Girl Magic is revolutionary. Going on vacation is revolutionary. Getting married can be revolutionary to some people. Like simple things but because they're Black, they're revolutionary. That's really part of this movement.

Figure **5.4** August 10, 2015 (source: Getty Images)

Figure **5.5** Brittany Ferrell and Alexis Templeton, October 8, 2014 (source: Robert Cohen/St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

Figure **5.6** Brittany Ferrell and Alexis Templeton, August 11, 2015 (source: Lawrence Bryant/St. Louis American).

4. THE POLITICS OF PROTEST

As summer turned to fall in St. Louis, protesters maintained steady pressure on the region calling for the grand jury to indict Wilson on murder charges. A constant protest presence could be found across the street from the Ferguson police station, with almost nightly clashes with lines of officers in riot gear, who taunted protesters and dared them to set foot in the street so they could be arrested. On a weekly basis, protesters shut down local highways and major streets. Cultural and sports events as well as county and municipal meetings were targeted by so-called flash mobs. The St. Louis Cardinals baseball games and Rams football games frequently included clashes between protesters and counter-protesters. On October 6, a multi-racial protest interrupted the St. Louis Symphony when over 50 people purchased tickets and gradually began singing "Which side are you on?" during the performance, with many musicians joining in. Additionally, people traveled to St. Louis from across the country to show solidarity with local resistance, congregating at the makeshift memorial on Canfield Drive and in the parking lot across from the police

station. Counter-protesters, often with signs reading "Blue Lives Matter," also frequented the area. Throughout the fall, tension and planning continued in anticipation of the grand jury's decision regarding whether or not to indict Wilson, with growing signs that a non-indictment would be announced.

4.1 Organic organizing

Many of those interviewed described the movement as both 'leaderless' and 'leaderful' simultaneously. "People, especially the women, will step up when it really counts," one woman in her 20s said, "but at the end of the day, nobody is more important than anybody else in this movement." People also observed that nobody was beyond reproach. "The minute someone thinks they're all that, there's someone else lett'n 'em know they need to check themself," Gloria shared. While struggles for hierarchy clearly occurred, protesters often spoke about the 'organic nature' of actions in contrast to formal organizational structures, which emphasize planning, define strict parameters of execution, and identify consistent people in charge. In this struggle, leaders emerged in and through actions. Many of those interviewed stated that their attitudes toward and understanding of queer people and queer politics were changed based on the fact the queer individuals were doing the work, consistently showing up, and leading in ways that "were working." These tactics, however, often seemed to "just happen" in the heat of protest, and witnesses described how the performative and improvisational qualities of actions organically emerged in particular ways at particular moments.

One such 'organic action' took place on October 8 when sustained protests extended to St. Louis City after an off-duty police officer working as a neighborhood guard in the Shaw neighborhood fired seventeen times on Vonderrit Meyers, killing the Black teenager as he ran away. For several nights, protesters shut down the major thoroughfare of Grand Avenue. A few days later, they marched across, and shut down, Interstate 44. Entering the campus of nearby St. Louis University, they were joined by hundreds of students. For six days, under the banner of 'Occupy SLU' over a thousand people lived in tents and occupied the campus. The university ultimately conceded to thirteen demands made by the Black Student Alliance, Tribe X—a newly formed organization of Ferguson protesters, and the established NGO Metro St. Louis Coalition for Inclusion and Equity. In exchange, protesters agreed to leave the campus. Like many of the actions that characterize the Ferguson protest movement, Occupy SLU was not planned but unfolded minute by minute as a few individuals stepped up and were able to lead large crowds and determine strategy "on the fly." In fact, like Occupy SLU, the actions that were later viewed as having the most impact by protesters and people in the region alike were not initially planned but occurred in response to conditions on the ground.

> Alisha
>
> Occupy SLU itself was never planned. We were planning to go to SLU, but we were never planning to stay at SLU, so none of the occupation, none of the demands, none of the accords were pre-planned. We literally just marched. I think it was a crowd of about 2,000 people that started in Shaw. We had them as two separate groups, walking down Grand and, right by the Starbucks, we got met by a line of military police, geared up and blocking us.

And we stood there, in two lines, and I remember we had certain people who were supposed to talk to the police. Eventually, they had to move, because we made sure to keep everybody on the sidewalk, and legally, you can't block people from walking on the sidewalk. So they had to move out of our way.

[The] DPS officers were trying to negotiate with us, because, we, myself, and some other school students were in the front, and they recognized us. And they were like, oh, don't do this, this is mid-terms week. These kids need to study, like, don't do this, this isn't the time for this. Then Jonathan pulled out his ID and then the DPS officer was like, well the school students can come in, but y'all can't, nobody else can come with y'all. So Jonathan pulled out his ID and said these are all my guests. And then, just like that, everybody just marched in, and went into the campus and chanted as we walked. And all the school students were holding up their IDs and then we walked to the clock tower, and we stood out there.

And so a lot of people don't know, VonDerrit Myers's dad works at SLU, which is another connection of why that happened, why we felt like that should happen there. He worked at SLU. So we felt SLU shouldn't get to be silent. First of all, you're St. Louis University, so these things are happening in your community. But, an employee is involved in this, and previous to that, I had gotten emails that were like, oh, don't worry, we're going to keep you safe and I'm just like, what does that mean, you're going to keep me safe? Because I'm also a school student and I'm going to Ferguson every night.

And when we got there to the clock tower at SLU, the parents of VonDerrit Myers talked about their son, their loss, how they were feeling, how grateful they were, how they had never felt like before this, that they had any support from St. Louis University community. They kind of felt like nobody cared. And then there were different community members who came up and talked and spoke, so we must have been there for like a good, at least 30 minutes before we posed the question: Do we want to keep marching or do we want to keep going?

But I remember somebody saying, "nah, we've been marching for like 60 days. We want to do something different. We don't want to just keep marching. We want to do something different." So, to us, doing something different meant like, okay, we're just going to stay here. And that was the beginning of Occupy SLU and the encampment. We were there for six days. During those days, students brought food down and blankets, and other people came down to the campus and brought food and blankets. Of course, there was news cameras. And in the end, SLU's president had to sign a concession to our demands.

4.2 Race, gender, and generation

The organic action of Occupy SLU coincided with a series of planned actions and resistance activities called Ferguson October, which were organized by several groups, some of which were established organizations in the region and others which had formed

in response to Ferguson resistance. Advertised nationally on social media and attended by hundreds from outside the region throughout the month, the planning and execution of Ferguson October revealed many fissures between those who had been on the front lines since August 9 and those who were perceived to be riding a wave of local and national attention, especially with regard to how the resources that were pouring in from around the country would be collected and allocated. While those on the front lines perceived newly involved people as "riding," older, long-time activists in the region were frustrated by new young activists' reluctance to join established organizations and recognize the work they had been doing for many years. Many young protesters were frustrated with being dismissed as simply "street protesters" by "old heads," especially women, queer, and trans individuals who consistently criticized what they saw as histories of heteropatriarchy. There were particularly heightened tensions between protesters and the Organization for Black Struggle (OBS) and Missourians Organizing for Reform and Empowerment (MORE).

OBS was founded in 1980 "to address, through a number of organizing strategies, quality of life issues affecting the black community."[111] The founding group was made up of seasoned Black activists, including Jamala Rogers and Percy Green, III, who had a history of putting their bodies on the line and targeting specific racist policies in St. Louis as members of the St. Louis chapter of the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE) and Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (ACTION), which was later changed to Action Committee to Improve Opportunities Now. ACTION "used militant, nonviolent direct action to fight for more and better black employment at the city's major firms," as well as addressing police brutality and the connections between race and class during the 1960s and 1970s.[112] In fact, the ways in which Ferguson protesters use spectacle and make people in the region uncomfortably confront pain and privilege continue a long tradition of similar methods of Black struggle in a "culture of opposition" in St. Louis.[113]

MORE, which was originally the St. Louis Chapter of the Association for Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), focuses on community organizing around inequalities affecting low- and moderate-income people and has a predominantly white leadership. MORE's history as a predominately white liberal organization and the connection of OBS with 60s- and 70s-era Black militancy tactics and politics exposed how race and generation played out when it came to organizing, supporting, and funding protest efforts. Issues of the protesters' generations and knowledge (or lack thereof) regarding the legacies of Black struggle in St. Louis became apparent in relation to interactions between protesters and OBS, as relayed in interviews. If, as Clarence Lang argues, "Civil Rights and Black Power were neither dichotomous nor seamless, but rather discernible phases in an ongoing Black Freedom Movement,"[114] then the Ferguson protesters could be understood as yet another, if distant, "discernable phase" in the Black

[111] Jamala Rogers, Testimony to the Public Safety Committee, Board of Alderman, June 24, 2004.
[112] Clarence Lang, "Between Civil Rights and Black Power in the Gateway City: The Action Committee to Improve Opportunities for Negroes (ACTION), 1964–74," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 3 (March 2004): 725–754:725.
[113] George Lipsitz documents the culture of opposition in St. Louis in *A Life in the Struggle: Ivory Perry and the Culture of Opposition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).
[114] Lang, "Between Civil Rights and Black Power in the Gateway City," 725.

Freedom Movement, following a long history of very corporal resistance in St. Louis. Yet, many protesters themselves were frustrated with this correlation. MORE, on the other hand, represents the classic predominantly white social organization, capitalizing (in the eyes of many Ferguson protesters as well as people outside of the movement) on Black struggle.

Darwin

So there were only two organizations that were already organized when Ferguson started. We didn't initially think about officially organizing ourselves because I guess we thought we'd only be out there two or three days. Once it got into weeks and then months, um, we realized really fast that was a huge mistake we made entrusting the financial and organizational stuff to OBS and MORE.

Brittany

You got the organization MORE, that is predominantly white teaming up with OBS, a predominantly Black organization that hasn't had any status in like 20 years. No one's heard of them except those directly involved in community organizing. MORE, because it's white, has the resources so there was a benefit for OBS to team up with them. Any money that came into Ferguson was funneled through MORE to get to where the money was needed. The problem was white folks go home at the end of the day and they're not directly affected. They didn't know where the money was needed because they weren't out there. And OBS had to agree to a lot of stuff because people thought MORE was more legitimate. So there you have it, a white organization controlling and profiting from Black work.

Diamond

So in late August I was scouted by OBS because they wanted people from the front lines. But they didn't have the funds so I got traded to MORE with some other protesters. We started working for MORE and we were supposed to come up with proposals of what people actually wanted to see happen in the community. When we did, it was all, "No, no, no, we can't do that." And I was like, "I thought you guys were about doing stuff out here with all the resources you collected. You pulled us away from active protest to help you and now you're saying no to everything that we're bringing you from the community."

They actually told us we couldn't protest while working for them. Then they said doing things like working on neighborhood restoration, creating safe spaces, helping kids—that's not what they're about. So we felt like we got tricked. And we were promised money for housing and things like that in return and then they said, "Yeah, no. Never mind. We actually don't have it for you."

Jonathan

So a lot of the frustration has been with MORE and OBS. And "Cut The Check" will always be symbolic of that issue. Tribe X has had issues with not just them but other organizations that haven't stepped up or made themselves accountable. Better Family Life, Urban League, United Way, all these organizations are using Ferguson to fund their service work but they're not

being held accountable to the people that brought the attention and funding to them.

In May 2015, Ferguson protesters protested at meetings of both MORE and OBS, claiming that the funds collected through these organizations in the name of Black struggle in Ferguson were not getting to organizers on the ground and that record-keeping of funds spent was not comprehensive or transparent. Using the slogan, "Cut the Check," people representing various grassroots protest communities formed an organizational board intended to hold people and organizations accountable for how they managed funds brought in through protest activities.[115] A statement was issued through social media demanding that MORE and OBS release records regarding how funds had been distributed. MORE responded by releasing a list of people and organizations that had received money. According to protest organizers, many people listed had not actually received funds. Furthermore, the executive director of MORE, Jeff Ordower, had personally received over $20,000 for unspecified expenses incurred during Ferguson October for which there were no records. In June 2015, MORE released funds to at least seventeen protesters, and Jeff Ordower resigned. The tensions that arose between young protesters, who were used to spontaneously responding to conditions in front of them, and older organizers with years of planning experience and established institutionalized structures, revealed generational conflicts and ultimately resulted in failed collaboration on certain levels. While some examples of coming together were seen, this example suggests that more 'organic' coalitions should be formed that would require established organizations and donors to relinquish substantial control and demonstrate more trust in emergent processes of resistance.

As protesters entered their third month of direct actions, the female leadership emerging in Ferguson was further alienated by the attention and resources given to male activists, especially local celebrities and music artists, who claimed to speak for the movement as a whole but whom many felt were just promoting their careers through activist activities. While female bodies made up the majority of protesters, both male and female protesters observed that the media interviewed more men, either because they sought them out or because men were inserting themselves in those spaces. They also observed that money and resources coming into the movement were funneled to, and distributed by, organizations and institutions led by men, including Black churches. Male rap artists were especially criticized for taking advantage of the movement. Some protesters expressed frustration with older Black women, who they felt did not hold Black men accountable and granted them special privileges, revealing more generational politics. Protesters also identified class and educational distinctions regarding who got to speak on behalf of the movement and who was recognized nationally as a leader. On the other hand, people and organizations that to many represent male patriarchy, such as Louis Farrakhan and the Million Man March, were using iconography and images associated with Black female leaders to promote their causes without their permission.

[115] The demands of "Cut the Check" and a discussion regarding its importance can be found on the blog site of Angel Carter, *Liberated Souls*, https://liberatedsouls.org/ferguson-reflections-2/cut-the-check/.

Brittany

Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam are promoting their march on October 10th using my image and I was so upset because I'm a proud gay woman and I've had to carve out my own space being a Black gay woman in a Black liberation movement. Because often times people don't really know how to accept the fact that if you're fighting for Black liberation you're fighting for all people not just straight cisgendered Black folks. And I was like no, you're not about to use me to promote your march because I'm not comin' to your march because I don't feel safe at your march. I don't think it is okay to be openly against gay people and then have an openly gay person on your flier just promote your event. I'm going to be consistent with my message. I'm not going to be used. I'm not going to be anybody's Black women's face. I'm not doing that. (Streamed live on August 3, 2015. On STAR67 with Alexis and Brittany).

Brittany

Lately I've been holding men to the same expectation that I hold white people. I refuse to do the work for them. You know, I will be damned if in 50 years from now, Tef Poe [an outspoken St. Louis rap artist who helped lead a Ferguson delegation to the United Nations] is painted as the pinnacle leader of the movement, you know. Or if any cisgendered man is because he fits the narrative people want to tell. We need to get this history right.

Nell (Pseudonym)

During Ferguson October, the people coming in from outside to organize wanted to deal with the orgs and groups headed by men. I'm not saying all those guys didn't mean well most of the time, but they became the focus of attention when things were more mainstream.

'Unsung Haiku'

There was this one night at the PD when some rapper pulled up in one of his vans that had his name and all his social media stuff on the side. He parked it so media cameras had it in the background. I was like, "Man, you going to have to move this truck or we're flipping it." There were a lot of artists who came out there for the sake of getting footage. They'd put revolutionary lyrics in their songs but I know, as an artist who was actually out there every day, they were only out there to show face. No chanting, no sign, no nothing. Just taking lots of selfies.

Kristina (pseudonym)

And you're not supposed to tell them [hetero men] anything either. Within the movement we were being suppressed as Black women and if we tried to do anything nice for ourselves, watch out. A select few [hetero men] were benefitting from the movement. Getting money from orgs and stuff while we could barely eat. And they were the ones telling us to love and support each other but not helping anybody out. Or telling us to go clean somebody's house for money while they're just getting checks for showing up. Why would I go scream at the police but then remain silent about y'alls stuff. They just really starting to resemble my oppressor and I've liberated myself from that shit.

Mary

It's also about generation because a lot of the older Black women still hold up the men, and support them. They don't think Black men should be challenged in public. And I find that really interesting. I think, "Are you really gonna put up with that?" Because there was a time when I would have too but I've been changed by these young women leaders. Like some of the older women think men should not have to do work like mopping, sweeping, and cooking. There's also not nearly as many men in the movement as women. When the men are there they will try to take charge and when they're not, things will get done. There are few men who respect the work and do important stuff but I can count them on one hand.

Darwin

The one thing I would say is that if a real problem comes up at an action, people go get a man before they go get a female. That has happened a whole lot. And I've been one of those chosen people. Like just the presence of a man settles things down. And I would say that even though this is a women's led movement, they have the control but none of the power in the form of money or resources. So they can't actually steer the larger movement and get the results they want because the money gets given to the men. Either directly or to their organizations that they lead.

Every time we need a space, the women have to go talk to a man. Like, "Hey, can we meet at your church?" Then we get there, and the women lead. But they don't get money or anything else. And that's the truth. The donors look at organizations and every time they give to the one that's led by a man. The media, the politicians, the officials, they always go to the men first. The access to money and the distribution of funds have really been glossed over when people talk about this movement. I'm sorry, it just has.

Alisha

You have so many people profiting from Ferguson. Building their careers and their platforms on Ferguson but they've never even gone to an action. It happens all the time. So many people are supposed to be more qualified to talk about this than the people on the streets. People who never put their bodies on the line are getting on planes that other people paid for. Staying in hotels that other people paid for. And the people in the streets are the people at the bottom, a lot of them. Like I'm just trying to get groceries for next week.

Chuck

The mainstream media has selected the visible leaders of this movement. My issue with that is that the people who got labeled leaders by the national media, it was because of their level of privilege. That still goes back to respectability politics. The media wants to hear things said in a certain way so they pick the people that can say it that way.

4.3 Queer Black women erasing queer Black women

To many people who are unfamiliar with the specific events and people that came to make up the Ferguson Protest Movement, it is synonymous with what is today understood

as the Black Lives Matter Movement. Most Ferguson protesters, however, reported frustration regarding this perception. Many in fact stated that Black Lives Matter, which is an organization founded by queer Black women following the death of Trayvon Martin, capitalized on the work of Ferguson resistance. While a few leaders identified with the Black Lives Matter movement as cohesively working in a similar direction as themself, most, like Brittany Ferrell (quoted at the beginning of this section), expressed irritation that the Black Lives Matter organization had capitalized on the sacrifices of Ferguson protesters and the visibility of events that traumatized many people in the St. Louis region. This frustration regarding the difference between Ferguson resistance and Black Lives Matter transcended the differences between women- and queer-of-color protesters and heteronormative and hypermasculinized viewpoints. Many people interviewed also stated that they were frustrated with how the Black Lives Matter organization and those who claimed to speak for the BLM movement had reduced the struggle to a set of demands. They stated that by asking for body cameras and more police training, it appeared that all that is needed in order to make Black lives nondisposable is to change a few specific policies. Many Ferguson protesters argue, however, that this approach does not address the racism they experience daily and, by appealing to technologies of the liberal state, it reduces the saliency and potential for radical Black flesh to tangibly disrupt systems rooted in white supremacy.

Protesters across age, gender, and sexuality also expressed disappointment that the founders of the BLM organization did not challenge the narrative that credited them with founding the national movement or linked them directly to Ferguson. Some, in fact, expressed outrage at what they felt was essentially Black queer women erasing other Black queer women. While people outside of the Ferguson protest movement seem to consider events and actions in Ferguson as part of, or an extension of, a national Black Lives Matter movement, it became clear in interviews that a substantial number of Ferguson protesters consider themselves to be something different. It also became evident that those pushing for an expanded understanding of blackness and intersectional struggle, as well as those arguing that an expanded agenda was hijacking the movement, were in agreement when it came to distinguishing between the Ferguson protesters and the Black Lives Matter organization. In fact, opinions regarding the larger Black Lives Matter movement appear to be a potentially unifying issue amongst the broad array of people that mobilized in response to the death of Michael Brown.

> E.J.
> The Ferguson situation after Mike Brown was like a storm at sea. And Black Lives Matter was like a surfer that was able to ride that wave, to make it look like they were at the center of it. Most people did not know that the Black Lives Matter organization existed until after Mike Brown got killed. Most people don't even know it's an organization now. It's a trendy little chant and hashtag that ties together the work of a lot of people in a lot of places but Ferguson put it on the map.
> Cassandra (pseudonym)
> I think the most troubling organization to me is Black Lives Matter. I think about this a lot and I'm going to think about it until somebody actually says something. I remember when we first took to the streets in August. And I

remember when I first met Alicia and Patrisse and Diana weeks later at Starsky's church and they wanted to interview us for an article Alicia was writing about the Bay Area. And at the time I didn't know what Black Lives Matter was. Nobody did.

I didn't know what was unfolding. I thought everyone that came on their freedom bus just wanted to help. I didn't know they were coming to build a brand and capitalize on the backs of people that sacrificed and continue to sacrifice their lives. Like just yesterday someone on Facebook was commenting, "Alicia Garza was invited to the State of the Union and she deserves to be there because she started this movement." And I was like, "No, she was the founder of an organization." And he was like, "What's the difference, it's just semantics." There's actually a big difference. They refuse to denounce that narrative. This is erasure. It's revisionist history. It's queer Black women erasing queer Black women.

Alexis

Black Lives Matter was not a movement before Ferguson, it was solely an organization. If it were not for the Ferguson protesters there would be no Black Lives Matter movement. Period.

Kristina

Black Lives Matter has nothing to do with St. Louis. They've been here but did they meet with the community? No. They met with people they wanted to meet with. That's how they entered the community. I've spoken to all three of the founding members in person but I've never organized with them. They organize with an elite group of hand-selected people. This has got to be confusing to people that don't actually know the history and what's been happening. Like if you weren't in Ferguson you just believe what the media tells you about Black Lives Matter. Why wouldn't you?

Jonathan

The amount of focus that has been put on Black struggle because of Ferguson is amazing. I never thought there would be such national and international attention put back on that struggle at this time. People credit BLM with doing that but it was Ferguson that made these conversations possible.

I think when you say Black Lives Matter it ends up putting a blanket over the whole character and color of people in Ferguson. I'm fine with it being used as long as you clarify what you're talking about.

Mr. Moff

Last year [Lost Voices] hosted a Stop the Violence march. It was huge. We reached out to everyone we could think of—priests, pastors, aldermen, and we reached out to Black Lives Matter. Instead of helping us, they decided to hold their own march instead. And theirs was not successful because they were too busy making themselves look good and we had all the people.

4.4 Diaspora-as-difference

As discussed previously with regard to the gendered oppressions experienced within the movement, the generational and racial conflicts that arose between Ferguson

protesters and established organizations such as OBS and MORE, and the misrecognitions concerning relationships to, and between, Black Lives Matter, are constitutive of the history and conditions of Black organizing. These contestations of meaning, belonging, and territory, as well as concerns regarding who may speak for whom, reveal the multivalent and fluid conditions of Black identity and the shared yet differing experiences to the Black diaspora. The Black diasporic subject is fundamentally shaped by shared loss and displacement, but the ways individuals and groups practice identity and establish belonging are creative acts that draw from particularized experiences across space and time. For Stuart Hall, these acts are "imaginative rediscoveries" that require the acknowledgment of difference and rupture while remembering that "what we share is precisely the experience of a profound discontinuity."[116] For Nadia Ellis, the reckoning with the intimacy of alterity is part of Black experience found in different modes of diasporic belonging, all of which are haunted by ghosts of the historical past and present.[117]

The shared experience and trauma of events in Ferguson, and night after night of sustained resistance against excessive force and state violence, created a community of difference that came to be called "the protest family." Protesters spent their time almost exclusively with branches of 'the family' both inside and outside of protest. A weekly meal was shared by those across the whole family in the parking lot adjacent to the police station, which was provided by a respected 'elder,' Mama Cat. It was clear through interviews that 'protest family' meant different things to different people, but the experience of struggle did much to create bonds that held together even through vast disagreements and differing perspectives. As Angel recalled more than two years after the death of Michael Brown, "I have a community now. The respect and the love and support that people show—I am literally surrounded by people who would die for me." The bond of respect and love in the face of brutal disrespect and violence are an important dimension within this movement. In this way the Ferguson Protest Movement represents a community that not only demands a better world but also provides a better way of living in the one that currently exists.

> Jonathan
> The movement family is essentially like food in your stomach from people you don't necessarily know but can trust. Like Mama Cat. Early on she was out there providing meals and snacks for people who were exhausted and without nutrition. And the social time around meals that she provided was really important because those spaces were a rare thing. It was a space away from the trauma.
> 'Haiku Unsung'
> Like, there were people that fell out with their actual family because they didn't agree on either the message or the kinds of actions or both. But to be standing there side by side with somebody who's going to link arms with

[116] Stuart Hall, "Culture, Identity, and Diaspora," in *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 392–403:395.
[117] Nadia Ellis explores these themes in her book *Territories of the Soul*, and specifically in the chapter "Burning Spear and Nathaniel Mackey at Large," 147–76.

you and keep you from getting arrested or come and make sure that you're not sprayed or shot, that takes a tremendous amount of trust and love.

Brittany

We're able to laugh together, we're able to cry together, we fight together. And we see each other on the street and be like, "What's up?" You know if I got a dollar and you ain't got shit, we got 50 cents between us. Because there's not a lot of support doing this work. It's not honorable work to most folks, the ones willing to take the scraps they're given. So it's important to have the [movement] family there to support you and check you.

Ivy (pseudonym)

The Ferguson family to me is a sisterhood. The relationships I've created over these months are the best I've ever had. The people that are still around have a certain character. I don't know. It's just some dope ass people that I'm really glad to know. They will hold you to your word. They truly want to see the best for you. And you can just be honest with them no matter what.

Alexis

"The family" are the people that I met on the front lines in the very first days. I got gassed with them. I got shot at with them. I got arrested with them. I've set up organizational spaces with them. People I actually fucking like. We built it from there. We've just, you know, we have a bond and they are the people I ain't never got to ask if they're riding.

Kristina

The movement family is like these people that some of them you can't stand but you still don't want the police to fuck them up. It's like when you don't really like all the people in your actual family but you still deal with them and you don't want anybody else messing with them. That's exactly what it is. There are so many people I love and adore and there's people you don't speak to but you'll sit outside the jail and make sure the police don't kill them.

Mary

I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in something so enormously significant. There is definitely a profound love. I mean, when you're in extraordinary situations, emergency situations, and there are people standing next to you that have your back. There is an enormous emotional support for one another, a depth of love and endurance…. It's a family. But it's a family built on the violence enacted in this society. It's a community of choice and I need to be here right now.

The profound love between protesters extended to individual relationships. Alexis Templeton and Brittany Ferrell married on December 16, 2014, after meeting on the front lines of protest in the immediate days after Brown's death. Describing some of her feelings, Alexis recalled in an interview with Jamilah Lemieux,

> On July 6th 2013, I was in a car accident. I lost my dad. I lost my ex-fiancée. I lost my uncle. Everybody [in the car] died except me. I was the only one who

made it. I went through a lot of depression. A lot of suicide attempts. A lot of suicidal tendencies. And then, one day I set foot in Ferguson and it gave me purpose to not kill myself. Literally an hour before I went out on the ground, I was about to kill myself. I went outside and then I came back in and I didn't wanna die no more. Then that started to fade. That passion started to fade. It was like a momentary Band-Aid. The trauma and the tear gas and the rubber bullets and all of that, and the protests and the chanting, it all became normal. So then I meet her, you know what I'm sayin'? She completely made my life go 360 [degrees.] I woke up one morning and I just didn't think about killing myself. I didn't think about how I was gonna make it through the day. That's when I was like "I gotta marry this girl!"[118]

Figure **5.7** August 22, 2014 in Ferguson (source: James Keivon/NY Daily News).

Figure **5.8** October 7, 2014 (source: Robert Cohen/Associated Press).

[118] Jamilah Lemieux, "Brittany and Alexis: In Love and Struggle," *EBONY Magazine*, August 7, 2015.

Figure **5.9** December 25, 2014 (Associated Press).

5. REGISTERS OF RESISTANCE

5.1 Queer praxis

In contrast to Black respectability politics, which many people associate with the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, and to the heteropatriarchy embedded within past Black liberation organizations and activities in the 1950s through 1970s,[119] the resistance that emerged in Ferguson pushes and interrogates the boundaries of Black intelligibility. This is a queer-of-color intervention in the praxis of protest in the same way queer-of-color critique intervenes in the historical and theoretical frameworks of liberation theory.[120] The bodies and voices of Ferguson protesters make visible the ways Black women, as well as queer, trans, and other nonconforming Black individuals, are unapologetically challenging all limits placed on, and through, blackness. In so doing, they call into question the myriad ways previously invisible people fundamentally shaped the history of resistance against racialized oppression. Consequently, these individuals are critically important to shaping the nature and efficacy of new iterations of resistance in St. Louis and beyond. These young leaders specifically emphasize aspects of self-love, spectacle, intersectional oppressions, multiplicities of blackness, and the productive possibilities of queerness, in response to the violence visited on Brown's flesh for nonconformity, including the visceral experiences of his body in the street and the corporal experiences of everyday violence lived in North St. Louis County. Critiques of respectability politics, liberal ideology, and neoliberal urban governance, as well as challenges to heteropatriarchy within liberation movements, are not new and can be traced back to anti-racist projects, particularly Black feminists writing and practice against discourses of homogeneity promoted by both the state and Black liberation projects.[121] Although separated by a generation, the emergent leaders in Ferguson can be viewed as a continuum of Black feminist praxis that emphasizes the relationship between intersecting oppressions and the inherent but often denied

[119] For an insightful discussion on these relationships, see Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black,* Introduction.
[120] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black.*
[121] Although there are many moreee for example, Audre Lorde, Shirley Chisholm, Margaret Sloan, Angela Davis, Francis Beal, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, bell hooks, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Patricia J. Williams.

heterogeneity within identity and social formations. As Ula Taylor states, "the ultimate goal of black feminism is to create a political movement that not only struggles against exploitative capitalism. . . but that also seeks to develop institutions to protect what the dominant culture has little respect and value for—black women's minds and bodies.[122]

As such, Ferguson resistance leaders engage in a queering of protest, which not only reveals intersecting oppressions practiced at multiple scales of governance impacting North St. Louis County, but also interrogates "how intersecting racial, gender, and sexual practices" within the culture of protest "antagonize and/or conspire with the normative investments of nation-states and capital."[123] Roderick Ferguson argues that queer-of-color critique is most interested in understanding how social formations reproduce and/or trouble social imaginaries of homogeneity—most specifically within nationalist discourses. According to Ferguson, queer-of-color critique combines the intersectional interventions of Black feminism and queer politics—which names the liberal state as a problem—and probes the limits of historical materialism. He argues that the Marxist obsession with class and property obfuscates the impact of race and gender on the material world and has also nurtured heteropatriarchy in past national liberation movements. Queer-of-color critique is concerned with exposing race and gender and countering heteropatriarchy within antiracist projects. The actions and conversations practiced by young Black women and queer leaders in response to the killing of Michael Brown and treatment of his body offer a queer-of-color critique that names intersectional oppression as violence executed by the state. This intervention also makes visible the implications of gender and sexuality in material terms and vehemently rejects all forms of heteropatriarchy within Black resistance.

5.2 (Re)oriented bodies

The body itself is an important part of the queer praxis in Ferguson. Turning the spectacle of flesh from the violated body of Brown in the street to the spectacle of bodies confronting daily life and norms in the region, protesters viscerally defy and critique hegemonic practices of oppression across boundaries of race, gender, class, and generation. The transformation of Michael Brown's body from sovereign and disciplined bare life into spectral flesh has set in motion the possibility for imagining different modes of life. The registers of freedom known through Black experience and written into Black flesh can also be understood relative to the transgenerational transmission of psychic, temporal, and bodily traumas of blackened bodies that constitute the monstrous intimacies Christina Sharpe describes.[124] The intimately violent processes of subjectification used to create slave subjects remain readable and locatable in the continued traumas enacted upon postmodern Black subjects: "those black and blackened bodies become the bearers (through violence, regulation, transmission, etc.) of the knowledge of certain subjection as

[122] Ula Y. Taylor, "Making Waves: The Theory and Practice of Black Feminism," *The Black Scholar* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 18-28, 18-19.
[123] Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*, 4.
[124] Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects.*

well as the placeholders of freedom for those who would claim freedom as their rightful yield."[125]

These placeholders of freedom represent what Negri and Hardt, drawing on Foucault, observe as the ability of all subjects to access "a margin of freedom, no matter how narrow that may be, which grounds their capacity to resist."[126] This suggests that with all power and oppression, there is an equal and opposite possibility for freedom. Using slavery as an example, Negri and Hardt argue that slavery was overturned "not by the good conscience of republican values, as if it were just a premodern remainder; nor by the progressive forces of capital, as if it were a precapitalist form that took time for capital to eliminate entirely. Instead slavery is destroyed by the resistances of slaves themselves, who make it untenable as a form government and unprofitable as a form of production."[127] Likewise, truly liberatory projects in our time will not come through reluctant actions by the liberal state that appear just, but through the knowledge and actions of bodies that suffer to claim freedom as their rightful yield.

The knowledge of a different freedom produced within intimate spaces of trauma is always already present within oppression itself and fundamentally shapes the work of Black women protesters leading resistance in St. Louis. This knowledge and presence, which is translated into power and derived in, and through, their experience as Black women and Black queer people, extends well beyond notions of Black pride or Black agency. Rather, as many leaders stated, these women queer-of-color protesters view their work as a global emancipatory project critical to, and intersectional with, any work aimed at dismantling structural foundations and everyday practices of oppression.[128] These same women- and queer-of-color protesters assert themselves as always-already self-defined as deviant, choosing to be located outside normative roles and subjectivities. This is the flesh that pushes and contests the inscripted lines between and within gendered, sexualized, violated, and racialized bodies, upon what Katherine McKittrick describes as "demonic grounds"—the ground upon which inscripted flesh, past and present, is rejoined and becomes one.[129]

The inscription of 'demonic flesh' upon the body of Michael Brown by Darren Wilson became the demonic grounds,[130] the territories of the soul,[131] upon which Ferguson protesters brought past and present inscribed 'flesh' together and staked their claims. Through the liberatory capacity of phenomenologically claiming and defining their own marked flesh and using their bodies as placeholders of freedom in space and time, these young women call out the inhumanity that perpetrates violence against dysselected bodies

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[125] Ibid., 4.
[126] Negri and Hardt, *Commonwealth*, 75.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Based on interviews with core organizers of the Ferguson Protest Movement between September 2015 and January 2016.
[129] Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).
[130] McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds.*
[131] Ellis, *Territories of the Soul.*

and talk back to the voices that would foreclose Black identity and liberation.[132] The focus on the lived body, or body schema, shifts the discursive field of protest from symbolic life and identity—the claiming of rights, the recognition of personhood, and the fixing of identity—to the relentless insistence on *living* as fully human, ceasing to tolerate Black pain, and reorienting one's body schema to the place in which the body feels 'at home.'

Not surprisingly, expressions of untempered anger and rage, and the projection of "Not Your Respectable Negro" that came to define Ferguson protesters, were often read as illegitimate acts or as acts of violence. This stood in contrast to the degrees of violence enacted by the state, which claimed that it legitimately and rationally used violence for the purpose of controlling irrational violence against the state. As Chandan Reddy points out, "legitimate violence (by the state) can thrive only when its enactment produces excludable groups, formations, practices, and meanings . . . .The state's claim to legitimate violence is predicated on its ability to achieve a monopoly on rationality as well, most powerfully through the extension of universal citizenship."[133] Reddy's first point is how the state produces and reproduces irrational actors—excludable groups—through apparently rational acts of violence. In spite of the remarkable amount of state violence enacted on protesters between August 9 and December 24, 2014, and the infrequent acts of violence by a handful of protesters, the protest movement was consistently represented and referred to as riotous and irrational while police response was viewed as necessary and rational. These representations of the protests illustrate Reddy's point. His second point, that the myth of universal citizenship works to insulate the state's monopoly on violence, can also be observed in the case of Ferguson. The words of the Ferguson mayor cited earlier, suggesting that all citizens of Ferguson wanted the same things and had the same opportunities, implied that the resistance could be viewed as a few unruly residents and a lot of people from somewhere else—or that people who did not want the same thing were not legitimate residents. Both of these points lead to Reddy's larger argument:

> Movements for social emancipation that use claims of universal citizenship (civil rights) to seek full inclusion within the modern state form will do little to change the conditions by which legitimate violence continues to be naturalized as a supposedly substantive attack on socially eradicable irrational practices and cultural expressions.[134]

The young women and queer-of-color leaders of Ferguson resistance understand that seeking inclusion in, and through, modern state structures or discourses of freedom will not bring about the transformation they seek. While changing laws and policies that implicitly disadvantage people of color is important, the more fundamental transformation sought by these protesters occurs in and through a corporal schema—the orientation of bodies toward one another.

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[132] In "Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?" Sylvia Wynter argues that capital accumulation has become the sole macro-signifier of symbolic life, and "[s]ymbolic death, therefore, is that of having been naturally dysselected and mastered by Malthusian natural scarcity: as are the globally homogenized….poor/the pauper/homeless/the welfare queens," p. 37.

[133] Chandan Reddy, *Freedom with Violence: Race, Sexuality, and the US State* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 39.

[134] Reddy, *Freedom with Violence,* 39.

6. More than demands

While transformation at the level of changing corporal schema is not yet visible, changes have occurred that impact lived experience in the St. Louis region. Some of the recent reforms stemming from agitation and revelation in Ferguson include: the removal of several Ferguson officials deemed responsible for the problems delineated in the Department of Justice report on Ferguson; a consent decree that holds the city of Ferguson accountable for remedying specific problems cited in the DOJ report; the resignation of the municipal judge and prosecutor accused of designing the details of Ferguson's kleptocracy; newly proposed state legislation and bills passed, such as Missouri Senate Bill 5 of 2014, that address connections between municipal budgets and predatory policing; ongoing state audits of courts and municipalities; voluntary and mandated court reform initiatives; multiple individual and class-action lawsuits brought against municipalities in North St. Louis County for the violation of citizen rights; renewed calls and traction for civilian review boards and municipal court consolidation; the adoption of amnesty programs by a few municipalities in North St. Louis County that waive fees and fines and drop warrants; and two new Black members of the Ferguson city council. Several commissions have also produced scathing reports, which are discussed in Chapter Three. Perhaps most importantly, it can also be argued that without the Ferguson uprising, the Black Lives Matter movement, which has become a household name and rallying cry for now countless actions of resistance against state sanctioned violence across the United States, would still be a little-known organization with a small web presence.

The interviews also reveal that Ferguson protesters have, for now, turned from active protest toward addressing specific needs and transformations within their community, both individually and as groups, in addition to the policy impacts listed above. Efforts include, but are not limited to, providing supplies, clothing, and support to school-aged children, maintaining a food pantry, overseeing a monthly reading group, addressing housing needs of families facing homelessness, providing technical training to youth, working on efforts to raise the minimum wage in Missouri, working to elect protesters to local public office, pressuring the city of Ferguson to comply with the DOJ consent decree, and maintaining blogs and social media sites to keep people informed. A few protesters have gained national attention and more formally joined the Black Lives Matter national efforts. Perhaps most visible at a national level, DeRay McKessen recently ran (unsuccessfully) for mayor in his home city of Baltimore and has been in headlines for his activism in cities across the country. McKessen and others, such as Brittany Packnett and Johnetta Elzie, have been instrumental in starting informational outlets for police accountability and speaking nationally regarding issues facing people of color.

In keeping with all emergent social movements, struggles over leadership, priorities, organization, and tactics threaten to undermine singular direction, lasting commitment, and degrees of sustainable change. Beyond the threats these struggles pose, conflict can be alternatively viewed as productive and part of the social movement process. As conflicts arise and become publicly visible, questions also arise regarding if and how the momentum gained through Ferguson protests will produce local staying power and new activist communities. Questions also remain regarding how the legacies of Ferguson protests should, and will, be tied to Black Lives Matter—as both an organization and a movement.

At issue locally are the ways purportedly well-meaning, mostly white individuals and nonprofit groups operating within normative institutional structures usurp necessary resources and donations, become the visible agents of change, and stand on foundations laid by marginalized and delegitimized people.[135] In keeping with histories of Black movements and Black political culture,[136] tensions also occur regarding the antagonistic tactics of young protesters who feel they are valued in a particular moment but are no longer needed by some of the established Black and white activists and politicians in the region. Consequently, the young people relegated as 'street protesters' claim they are often not invited to the informal 'Organizing Table' that brings together recognized 'post-Ferguson' actors.[137] In response, young protesters appear to sometimes miss or dismiss the connection between themselves and the rich history of Black struggle in the region.

Ongoing discussions and disagreements between core leaders also continue to pose important questions regarding the relationship between the Ferguson protest family, the Black Lives Matter organization, and Black struggle more generally.[138] Many of those who have prioritized local issues and continue to focus attention on reform in the St. Louis region are publically critical of Ferguson leaders who gained a national spotlight and are now indistinguishable from the Black Lives Matter platform.[139] The divisions discussed above with regard to those who do not support intersectional politics are fully evident as well. The execution-style murder of protester Darren Seals (aka KingD Seals) on September 6, 2016, brought many of these disagreements and hard feelings into public view through social media. While there is shared animosity toward Black Lives Matter and consensus that the police investigation of Seals's death will not be carried out in a just manner, those within Seals's network of activists redirected much of their anger and grief toward the women- and queer-of-color leaders. Some alluded to the idea that protesters at odds with Seals within the movement were indirectly responsible for his death. Those who were not in Seals's circle of activists attempted to walk a line between acknowledging disagreements with Seals and showing respect for his passion for the movement.

Regardless of the challenges and tensions that exist, the transformative spaces of possibility for local reforms and national discussion were opened up through a dialectics of violence and liberation—on, and of, the flesh—in the form of the Ferguson Protest Movement. Although the revelations of vast economic exploitation and racially motivated policing of residents in Ferguson and North St. Louis have been largely credited to watchdog agencies, legal advocates, media investigations, and Department of Justice

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[135] An indictment of these practices can be found in Angel Carter's essay "Cut the Check," May 2015, *Liberated Souls* (blog), http://liberatedsouls.co/ferguson-reflections-2/cut-the-check/.

[136] To understand how similar tensions between antagonism and accommodation have played out throughout the history of organized black struggle, see Robinson, *Black Movements in America*.

[137] Based on interviews with core organizers of the Ferguson Protest Movement between September 2015 and January 2016. The Organizing Table is the informal name for a group of activists, clergy, lawyers, and representatives from new and established groups in St. Louis that recognize themselves as overseeing and carrying out activities, reform, and political pressure that continues from, and capitalizes on, the momentum created by Ferguson protests.

[138] Based on interviews with core organizers of the Ferguson Protest Movement between September 2015 and January 2016.

[139] Key-informant interviews—Ferguson protesters.

reports, this work would not exist if young protesters had not consistently been (as they continue to be) performatively and unapologetically present and visible in physical and discursive spaces for the purpose of creating discomfort, maintaining pressure, and reorienting the proximate and actual locations of bodies in space. It is also fair to say that the broad scope of demands and reform, in both St. Louis and the United States currently, would have been much narrower in scope had young women and queer protesters not consistently reframed the problem space to extend well beyond immediate issues of police brutality. While "Justice for Mike Brown" brought people to the street, young emergent leaders pushed people in the region, the country, and the movement to recognize overlapping systems that had rendered Brown's life as disposable. These discussions continue in St. Louis and beyond, and while most people outside of the protest community consider the Ferguson Protest Movement to be over, those whose lives were transformed through sacrifice remain committed to fight in registers that go beyond those recognized by the liberal state.

> Kelly
> [In St. Louis] there's still the ability to reach out and pull different people for whatever is needed. And should anything happen again. Don't blink. People will mobilize faster than anybody can follow it. Everybody will be there.

List of Voices in Chapter Five, in order of appearance.[140]

Darren Wilson, Police Officer, Age 28 in 2014, White, Straight Male
Marlene, 50s, Black Straight Female
Cheyenne, 20s, Black Straight Female
Reverend Sekou, Local pastor and musician
'Sixela Yoccm', 20s, Black Straight Female
Mr. Moff, 40s, Black Straight Male
Ferguson Mayor James Knowles
William, 20s, Black Straight Male
Chuck Modiano, 40s, White Straight Male (Reporter)
Ms. Jones, 60s, Black Straight Female
Kiera, 20s, Black Straight Female
Brianna, Black, 20s, Straight Female
Reverend Al Sharpton
Mary (Pseudonym), 60s White Straight Female
Tia (Pseudonym), 20s Black Queer Female
Angel, 20s Black Straight Female

[140] With the exception of Darren Wilson and Reverend Al Sharpton, the voices represented in this chapter came from transcripts of interviews with peer-identified protest leaders. These interviews were conducted and recorded according to protocol approved by UC Berkeley. Respondents were asked if they wished to be named and cited in the research. Although the majority of respondents requested to be named and cited, the identifying information for several people was not provided to me. In the case of those that wished to remain anonymous or whose information was insufficient to use, pseudonyms were randomly assigned using a pseudonym software.

Alisha, 20s Black Straight Female
Valerie (Pseudonym), 30s, Black Straight Female
Estelle (Pseudonym), 20s, Black Straight Female
Diamond, 20s Black Queer Female
Alexis, 20s Black Queer Female
Jamell, 20s Black Straight Male
Antwan (Pseudonym), 20s Black Straight Male
Cameron (Pseudonym), 20s Black Straight Male
E.J., 20s Black Straight Male
Darwin (Pseudonym), 30s Black Straight Male
Mitchell, 20s Black Straight Male
Kathryn (Pseudonym), 20s White Queer Female
Jonathan, 20s, Black Straight Male, Tribe X Leader
Gloria (Pseudonym), 20s, Black Straight Female
Vanessa (Pseudonym), 20s, Black Queer Female
Kelly, 60s, White Straight Female
Nell (Pseudonym), 20s, Black Queer Female
'Haiku Unsung', Black Straight Male
Kristina (Pseudonym), 20s Black Straight Female
Cassandra (Pseudonym), 20s Black Queer Female
Ivy (Pseudonym), 20s Black Queer Female

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION: BODIES THAT SHOW UP

> I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids—and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me.
>
> —Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

Haunting occurs when bodies that are supposed to be invisible show up.[1] *Black Lives and Spatial Matters* is concerned with issues of invisibility and precarity in North St. Louis County and the experience of living as a racially determined sub/urban citizen. This work is also about bodies that show up—the hauntings posed by visible Black flesh that register the harm inflicted and the loss sustained by present and past violences, including the violence of invisibility. This type of haunting is "not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe,"[2] nor is it the haunting of the trace that captivates many postcolonial critiques. Rather, as Avery Gordon describes it,

> Haunting [is] precisely the domain of turmoil and trouble, that moment when things are not in their assigned places, when the cracks and the rigging are exposed, when the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving, when disturbed feelings won't go away, when easily living one day and then the next becomes impossible, when the present seamlessly becoming "the future" gets entirely jammed up. Haunting refers to this socio-political-psychological state when something else, or something different from before, feels like it must be done, and prompts a something-to-be-done.[3]

The bodies that haunted North St. Louis County, as described in Chapter Five, did not just register the harm inflicted by centuries-old logics that work to create disposable Black life; nor did they simply make visible a system of state violence based on an economy of profitable Black flesh, although they did both of these things. This haunting called for a something-to-be-done such that the future was called into question and living one day and then the next in the same way was no longer possible.

Paying attention to the experience, vulnerability, and agency of the lived body, this study moves beyond generalized observations and analysis of systems, populations, and governance. The body is in fact a political instrument, as we have seen in Chapter Five. Furthermore, shared vulnerabilities and experiences, ways of being in the world, are connected through embodiment and forge political communities. Bodies force confrontation at the point of visibility and, through visibility, bodies force those who cause suffering to make a choice—to see or not see their own acts. Judith Butler alludes to the

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[1] Avery Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," *Borderlands* 10, no. 2:1–21.
[2] Ralph Ellison, "Invisible Man," *The Underground Reader: Sources in the Trans-Atlantic Counterculture*, eds. Jeffrey H. Jackson and Robert Francis Saxe (New York: Berghahn, 2015 [1952]), 133.
[3] Gordon, "Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity," 3.

power of the body to reveal precarious life through her extension of Levinas's 'face of the Other,' stating,

> We cannot, under contemporary conditions of representation, hear the agonized cry or be compelled or commanded by the face. We have been turned away from the face, sometimes through the very image of the face, one that is meant to convey the inhuman, the already dead, that which is not precariousness and cannot, therefore, be killed; this is the face that we are nevertheless asked to kill, as if ridding the world of this face would return us to the human rather than consummate our own inhumanity. One would need to hear the face as it speaks in something other than language to know the precariousness of life that is at stake.[4]

The counter to contemporary conditions of representation, which obscure the body and the face of suffering, is the capacity of embodied experience to see, hear, and feel the vulnerability of our own bodies through the bodies of others. In this way, we might also experience a sense of the public in which oppositional bodies "are not feared, degraded, or dismissed, but valued for the instigation to a sensate democracy they occasionally perform."[5]

Black Lives and Spatial Matters lays bare formal and informal practices, as well as conditions of representation, that render life precarious, unflourishing, and ungrievable. This study also offers insight into what the 'performance' of a sensate democracy might look like. In looking at the historical, juridical, and rhetorical work of race in the creation and administration of North St. Louis County, this work is admittedly large in scope; however, examining the same location through multiple lenses of analysis allows us to see the many forms that cultural politics takes and the interconnectedness between various modalities of race-making. Furthermore, by considering physical, social, and political space, the varied yet dependent ways that racialized bodies and metropolitan space are produced are brought into view.

A consistent thread running through this study is the way cultural tropes—those concepts that appear to be natural and given within cultural production—are at once fixed and fluctuating. The concept of blackness-as-risk, in contradistinction to, and as a necessary condition for, the concept of whiteness-as-property,[6] is one such trope that has shaped the history of the St. Louis region, and, it is fundamental to understanding everyday practices and life in North St. Louis County today. 'Darkness'-as-risk was a key conceptual premise embedded in narratives of cultural savagery intended for the preservation of indigenous slavery in the early settlement of St. Louis. Due to the scarcity of African slaves and as a way to deal with in-the-way peoples, early St. Louisans continued to take, keep, and trade 'non-European' people in spite of Spanish emancipation policy and carefully navigated between the laws and customs of four imperial powers on the continent. Blackness-as-risk emerged again in the wake of the Haitian Revolution as fear of revolts

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[4] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004),150–51.
[5] Butler, *Precarious Life*, 151.
[6] See Chapter Four, pp. 118-119, for a discussion of whiteness-as-property as conceptualized by Cheryl Harris.

forced new global relations and the transfer of 827,000 square miles in North America, including St. Louis, from Spain, to France, to the United States at the turn of the nineteenth century. As C. L. R. James has shown, the forces acting in Haiti were more complex than simply a Black African revolt against white European domination.[7] Similarly, the forces of class, capital accumulation, plantation economies, imperial pursuits, questions of nation, and cultural specificities would converge in North America to force action, in this case to secure the transatlantic slave trade through the acquisition of property. The same forces intersected in St. Louis around questions of property, rights, and degrees of the human. National politics that traded in blackness-as-risk would determine the terms of Missouri statehood and played a key role in the lead-up to the lead-up to U.S. Civil War. The St. Louis region straddled a thin line between Northern and Southern ideologies on issues of slavery and 'non-white' rights, and blackness-as-risk framed the backlash to, and the failure of, Reconstruction policy in Missouri, representing free blacks as a threat to labor and investing mightily in whiteness as a cultural signifier of privilege that transcended class.

A fierce and somewhat peculiar desire for local autonomy (a force that from the very beginning of St. Louis history drove efforts to assert cultural specificity, deflect state sovereignty, and exclude difference) also arises as a consistent factor throughout this study. Significantly, a century after St. Louis was founded, ethnic European immigrants embraced local autonomy and left St. Louis city for suburban neighborhoods, establishing themselves as 'white' working-class enclaves, in contradistinction to dark urban space, where blackness-as-risk was spatialized. The spatialization of race and the *work of space* to establish and reinforce racial identity and to determine the boundaries of white privilege became congruent with the *work of race* in determining racial subjects in metropolitan space. The work of race and space as critical components of the modern racial state is carried out at the scale of local governance, as evidenced by this study. In this way, local governance must adopt the white spatial logics of the racial state—which relies on the trope of blackness-as-risk as an ordering principle—in order to maintain and justify its existence.

In North St. Louis County, where municipal autonomy is taken to the extreme, the resulting hyper-fragmentation of physical and political space establishes an environment of intense competition and antagonisms. This, in combination with limited opportunities for economic viability in the face of white flight and disinvestment, results in excessive practices of policing blackness-as-risk narrated through intersecting cultural politics of local governance, law enforcement, and municipal courts. A political economy of risk that capitalizes on tropes of the Black body operates in North St. Louis County in response to the hollowing out of the state and the inability to compete in a market-driven economic model of municipal finance where 'whiteness is property.' As discussed in Chapter Three, the double bind experienced by Black residents is a continuous loop in which the risk attached to their bodies is both the cause of depreciation and the source of survival for tiny cities. North St. Louis County is indeed a race-making situation.

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[7] C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, Second Edition (New York: Vintage, 1989).

The all-Black leadership in majority-Black cities in North St. Louis County also must adopt the logics of the racial state and promote blackness-as-risk in order to remain solvent. In fact, the higher the percentage of Black residents, the more cities rely on policing blackness to make up for lost revenues. In these cities, cultural tropes take the form of respectability politics steeped in the concept of racial uplift, and leaders are able to use particularly virulent rhetoric to justify culturally specific laws because they appear to be situated within the same racial and class subjectivities as their constituents. Political autonomy takes an even more extreme form in cities with all-Black leadership where the historical struggles for Black governance and Black political autonomy were fought for long and hard. While Black residents in these areas overwhelmingly believe they are exploited by their own Black leaders, they are not inclined to hand over the leadership of these areas to regional governance and white actors. Black leaders are also not inclined to step down. Regarding recent oversight of hyper-policing practices in St. Louis County brought about by protests in Ferguson, Black leaders make the valid point that new regulations will not impact predominantly white cities. Black leaders also correctly claim that, due to the economic factors stacked against them, majority-Black cities will be the only municipalities forced to give up political autonomy through dissolution. As regional policymakers debate how to rectify wrongs brought about by the liberal state through the mechanisms of the liberal state, one question looms large: What new race-making situations will arise when others are removed?

As an outcome of race-making situations, a perpetual tolerance of Black suffering and acceptance of premature Black death results in spaces where suffering is not only tolerated but expected and where occurrences of actual death are considered routine. The space of the ghetto, understood today as Black space in the U.S., represents a space of expected suffering where the value of life holds comparatively little currency. The white spatial imaginary of suburban space is necessarily dependent on its opposite—the imagination of Black urban space—which is viewed as justification for all that might be said about the suburbs. This is a biopolitical dialectic such that *making live* is dependent on the possibility of *letting die,* in space. In North St. Louis County the white suburban imaginary collides with Black bodies and creates a crisis. Because visible suffering, which is expected in Black space, cannot be tolerated in the imagination of the suburbs, historically white suburbs that 'become Black' must be reimagined as something else. As discussed in Chapter Four, North St. Louis County is rhetorically represented as *suburban* when referring to its white past and as *urban* when confronting its Black present. In actuality, North St. Louis County is a *pornotopology*—a paradoxical place where suffering is not only tolerated but expected and where Black political autonomy is fetishized as a testament to the promises of liberal democracy, although imagined possibilities remain out of reach for most residents. Black residents themselves simultaneously embrace and reject representations and identities of blackness in the context of urban and suburban space, and their perceptions and definitions of space—as urban or suburban—reflect an experience of their bodies, as both in and out of place, with very specific consequences.

The systemic and individualized violence described throughout this work is strikingly similar to descriptions of the space of the colony (and postcolony)—where life and death merge and extreme violence is naturalized. Also similar is the phenomenological

experience of extreme violence, oriented toward a group of people but individually lived. When considered through Frantz Fanon's descriptions of colonial space, North St. Louis County appears as a liminal space between the space of containment—the native town (the ghetto)—and the space of exclusion—the satellite towns of the metropole (suburbs).[8] Achille Mbembe questions the difference, if any, between colonial and postcolonial time and space when considering the 'phenomenology of violence,' the everydayness of things like harassment and fatigue and the uncertainties of everyday existence, in the postcolony. He asks, "Have we really entered another period, or do we find the same theater, the same mimetic acting, with different actors and spectators, but with the same convulsions and the same insult? Can we really talk of moving beyond colonialism?"[9] In the context of metropolitan space in the United States and elsewhere, Mbembe's questions resonate because we see the same spatial logics operating with regard to the production of racialized bodies in and through spaces of containment and spaces of exclusion.

Borrowing from Mbembe to theorize a 'phenomenology of extreme violence,' Étienne Balibar examines what constitutes extreme violence in the context of the everyday and how thresholds of intolerability are established relative to categories of the human. He observes,

> There is extreme violence in the brutality and suddenness of traumatic events, catastrophes that bring death, displacement, subjection to the power of a master. But there is also extreme violence in the indefinite repetition of certain habitual dominations at the invisible or indiscernible limit of violence because, it seems, they are part of the very foundations of society or culture. . . . Because violence and politics, violence and aesthetics, violence and moral experiences, and so on are inextricably associated, we feel the need to locate those thresholds associated with the idea of the intolerable. We place such thresholds in relation to a legal limit of the very possibility of politics. We might thus consider thresholds of the intolerable as manifestations of the element of inhumanity without which even the idea of humanity is meaningless.[10]

Pornotopologies are spaces where thresholds of the intolerable are constantly in flux and where subjectivities of oppressor and oppressed collide and become blurred. This is the space produced and controlled through the repetition of violences, seen and unseen, that together constitute a space of extreme violence. It is the container of risk attached to dark bodies, but it is also a fetishized place where opportunity is said to exist. It is, most importantly, necessary to the advancement of imperial projects at the largest scale, but also necessary for the production of metropolitan space at the scale of the local. North St. Louis County is not 'the ghetto' of Black urban space. Nor can it be understood within the spatial imagination of the suburbs. It is closer to the in-between space of the postcolony where it is

[8] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. C. Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1991) 38–39.
[9] Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 237.
[10] Étienne Balibar, "Violence and Civility: On the Limits of Political Anthropology," *Difference* 20, no. 2/3 (2009): 11–12.

difficult to discern the oppressor and where life is consistently and ruthlessly mediated through the signifiers of a dominant society, in this case through suburban norms.

From the space of extreme violence, which is both invisible and lived at the same time, emerged what could be considered an 'ethics of blackness' not dissimilar to the queer-of-color critique discussed in Chapter Five. This ethics of blackness relies on the possibility of a politics that is capable of transforming lived experience. It is the politics of a something-to-be-done. The ethics of blackness also relies on visible Black bodies—bodies that span physical, psychic, representative, and temporal identifications within and through blackness yet share in the ability to 'haunt' historico-racial constructions and systems of white heteronormativity. The Black body—as paradoxically marked (as Other) yet invisible—is, upon becoming visible, the location of knowledge that exposes what is unseen. It is the haunting of freedom in the face of unfreedom, the human that reveals vast inhumanity. If ethics is, as Michel Foucault insisted, the practice of freedom, then the insistence upon the visibility of unapologetic Black bodies and Black flesh is an ethical practice of 'blackness as freedom.'[11]

In North St. Louis County, Black bodies—most especially Black queer female bodies—became visible and mobilized radical imaginations of what should or could be in the face of what was and is. This visibility, which stemmed from the initial visibility of Michael Brown's body and the desecration of his flesh, exposed the unmet promises and false claims of the liberal state at multiple scales. The haunting of the space and the place in which Brown died also circumvented and connected time, such that, for those able to see the ghost, the space may just as well have been the hold of a ship traveling the Middle Passage or a tree where a Black body hung. The shared vision of Brown's body and what it symbolized brought together experiences of blackness and of violence across time and space and provided a political opening that is always present but not always within reach. The power of bodies to become visible, to haunt, to show up unexpectedly, is the counterpoint to extreme violence, which, in its purest form, produces a life worse than death and annihilates the possibility for resistance. While a form of extreme violence was practiced 'out of view' for decades in North St. Louis County, the possibility for bodies to resist was necessary in order for specific dynamics of power to exist.

The bodies that performatively showed up in Ferguson and exposed the violence of the state were in fact exposed to even more extreme forms of state violence in response to their presence. Initially, efforts by the state backfired in that 'Ferguson' became a known location on the map through media attention and represented a renewed iteration of the struggle against imperial forms of hegemonic power. Two years later, Ferguson continues to symbolically mark time and certain perceived phenomena (i.e., 'the era of Ferguson,' 'the Ferguson effect,' post-Ferguson).[12] 'Bodies of color' have seemingly made themselves more

[11] Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for Self," 284.

[12] I first noticed journalists as well as scholars referring to 'the era of Ferguson' in 2015. A Google search of this term in October of 2016 results in over 100 references to 'the era of Ferguson,' which is typically used to signify a general awareness and need to document acts of violence, especially by law enforcement, against people of color. The 'Ferguson Effect' is now a widely used term by law enforcement and the media across the United States to signify an assumed correlation between alleged scrutiny of law enforcement after Ferguson

visible in public and political spaces across the United States, and the conditions of representation—a politics of representation—have recently been challenged, especially with regard to conflicts between law enforcement and citizens of color. While many view these things as progress toward a more just society, more virulent forms of state violence not dissimilar to the violent backlash waged against Reconstruction-era policy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have been provoked. Frustrations over the protection of contested civil liberties in the past several decades, real and perceived losses by the white working class, eight years of a popular Black president, and the assessment of a new order in the world have led to the reworking of visible bodies once again racialized through variations on the trope of blackness-as-risk. Calls that include further securing and militarizing the borders, surveilling U.S. citizens, criminalizing Muslims, respecting law enforcement by not holding officers accountable, and the cryptic yet racialized call to "make America great again" are ushering in a newly recycled era of cultural politics that can only be understood in relationship to histories of blackness-as-risk within the contexts of race and space.

While it remains to be seen what the most recent era will bring, it is clear that unapologetic blackness will continue to haunt St. Louis and elsewhere in ways that expose the inhuman, provide new understandings of "the praxis of being human," and reveal a something-to-be-done.[13] As nations around the world move toward isolationism and promote a politics of fear, the stakes surrounding the something-to-be-done do not just apply to people who live in places like North St. Louis County. The modalities and uses of race-making to produce invisible and precarious populations through national and cultural questions of risk and belonging, in space, reflect scales and practices of the inhuman connected across the globe that impede the possibility for anyone to live as fully human. As such, we all in live in a precarious state. This study suggests, however, that the only site of resistance capable of simultaneously revealing and challenging powers over life and death is the site of sensate and precarious bodies: bodies that speak through the vulnerability and visibility of flesh; bodies that understand what is at stake; bodies that show up.

unrest and statistics that show violent crime increasing in the months and years after August 9, 2014. The term is credited to St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson, who used it in an interview with a reporter on November 14, 2014. See Christine Beyers, "Crime Up After Ferguson and More Police Needed, Top St. Louis Area Chiefs Say," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 15, 2014.

[13] See Sylvia Wynter, *On Being Human as Praxis*, ed. Katherine McKittrick (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

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