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The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

General Information

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Global Africana Review

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Dedication

This issue of the Global Africana Review is dedicated to the life and memory of Professor Perry Alonzo Hall (1947–2020), an esteemed scholar and friend whose service to the Department and the larger discipline of African American Studies elevated and advanced the study of the histories and cultures of people of African descent.

Chair's Note

I am very pleased to welcome you to Volume 5 of *Global African Review* (GAR), our annual undergraduate research journal! This volume marks the fifth anniversary of GAR, and on behalf of departmental faculty and staff, I am very grateful to all the students who have contributed to the journal's success over the years. The seven excellent students whose work constitutes this year's GAR, and who worked very hard to finalize their articles during the significant challenges generated by the COVID-19 global pandemic, join the many outstanding students who have published with us. We thank the 2021 contributors for their commitment to their research and for their resilience during a difficult time in the world, and we wish them the best in their future scholarly and other endeavors. I would like to thank this year's GAR Executive Editor, Professor Claude Clegg, for his excellent work. Further, I am very grateful for the excellent work of faculty who mentored students whose work is included in this volume and to the journal's Managing Editor, Angela Pietrobon. Many thanks to Rebekah Kati of the Davis Library for all her help with the publication of this volume. Special thanks to the Dean's Office and to Nicci Gafinowitz and her family for providing financial resources that enabled the publication of this year's volume of GAR.

Eunice N. Sahle, PhD, FAAS

Chair, Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies

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Executive Editor Bio

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Allison Whitenack is a UNC-Chapel Hill alumna from Asheville, North Carolina. She graduated in May 2020 with a B.A. in Global Studies and Political Science, focusing her studies on East Africa and international politics. She is interested in redefining the ideas of human rights and development to center the voices, experiences, and leadership of communities in the Global South. She intends on pursuing a Master of Arts in Human Rights or Development Studies in the Fall of 2022.

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Introduction

Claude A. Clegg III

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

As executive editor of the *Global Africana Review*, I am proud to present the fifth annual edition of our undergraduate research journal. As with the previous volumes, we are exceedingly proud of the scholars who have contributed to this one. Their work reflects the best of the intellectual traditions of both the Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies and the larger University.

This volume includes a rich array of articles and review essays that broadly engage issues of gender, sexuality, and activism. Allison Whitenack's piece examines the struggle of women in Tanzania to gain government recognition of their rights to land tenure and natural resources. Mia Colloredo-Mansfeld's article also takes up the issue of women's efforts at self-empowerment, using Tanzania and Ghana as case studies for understanding the dynamics of artisanal small-scale mining as a means of social and economic mobility in occupational zones traditionally dominated by men. In her study of the National Association of Colored Women, Miriam Madison explores the intersection of the African American clubwomen's movement and the occupational origins of American social work, arguing that Black women were pioneers in addressing the communal needs of African Americans while navigating the many pitfalls of US racism during the first half of the twentieth century. Saskia Staimpel's article on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee carefully renders the activist trajectory of the group, asserting that its transformation from a civil rights organization into a vehicle for Black Power revealed an ideological dynamism that unfolded over the course of the 1960s. Finally, Naraya Price's piece on Nadine Gordimer situates the South African writer within a literary genealogy of social consciousness and political resistance as she delves deep into the meanings of two of Gordimer's more influential novels.

Along with these five articles, this issue also features two reviews, both of which assay particularly timely subject matter. Hannah Motley's review of Patrisse Khan-Cullors and asha bandele's book, *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*, engages one author's personal journey to the Black Lives Matter movement, rendering it in especially sharp relief against the mass incarceration, police brutality, and other forms of institutionalized racism that still characterize US society in the early twenty-first century. Further, Jalen Carver's review essay on the award-winning movie *Moonlight* offers a compelling discussion of the complicated identities of Black men along vectors of masculinity, queerness, homophobia, and race.

Individually and as a cumulative contribution, these seven pieces of scholarship advance our knowledge and understanding of the many aspects of history, politics, economics, and culture that constitute modern Africa and its ever-branching diasporas.

Dr. Claude A. Clegg III

Executive Editor, *Global Africana Review*

Distinguished Professor, Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies

NGOs as Agents of Women's Land Rights in Tanzania

Allison Whitenack

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to identify the role of NGOs in promoting women's land rights in Tanzania. I begin by outlining the gendered history of land tenure in Tanzania from the colonial era through today that has systematically excluded women from formal land ownership structures through the creation of gendered land regimes. In this history, I highlight the significant movements and associations that Tanzanian women have created in order to demonstrate their agency and advocate for their rights. I situate my argument among debates about human rights theory and international human rights law by discussing responsibility, capability, and cultural legitimacy schools and feminist critiques. I analyze primary sources, including expert interviews and print documents from universities and local NGOs, and secondary sources such as books, scholarly journals, and newspaper articles. My research examines a case study of two land rights NGOs in Tanzania as agents of women's land rights, and characterizes these NGOs through Claude Welch's (1995) six roles of human rights NGOs. By demonstrating that the two NGOs successfully fulfill the education, empowerment, and enforcement roles of human rights NGOs, I argue that local NGOs in Tanzania are important agents of human rights in the context of women's land rights.

Keywords: human rights, land rights, women's rights, Tanzania, NGOs

Introduction

The system of land ownership and distribution in Tanzania has disadvantaged women from the colonial period through today via the configuration of gendered land regimes. In Tanzania, discontinuities between federal laws and customary laws complicate women's exclusion from land ownership. While the constitution declares that women have equal access to land, most customary practices dictate that women cannot inherit land and can only access land through relationships with male relatives, such as husbands or fathers. Therefore, many women still lack land ownership in Tanzania. Because of the large agricultural sector in Tanzania and the importance of land to personal livelihood, the right to own land is integral to women's rights, liberty, and well-being. Due to the gendered disparity in land ownership in Tanzania, I seek to answer the question: What role do local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play in promoting women's land rights in Tanzania? By examining the role local NGOs play in promoting women's land rights, I argue that local NGOs are agents of human rights in this context.

Methods

To answer my research question of what role NGOs play in promoting women's land rights in Tanzania, I analyze primary sources, including expert interviews and print documents from universities and local NGOs, and secondary sources such as books, scholarly journals, and newspaper articles. I conducted in-person interviews with three NGO professionals, three researchers, and one university student (Respondents #1–7) on the successes and failures of various institutions in providing land rights, and I collected primary and secondary sources from local universities and NGOs. I spent time with two NGOs in particular, one in Arusha (NGO #1) and the other in Dar es Salaam (NGO #2). NGO #1 is smaller in geographical scope and number of employees, and it works with one community in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania. This NGO engages in a variety of land rights issues and emphasizes guaranteeing the land rights of marginalized groups, such as women, small-scale farmers, and people with disabilities. NGO #2 has a similar focus on land rights, but it operates throughout the nation and employs dozens of Tanzanians who work in specialized areas including research, publications and documentation, and public engagement and advocacy. The day-to-day work of these two NGOs is similar: they both focus on education, advocacy, and community empowerment as tools to promote land rights for women and other marginalized groups.

Land Tenure and Women's Associations in Tanzania: A Gendered History

Land tenure is one of many gendered systems in Tanzania, and women have organized for their liberation from oppressive systems throughout Tanzanian history. Land tenure in Tanzania has historically been a gendered process that has excluded women through patrilineal inheritance laws and patriarchal structures. Beginning in the colonial era, local elite men used the creation of the label "customary" to validate and claim power over systems such as land tenure, even though the shifting colonial economy demanded that women perform the majority of the agricultural labor (Mbilinyi 2016). These colonial legacies continued into the Ujamaa period of socialization, as President Julius Nyerere defined rigid gender roles within Tanzanian families (Lal 2010). The era of neoliberalism added value to land through commodification and privatization while further restricting women's access to land. International institutions, foreign governments, and the Tanzanian state continued to invoke the customary as a tactic to exclude women from land and credit markets. Furthermore, land grabbing increased in prevalence, making land an increasingly valuable commodity. Unfortunately, land grabbing negatively affected women as they lost access to their livelihoods. The Land Acts of 1999 began the process of equalizing the playing field for women in terms of owning land, but its implementation has not lived up to its full potential (Pendersen 2015; Whitehead and Tsikata 2003). The customary continues to exclude women from land ownership in the twenty-first century. Women continue to suffer because of their inability to access land ownership in a manner equal to men.

Despite the barriers they face to equality in land ownership and other areas, women have been active agents in promoting their own human rights. In Tanzania, women have a deep history of organizing for their rights: "the history of Tanzania shows women's active involvement in such associations at all times. Within such organizations women have been mobilized, encouraged, motivated, and given the chance to engage in 'formal politics' which used to be the male-domain" (Koda and Shayo 1994, 16). Through developing and mobilizing NGOs, political parties, and grassroots organizations, women have historically been their own greatest advocates in Tanzania (Tsikata 2012). In response to women's organizing, the

government has taken “steps towards the revision of national legislation that is discriminating against women” and promoted educational campaigns regarding women's rights (Macha 2013, 31). The government's actions, although important, would not have happened without the advocacy of women and women's associations.

Women played a key role in the decolonization efforts of the mid-twentieth century, and they successfully created organizations and institutions to serve as vessels for their goals. Perhaps the most significant women's association that participated in decolonization was the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Thousands of women joined the efforts of TANU in the 1950s and were crucial agents in the nationalization and democratization movements (Geiger 1999). Many of the organizations that formed during the decolonization period started within political parties as a way for women to become involved in politics within male-dominated political institutions. Even today, associations within parties are important structures for women organizing in the political sphere (Koda and Shayo 1994).

One of the most influential women's associations in Tanzanian history is the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP). Founded in 1993, TGNP is a non-profit activist group that strives for gender equity on a national level. In the 1990s, TGNP played an important role in structural adjustment programs and other economic policies harmful to women (Rusimbi and Mbilinyi 2005). By working on issues such as democracy, agriculture, education, and health, TGNP has both academic and advocacy impacts in many sectors around the country. Today, TGNP serves a crucial role in educating the nation, the nation's leaders, and the international community on gender equity issues in Tanzania. NGOs such as TGNP serve a crucial role in advocating for and raising awareness about women's rights and human rights in the country.

During the 1990s and beyond, Koda and Shayo note, “an increasing number of women associations” have been “challenging the balance of power between men and women at both the household and community levels” (1994, 16). They emphasize the increasing power of informal associations that exist outside the government that, although not widely recognized, are successful in “consciousness raising, decision making, and action geared towards women's advancement and gender equality” (Koda and Shayo 1994, 16). It is these NGOs that prove to be so successful for women in Tanzania, as they attempt to deconstruct the historical and contemporary patriarchal systems in local and national government institutions and other NGOs. For these reasons, women's rights to land might also be effectively promoted by local NGOs, particularly those that emphasize the voices and experiences of local women.

Theoretical Debates on Human Rights and the Role of NGOs

Debates around human rights on the continent of Africa are extensive and diverse, as scholars examine the ethics of international human rights law, NGOs, and the role of international and African institutions (Viljoen 2012; Welch 1995). Human rights scholars such as Welch (1995) focus on Western constructions of human rights and argue that human rights law has largely excluded African voices. However, this claim erases the significant work of African scholars, activists, and institutions who have contributed significantly to the field of human rights. Viljoen (2012) addresses this by providing an in-depth analysis of the impact of African institutions and sub-regional institutions in his book, *International Human Rights Law in Africa*. Viljoen's (2012) work reminds us to acknowledge and center the influence and agency of African institutions in conversations about human rights on the African continent, and to continue to see African institutions and organizations as agents of human rights on the international stage. Abdullahi An-Na'im (1990) expands on Viljoen's emphasis on African agency by arguing that

cultural legitimacy in human rights law is key to the implementation of human rights around the world. In conjunction with this argument, An-Na'im and Jeffrey Hammond (2002) assert that cultures are never static, and thus that international human rights law should not treat them as such. Therefore, I argue that NGOs effectively serve as human rights agents as they are able to provide culturally competent services to community members. With these assertions and taking into account arguments from other human rights scholars that claim NGOs are important agents of human rights, I center the voices of local NGOs in examining women's land rights as a feminist human rights issue (Laliberté 2015; Miller 2002; O'Neill 2001).

As acknowledged by authors such as Welch (1995), Miller (2002), Laliberté (2015), and O'Neill (2001), NGOs can serve as crucial agents of human rights. Building on the framework of Welch (1995), I employ the roles that he establishes to structure my presentation of the work that two local human rights NGOs do in Tanzania related to women's land rights. Welch (1995) categorizes six roles that NGOs play by defining the three Es (education, empowerment, and enforcement) and the three Ds (documentation, democratization, and development). While he notes that all of these roles are important, he also explains that not every NGO focuses on or fulfills each role to the same extent. NGOs may center their work on specific roles depending on the issues they address and the tactics they use to promote human rights. Due to the scope and focus of the two NGOs I researched for this study, I only examine Welch's three Es, as neither NGO significantly fulfills the roles defined by the three Ds.

NGOs that perform education related activities work to ensure citizens understand their human rights. They believe that having an educated citizenry is fundamental to promoting human rights (Welch 1995, 51–54). In the education role, NGOs must work alongside the government as a partner; therefore, NGOs with an education focus are often located in cities and their staffs are often composed of highly educated individuals (Welch 1995). In their empowerment role, an NGO emphasizes the political mobilization of the communities with which it interacts (Welch 1995, 54–56). Here, NGOs often challenge the status quo by encouraging communities to demand their rights and even challenge the government; therefore, NGOs that center empowerment may be seen as a threat to the government (Welch 1995). The third E that Welch outlines is enforcement, which includes utilizing national court systems, international treaties, and other forms of bureaucratic measures of accountability (1995, 56–60). This role requires a certain level of structure and capacity within the state so that NGOs have systems and institutions to call upon for the enforcement of human rights. NGOs that focus on enforcement may hold the state accountable in order to have it provide rights to its citizens or to stop human rights abuses that the state may be perpetrating. Welch's (1995) model of the roles of NGOs allows us to critically examine the work that NGOs are doing and how their strategies fulfill their roles as agents of human rights.

NGOs as Agents of Women's Land Rights: Two Case Studies

In communities in Tanzania, NGOs are promoting women's land rights in accordance with the demands made by women community members and women's associations. Today, there are thousands of NGOs that operate in Tanzania, with over six hundred formally recognized by the Tanzanian Association of NGOs (TANGO), and it can be assumed that several hundred of these organizations focus on land tenure and/or women's issues (TANGO 2020). Most land-focused NGOs in the country use a multi-pronged approach to land rights, focusing on education, community empowerment, and enforcement (Tanzania National NGO Coordination 2020; Welch

1995). NGOs have also played an important role in holding the government accountable to the Land Acts of 1999 and in continuing to pursue equitable land policies (Mallya 2006).

Women in Tanzania, particularly in rural areas, struggle to take advantage of their legal right to own land because of patriarchal systems of inheritance and ownership. Land is a crucial resource for women in Tanzania as they perform the majority of the agricultural labor in the nation, but they own a highly disproportionate ratio of land. Furthermore, access to and ownership of land is fundamental for the economic and political status of women in Tanzania, as without land they are vulnerable to poverty and social isolation. Next, I examine the strategies used by two NGOs to promote women's land rights, with Welch's (1995) roles of NGOs in Africa as a framework, in order to examine the purpose and use of each element of the NGOs as described above. These NGOs provide culturally legitimate and individualized resources and programs using flexible, multi-pronged approaches to promote women's land rights, with an emphasis on their roles in education, empowerment, and enforcement.

Education

The two NGOs I engaged with have a definite emphasis on education and empowerment, and often these two roles overlap in their work. NGO #1 identifies human rights education, or what they call "awareness creation," as their main activity, but they also engage in empowerment and enforcement activities (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). They define awareness creation as efforts to educate the community about land tenure issues, including the land rights of Tanzanian citizens, and the work of the organization (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). Their awareness creation is centered on the work that they do directly in communities near the Kilimanjaro region and on weekly radio program broadcasts that aim to reach beyond their immediate audience. NGO #1 sees an educated population as one of the best and most effective ways to promote women's land rights.

A challenging aspect of the work that NGO #1 performs is working against the deeply gendered system of land tenure in the country. In order to counter the patriarchal definition of customary law and land tenure, the organization presents alternatives to the "traditional" practices that exclude women from land ownership by educating individuals in the community about women's land rights. This process of integrating gender equality and land rights into cultural practices through education is known in the organization as "sensitizing" (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). Sensitizing is conducted through navigating peer networks in local communities—effectively relying on the strength of peer education to carry out their role as educators of human rights.

Community sensitization is not the only tactic NGO #1 implements to conduct their education initiatives. They also rely on radio programming to spread their message to women who may not be engaged by the methods of community sensitization. In collaboration with local radio stations, the organization broadcasts weekly programs that discuss land rights for women and other marginalized groups. NGO #1 estimates that around fifteen hundred women listen to the programs each week in the areas in which they mobilize women to advertise these programs (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). Similar to the peer education model of community sensitization, they reach out to a select few women in each village and ask them to tell other women to listen to the broadcast. NGO #1 is able to reach thousands of women through their community sensitization methods and education programs (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019).

Many of the human rights education practices of NGO #1 are also used by NGO #2. For example, NGO #2 also uses peer education models and on-site programming to educate women

about land rights. In addition, NGO #2 produces print resources, such as pamphlets, calendars, and publications, for their clients and individuals in the communities they engage with to detail the work that they do and educate communities about land rights for marginalized groups. Publications include stories of women landowners who have been served by NGO #2 as well as current events and information about the organization itself. NGO #2 successfully demonstrates the agency of human rights NGOs through its utilization of various strategies to carry out education in Tanzania.

Another key element of NGO #2's education mission is its land monitor program. Because NGO #2 is located in the largest city in the country and employs a highly educated staff, it often receives criticism for elitism or an urban bias because it is located in the city while it works with people in rural areas. People from urban areas may be considered outsiders by rural community members or may be seen as having a savior complex. In order to overcome this divide, NGO #2 stations employees, called land monitors, to live and work in these communities (Respondent #2, Dar es Salaam, 2019). Land monitors help bridge the urban-rural divide between Dar es Salaam and surrounding villages. NGO #2 uses land monitors to compensate for the outsider mentality and pursue cultural legitimacy in the communities they engage with (Respondent #5, Dar es Salaam, 2019). Land monitors lead programs and trainings, educate community members about land rights issues, and provide case management for legal issues, all while learning from the community about the issues of that community and where advocacy and education are needed most (Respondent #5, Dar es Salaam, 2019). While this system is different from the NGO #1 model of community-based peer education, it still embodies the values of community-centered education and addresses the needs of the communities.

Empowerment

Human rights education and empowerment go hand-in-hand for both of these human rights NGOs. Many of their programs, such as community sensitization, function both to educate community members and to empower local communities to educate each other and demand their rights. Community sensitization is an intricate process that revolves around the existing structure of the community. During an interview, Respondent #1 described this process:

We ask the community, through the village leaders, to identify a number of women whom we want to work with in the first place....So we go to their leaders, the chairman of the village and the executive officer, to identify key women and...we will treat [these women] as train[ers] of trainers...we train them and then after training we ask them to train others in their day-to-day meetings.

We deliver [our message] through these groups of women, and now these women disseminate through other women. But not only to other women, but even to traditional leaders because these are the holders, these are the upholders of the cultural practices, the traditional leaders and religious leaders (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019).

This is an intentional system of utilizing existing networks and leadership structures to disseminate the educational programs and change the status quo of patriarchal land systems. By first addressing the leaders of each village, the organization recognizes and respects local hierarchies and customs by asking them to engage in this process of sensitization together. NGO #1 then accesses existing networks of women by identifying leaders in various women's groups and creating a trickle-down effect, whereby these women are trained as facilitators to train their

own respective networks and communities (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). Drawing on research from An'Na-im (1990) and the concept of cultural legitimacy, it is the ability of NGO #1 to engage with these communities in such a culturally affirming and empowering way that enables the success they claim from these programs. The organization estimates that in one year, they can reach approximately 3447 women from 16 villages in 4 wards (wards in Tanzania are typically composed of several villages in rural areas) (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019).

NGO #1 operates most of its programs through a peer education model, wherein this local organization engages individuals within the community, equips them with knowledge about their land rights and skills to advocate for themselves, and empowers them to disseminate information throughout their community. Establishing links through social networks is key to making community-wide change, and NGO #1 demonstrates its agency in human rights by employing this tactic (Respondent #4, Dar es Salaam, 2019). The organization's relationship with community leaders gives the organization legitimacy within these communities and allows them to rely on the authority of local hierarchies to carry out their work (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019).

The land monitor program that NGO #2 implements as part of its education initiative also has an empowerment component. Because NGO #2 is located in the city, its staff emphasize valuing and appreciating the voices of small-scale farmers and pastoralists, women, and other marginalized groups because these groups understand their own way of life better than the employees of the organization (Respondent #3, Dar es Salaam, 2019). The intentional work of NGO #2 to center community voices and cultural legitimacy in their work reinforces the empowerment role of this NGO. Furthermore, while performing the community-level work of land monitoring, the organization emphasizes working with traditional and religious leaders, and specifically men (Respondent #3, Dar es Salaam, 2019; Respondent #4, Dar es Salaam, 2019). Respondent #3 explained that if one only works with women, they may be on board and understand the material while they are in the program or workshop, but when they return home, they may experience resistance from the men in their families. He narrated a hypothetical conversation in which, when women return to their homes from educational workshops, their husbands may say, "you receive this education there, it needs to remain there. This is my family, you want to live in this marriage, you will follow our procedure" (Respondent #3, Dar es Salaam, 2019). This reinforcement of patriarchal norms by men demonstrates two things: that the gendered history of land tenure still pervades the everyday lives of Tanzanians, and that human rights agents must engage with and empower local men in the land conversation in Tanzania. If the organization were to address men directly and explain the importance of women owning and accessing land, men would be more likely to be receptive to this cultural transition because of the emphasis on cultural legitimacy and empowerment of local structures of power (Respondent #3, Dar es Salaam, 2019). NGO #2 is able to galvanize the power and influence of local men to shape the local customs and conceptualizations of land and women's rights, thus playing a crucial role in advocating for and legitimizing these rights. However, the method of engaging with local power structures is not a perfect system for promoting women's rights because they continue to validate the patriarchal systems of local governance.

Although these NGOs demonstrate the agency that local human rights NGOs have in promoting women's land rights in Tanzania, unfortunately, the government does not always commend the advocacy and empowerment work that local NGOs are doing. As Welch (1995) warns, the empowering nature of human rights NGOs often encourages individuals and communities to push back against the patriarchal status quo, thus threatening sources of power

around the nation. In Tanzania, not only does the government often feel threatened by the advocacy work of human rights NGOs, it also has actively taken measures to weaken and stifle the civil sector over the past few years. Respondent #2 explained: “We cannot maintain the relationship [with the government] because at the end of the day, they can say...what you [the human rights NGO] are doing is making people rise against the government, being stubborn, et cetera” (Dar es Salaam, 2019). This explanation of the organization's relationship with the government reveals the tension that exists between these institutions. The government interprets the advocacy and empowerment work by NGOs as an affront to its power. This tension between the government and NGOs results in government regulation of NGOs, such as through policies that restrict empowerment and education-related programs in favor of direct service provision, what I categorize as enforcement (Respondent #2, Dar es Salaam, 2019). In the case of human rights NGOs, these regulations mean they are encouraged to spend less time on community empowerment programs and education and to instead direct more of their attention toward the attainment of land title deeds, for example. The problem with this is that “if we will end up only having the service provision NGOs, you cannot really achieve the rights of the disadvantaged groups, like women or minority groups because [service provision by itself] will never assure their right[s]” (Respondent #2, Dar es Salaam, 2019). The education and empowerment focuses of these human rights NGOs are fundamental to their roles as agents of human rights, but the government is actively trying to limit their activities. Regardless, the two NGOs are still able to fulfill the empowerment role of human rights NGOs as described by Welch (1995), and to demonstrate their agency as promoters of human rights.

Enforcement

While both NGO #1 and NGO #2 have specific emphases on education and empowerment, they do still engage with the enforcement role in some capacities. When the government is unable to hold itself accountable for providing land rights due to its lack of resources or female representation, NGOs are able to act as watchdogs and pressure the government to improve. Respondent #5 attributed much of the work done by the government in terms of land rights and women's rights to the lobbying and enforcement work of local NGOs (Dar es Salaam, 2019). This type of advocacy and lobbying work is a core priority for both NGO #1 and NGO #2. NGO #1 approaches enforcement through collaboration, navigating government institutions on behalf of its clients in order to ensure that land title deeds are allocated to women and other marginalized groups. NGO #2 plays a different enforcement role through lobbying and external pressure. As mentioned in previous sections, the Tanzanian government, on paper, has progressive land policies in terms of gender equality, notably the Land Acts of 1999. Some local human rights agents argue that the laws themselves are not flawed, as they allow for equal rights and equal access (Respondent #5, Dar es Salaam, 2019). The problem is that the government lacks the resources for the implementation of these laws and lacks the incentive to enact new laws that may aid in this implementation. Moreover, both the government and the Tanzanian elites benefit from upholding the patriarchal land tenure system that developed out of the colonial era.

In order to hold the government accountable for providing land title deeds, NGO #1 works with clients to petition the government in a case management capacity by working with individual women to address their unique land needs. The organization itself does not have the power to distribute deeds, but they advocate on behalf of their clients to local governments to ensure they provide these documents that grant women ownership of parcels of land (Respondent

#1, Arusha, 2019). NGO #1 works with clients one on one to gather the necessary documents (e.g., pictures, divorce papers, court documents, birth certificates) and petition local land councils to grant them the title deed for the land. By navigating the legal and judicial systems of the Tanzanian government, NGO #1 plays an enforcement role as a human rights NGO to ensure that women are able to own land pursuant to Tanzanian law. NGO #1 estimates that over 90 percent of the women they work with have successfully gone through the process of acquiring land title deeds (Respondent #1, Arusha, 2019). This organization further demonstrates their agency as a promoter of human rights in their capacity as an enforcer of human rights law.

NGO #2 plays a slightly different enforcement role that emphasizes lobbying and placing external pressure on the government instead of navigating government systems. This organization is also successful in its enforcement efforts and effectively pressures the government to follow through on laws and government programs (Respondent #5, Dar es Salaam, 2019). Both NGOs promote women's land rights through an enforcement role by holding the government accountable and navigating government systems to promote women's land rights.

Limitations of Human Rights NGOs

While I argue that these two human rights NGOs have agency and play important roles in promoting women's land rights in Tanzania, I also acknowledge the limitations that NGOs face in this context. NGOs are agents of neoliberalism in Tanzania, and the NGOs I engaged with are not excluded from this. Although neoliberalism influences the actions and outcomes of the civil sector in innumerable ways, I see the impact of these NGOs as being in two distinct areas: the way that the NGOs interact with land tenure systems, and the influence of donors and donor interests on their work as human rights NGOs. Both NGO #1 and NGO #2 strive to change the patriarchal status quo of the land tenure system in Tanzania; however, neither attempts to challenge the commodification and privatization of land that occur as a result of neoliberalism in the modern era. As noted earlier, the gendered nature of land tenure and neoliberalism are intimately intertwined; therefore, the continued maintenance of one system will likely result in the continuation of the other. If human rights NGOs continue to comply with and perpetuate the system of land title deeds, they may encounter more difficulty in deconstructing the patriarchal aspects of this system.

Mutua (2009) provides one such critique of human rights NGOs as agents of neoliberalism. He argues that "human rights NGOs in East Africa are...a response to state despotism in the region, and an inspiration from the international human rights movement" (Mutua 2009, 20). He believes that because the explosion of human rights NGOs in East Africa occurred in the era of neoliberalism, East African NGOs are simply replicas of NGOs around the world. Furthermore, Mutua (2009) attributes the human rights dialogue as a Western construction and argues that East African NGOs are therefore simply playing a part in Western neoliberalism. His assumption that the field of human rights does not have history or originality in East Africa is ahistorical. This argument ignores the vast history of organizing around human rights issues in East Africa, and it erases the agency of East African activists, organizers, lawyers, and human rights specialists. Unfortunately, arguments like Mutua's (2009) have been pervasive in the human rights field for decades, excluding the voices, contributions, and experiences of Africans from the human rights cannon.

While I do argue that NGOs are important agents of human rights in Tanzania, an important critique of NGOs in Africa is presented by Issa Shivji (2006). He challenges NGOs in Africa as

potentially harmful institutions born out of neoliberalism in the post-Cold War era. Shivji's criticism focuses on the intent and impact of NGO formation in the neoliberal era, and he argues that the anti-state and vain interests of NGO donors corrupt the missions and programs of NGO work in Africa (2006, 18). Because NGOs were created with the intent to offset the power of the state instead of with the genuine goal of addressing root causes of poverty or inequality, the mission of these organizations has been corrupt from their inception (Shivji 2006). Additionally, NGOs have often been constructed on more superficial issues that are internationally popular and attractive in order to appeal to donors' interests; however, these issues are not always the most urgent ones to address (Shivji 2006). Shivji (2006) argues that because NGOs are comprised of and led mostly by the elite and in the name of donor interests, their work can never be truly ethical or impactful as they fail to address the root causes of inequalities or crises. By qualifying NGO work as having an "act now, think later" approach, Shivji attempts to highlight the lack of sustainability of NGOs doing human rights work in Africa (2006, 21). Shivji's (2006) critique brings an important context to this conversation, but the efforts and impact of human rights NGOs in Tanzania, such as NGO #1 and #2, are clear examples of the importance and agency of such NGOs in the movement for women's land rights.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that local NGOs in Tanzania are important agents of human rights in the context of women's land rights. By discussing the roles of human rights NGOs described by Welch (1995) and in relation to the work of the two NGOs I investigated, I have shown that these two NGOs are important agents of women's land rights. I have further highlighted that the work of the NGOs falls in line with a vibrant history of women's organizing and civil sector engagement in Tanzania that is not simply the product of Western impositions or neoliberalism, as scholars such as Mutua (2009) would argue. Finally, I have acknowledged the impact of neoliberalism on women's land rights and the ways that human rights NGOs operate as agents of neoliberalism. This article provides important groundwork to validate the importance and strengths of NGO work in promoting human rights. Moving forward, we must examine the implications of the role of local NGOs in human rights promotion, their strengths, and their weaknesses in the broader human rights dialogue.

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Interviews

- Respondent #1. 2019. Author's interview. Arusha, Tanzania.
- Respondent #2. 2019. Author's interview. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Respondent #3. 2019. Author's interview. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Respondent #4. 2019. Author's interview. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Respondent #5. 2019. Author's interview. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Respondent #6. 2019. Author's interview. Arusha, Tanzania.

Placemaking in Artisanal Small-Scale Mining: A Gendered Examination of Mobility, Economic Opportunity, and Vulnerability in Africa

Mia Colloredo-Mansfeld

ABSTRACT

Informal mining, or artisanal small-scale mining (ASM), is a growing industry in Africa, providing diversification of livelihood and economic opportunities in rural communities. Women make up 10 to 60 percent of ASM workforces, occupying roles both directly and adjacently related to ASM that are typically designated based on gender. This article situates ASM in a development context, recognizing the role of international development discourses on the growth and framing of ASM communities. The placemaking processes that occur at ASM sites result in inherently gendered experiences for everyone involved in these communities. Examining ASM sites through a gender in development lens reveals the complex relationships between structure, agency, and vulnerability that shape how women exist in and move through ASM communities. This article looks at the ways in which women exercise agency to renegotiate their position in society through economic and mobility opportunities related to ASM, comparing ASM communities in Tanzania and Ghana as case studies. Through complicating the narrative of ASM sites by examining the lived experiences of women in ASM, this article adds to the growing body of literature on the potential role of ASM in rural economies and the ways in which a gendered lens reveals complex placemaking relationships.

Keywords: artisanal small-scale mining, gender, development, placemaking, Africa

Introduction

Development frameworks often discuss the concept of rural livelihood diversification in a variety of forms. This concept examines the possibilities for employment, economic growth, and mobility in rural communities, usually in relation to poverty or development. These narratives can overlook the role of and opportunities available for women when gender is not considered as a structural component that shapes livelihood options. Societal structures linked to cultural and social norms create barriers to both female participation and the visibility of women in economic sectors (Yakovleva 2007, 31). These structures include limited access to credit to support endeavors such as petty trade and a lack of education and technical knowledge, narrowing the roles women are able to occupy and affecting their family commitments and cultural expectations around family care, which all places a heavy family burden on women, thereby limiting their mobility, independence, and ability to pursue economic freedom (Yakovleva 2007, 31).

Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) is a growing source of livelihood and economic opportunity in rural communities, with an estimated twenty million miners engaged in ASM globally (World Bank 2012, 6). Since the 1980s, ASM has been a growing source of livelihoods

across rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa. While ASM takes many forms and has no single definition due to the heterogeneity of sites and practices, which reflect local geographies and available resources (World Bank 2012, 3), it can broadly be defined as “the low-tech, labor-intensive mineral extraction and processing found across the developing world” (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 104). The goal of this article is to analyze the role of artisanal and small-scale mining in Africa as a viable livelihood strategy for rural communities from a gendered perspective. Using Tanzania and Ghana as comparative case studies, this article specifically examines the extent to which placemaking and agency work to construct environments for the employment of women, analyzing how mobility, economic opportunity, and vulnerability interact in ways that both restrict and enable opportunities for them. Through introducing current narratives of ASM sites and deconstructing the homogenized perception of ASM, this article will add to the growing body of literature complicating the discourses surrounding ASM and its potential role in rural economies.

Context and Characteristics of ASM

When ASM first entered international development discourses in 1987 through a World Bank report entitled *Small-Scale Mining: A Review of the Issues*, it was framed as an entrepreneurial activity; however, it has become clear that poverty, not business endeavors, is the main factor driving people to ASM work (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 105). Growth in the sector, due to its links with poverty, is connected to the implementation of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 105), discussed below. There are four commonly identified categories of ASM: 1) rush ASM, characterized by the rapid growth of mining communities and a large influx of miners; 2) seasonal ASM, where laborers are engaged in agriculture or other seasonal work and use ASM to supplement other livelihood strategies; 3) year round ASM, in which ASM represents a primary source of employment, the routines of mining shape daily life, and mining communities are stable; and 4) shock ASM, characterized by outside factors pushing people into mining, such as economic recession or agricultural crop failures (Huggins et al. 2015, 143; Yakovleva 2007, 30).

ASM includes mining for precious stones in addition to industrial minerals and base metals (World Bank 2012, 3). Characteristics shared across the ASM sector, regardless of geography, include close ties to rural poverty, levels of participation that reflect commodity prices, labor intensive work carried out under locally determined labor structures, and low wages in exploitative, often dangerous, conditions (World Bank 2012, 3). Additionally, regardless of location, ASM is frequently associated with inequality, environmental degradation, and the spread of disease, particularly HIV/AIDS and other STDS, and is often a site of high levels of gambling and prostitution (World Bank 2012, 5).

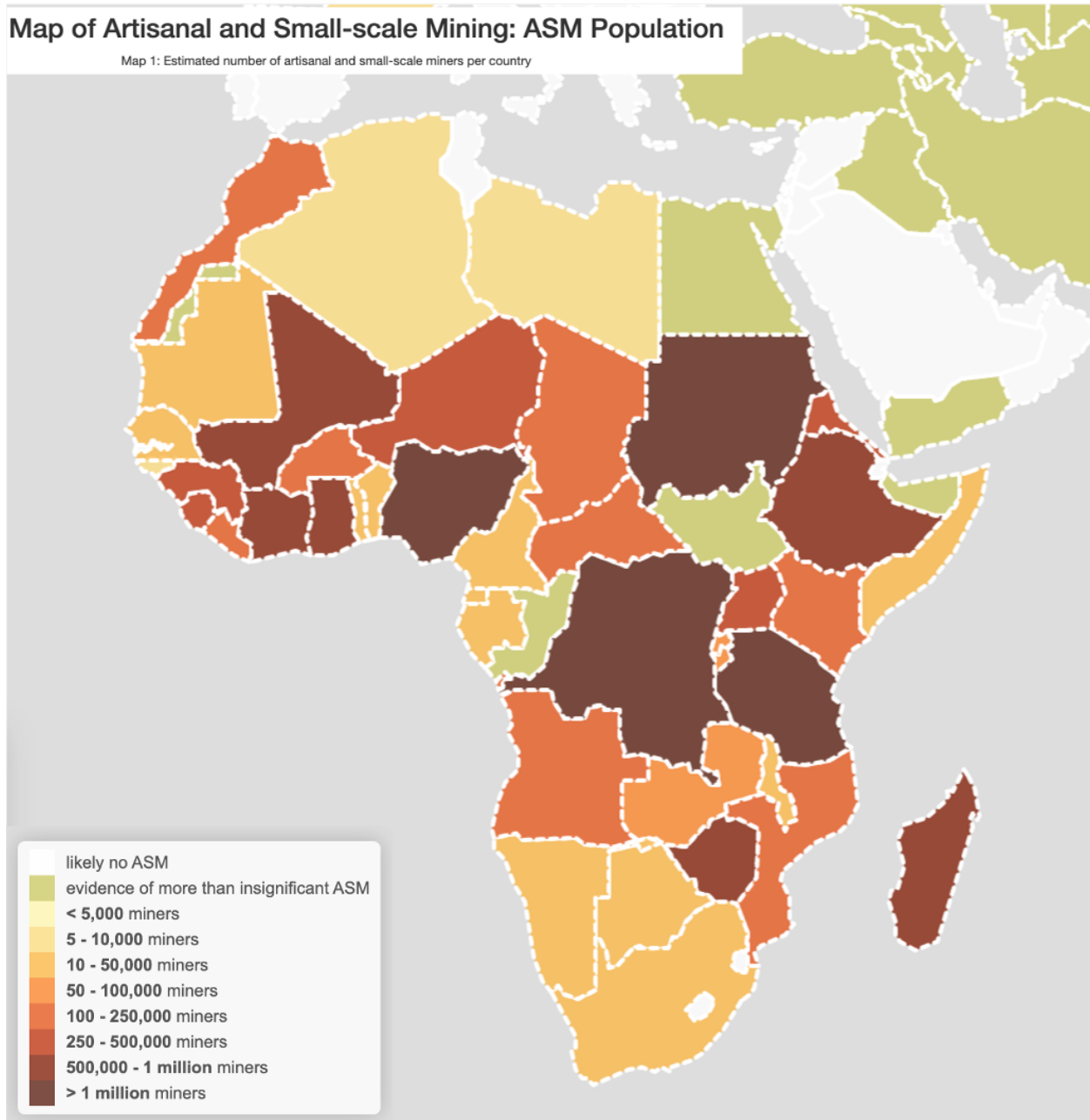
ASM sites are not simply defined by the site of extraction. Rather, they extend to include all components of extraction and processing, as well as the supplementary components that sustain the act of mining, such as petty trading and food production. As a result, ASM is viewed as providing more stable economic and employment opportunities compared to small-scale agriculture and commerce. For every mining job, an estimated six other opportunities are created downstream, including unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled opportunities (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 105), demonstrating how important ASM is in rural livelihoods. Due to the informal, often illegal, nature of ASM and the ways in which economic opportunities in mining communities are both directly and indirectly connected to the mining sector, determining an accurate estimate of the number of people who work in the ASM sector is difficult. In Tanzania and Ghana, the

comparison sites for this analysis, an estimated 1,500,000 and 1,100,000 individuals, respectively, are employed directly in ASM, with an additional 9,000,000 and 4,400,000 people dependent on the ASM sector for employment (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 105).

A second result of the variety of economic opportunities available in mining communities is the increased inclusion of women in the ASM sector. Across Africa, women make up 10 to 60 percent of ASM workforces depending on the context of the mine (Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 529), and they occupy a variety of roles. In Ghana, women make up 50 percent of the ASM workforce (Yakovleva 2007, 30). Although highly dependent on the local site and the mineral being mined, the roles women occupy across small-scale mining communities are similar. In terms of direct work in gold mines, which is the context of both Ghana and Tanzania, women predominantly work loading and transporting material or panning and sluicing for gold (Yakovleva 2007, 30). Work done underground, digging pits, and the final separation of gold are all almost exclusively done by men (Yakovleva 2007, 30). Additionally, women find economic opportunities in other forms of labor, such as petty trade, cooking, laundry, fetching and selling food and water to miners, and other jobs that help sustain the mining communities (World Bank 2012, 6–7; Yakovleva 2007, 31). For instance, in Tanzania, there are two and a half times as many women indirectly working in ASM compared to those involved in direct mineral production (World Bank 2012, 7). These gendered divisions of labor are the result of cultural and societal expectations about the roles of women and perceptions of masculinity. Due to these ancillary roles that they often occupy, women—even in positions directly related to mining such as transport—exist largely in invisible spaces within the mining sector, and their unique needs and experiences go largely ignored in international discussions of ASM.

Development Context and the Rise of ASM

In order to discuss the gendered ways in which ASM affects rural livelihood opportunities, and specifically how ASM offers ways for women to exercise agency in order to renegotiate their position in society, ASM must be situated in a development context. The rapid growth of the ASM sector since the 1980s in rural communities across Africa is closely tied to the implementation of SAPs at the direction of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 108; Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 528; Yakovleva 2007, 29). SAPs require the liberalization of trade and markets along with the promotion of neoliberal economic ideas, specifically that of comparative advantage, which, in Africa in the 1980s, emphasized the role of African countries in exporting raw minerals and materials, thus leading to expansions in mining, both large scale and small scale. Additionally, the promotion of foreign investment in the mining sector allowed for the rapid expansion of large-scale mining, drawing attention to how mining as an industry plays a role in development. In Ghana and Tanzania, incentives took the form of tax breaks for foreign investment (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 108). However, due to liberalization, privatization, and the shrinking of public sector employment opportunities caused by neoliberal reforms, many employees of the state, especially state miners, were pushed out of the formal sector (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 109). Smallholder agriculturalists were also negatively impacted by neoliberal economic reforms and the restructuring of trade and farming patterns that sought to integrate rural economies with global production circuits, resulting in instability in the subsistence and smallholder agriculture sector and in more people looking for work in the ASM sector (Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 528; Yakovleva 2007, 29).



Map 1: Estimated population participating in ASM activities by country. Source: Artisanal Mining, 2018, “The Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining Knowledge Sharing Archive,” <http://artisanalmining.org/Inventory/>.

While mining as an industry was recognized as an opportunity for development, largely due to the role of foreign investment and export opportunities, artisanal and small-scale mining did not emerge as part of international development discourses until the late 1980s. The publication of the World Bank report in 1987, *Small-Scale Mining: A Review of the Issues*, emphasized for the first time the role of ASM in creating job opportunities and thus being a viable strategy for rural economic development (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 105). During this period, ASM-related development was disconnected from larger initiatives and emphasized top-down,

technical interventions because ASM miners were viewed as entrepreneurs (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 110). These programs were largely ineffective as they were targeting a very small portion of the mining demographic and had little policy support (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 108–109).

In the mid to late 1990s, a second shift in development discourse around ASM occurred. ASM became linked to poverty, demonstrating the motivating factor behind joining the ASM sector to be economic necessity rather than entrepreneurial opportunity, and shifting development strategies toward a livelihood approach (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 111–13). A push to include ASM in World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) led to the incorporation of ASM into Ghana's first PSRP and Tanzania's second PRSP (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 115). PRSPs are written by the World Bank along with national governments; thus the inclusion of ASM in these strategic plans demonstrates recognition on behalf of national governments of the potential within the ASM sector for rural livelihood development (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 115). During this era, national governments also sought to formalize the ASM sector; however, this was done through the implementation of rigid policy frameworks that did not demonstrate an awareness of the demographics and situation of those involved in ASM (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 113). The result of these legislative efforts was the labeling of the majority of ASM sites and workers as illegal, an outcome that did little to incorporate ASM into formal development strategies (Hilson and McQuilken 2014, 113; Yakovleva 2007, 31).

Placemaking: ASM Sites as Gendered Spaces

ASM communities, through a complex process of placemaking, are inherently gendered sites, which has significant ramifications for how women specifically, but also men, experience these environments.¹ Place ties together aspects of mobility, economic security, vulnerability, and agency that all interact with structure to determine how and why women choose to enter ASM spaces and the implications of these decisions. The conceptualization of ASM communities as separate and isolated spaces (Fisher 2007, 736) increases the importance of placemaking, as perceptions of the types of place these spaces are dictate reactions to ASM and, on a larger scale, determine the support and assistance levels provided to those in ASM. Huggins et al. describe placemaking as the process of interactions between local sites and the “webs or constellations of external and internal relations which in effect make them” (2017, 143). For ASM, multiple scales of interactions and characteristics define individual sites as places, including physical geography, social and cultural norms, everyday practices and lived experiences on site, policy frameworks, and international interactions with national governments (in the form of SAPs and PRSPs) (Huggins et al. 2017, 143). Enmeshed across these scales and within the structures in place, hierarchies of power control access and are inextricably intertwined with construction of place.

¹ In international development studies, a gendered approach to analyzing power structures and placemaking emphasizes the unequal relationships between men and women, focusing on the impact of unequal social positions on people of all genders and the societal acceptance of these inequities as “natural.” This contrasts with a women in development (WID) approach, which focuses on the absence of women in policies, plans, and programs, and targets this issue by focusing on integrating women into existing structures rather than creating new systems that aim to equalize the participation of and relationships between all genders. For more information on the specific differences between gendered approaches and WID approaches, see Shirin M. Rai's *Gender and the Political Economy of Development* (2002).

Examining placemaking in relation to ASM is particularly important when discussing gender, as geographies of ASM communities are deeply gendered and reflect the processes of placemaking that shape the differentiated experiences of women in these spaces. In addition to varying across time, gender relations vary across space. This variation underscores the fact that gender relations are constructed, and thus the power differences that emerge due to gender are place specific and not the natural consequence of a specific gender identity (Massey 1994, 178). Understanding the spaces of ASM communities in a gendered way to examine how women move in, interact with, and experience space provides a different geography of mining sites as compared to understanding ASM sites within development or livelihood frameworks. As Huggins et al. explain, “women’s economic and decision-making roles in these masculinist visions of space open up new questions about gendered dynamics of place-making, both in terms of activities within mine sites, and gendering of mine-sites as places requiring policy intervention” (2017, 144). The symbolic meaning of specific places and spaces sends clear gendered messages and therefore directly influences the construction of power relations within these sites (Massey 1994, 179). Mining spaces render women’s labor, both direct and indirect, invisible due to the equation of mining with digging and other tasks largely performed by men in light of the gendered work roles (Huggins et al. 2017, 144; Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 526). In mining communities, women’s gendered labor roles reflect the societal expectations of the domestic woman, thus reinforcing normative gender roles, even while contradictions between the domestic woman and the economic woman coexist (Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 526). Through minimizing women’s contributions to the mining sector and mining communities, women’s labor is marginalized (Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 525), perpetuating the image that mines are masculine spaces.

The perceptions associated with ASM communities as a result of the structures that define place at these sites carry implications for how miners and other people who live in these communities interact with the space on a daily basis and how outside actors view and interact with ASM laborers. Politically and socially, the conception of ASM communities is negative. ASM sites are framed politically as illegal spaces, the result of attempts to formalize and regulate ASM, where the illegitimacy of the work is underscored by the physical isolation of mining communities from the control of the state (Fisher 2007, 736; Hilson and McQuilken 2014; Huggins et al. 2015, 144). This political framing of space contributes to the social view of mining communities as an amoral place, where prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, and an emphasis on money and vices are fostered and also corrupt youth (Fisher 2007, 736; Huggins et al. 2015, 144). The social conception of ASM communities influences how women who decide to enter these spaces are viewed. Simply by entering these places, women are seen as being morally corrupt and sexually active (Werthmann 2008, 18). The conception of ASM communities as lawless places creates an opportunity for miners to operate in an undefined space outside the law, allowing many people to enter the sector, while also creating and perpetuating exploitive labor practices, power hierarchies, and inequalities (Fisher 2007, 755). Furthermore, the characterization of ASM as an illegal space delegitimizes both the people and the work conducted in these communities, exacerbating the social image of these spaces as amoral (Huggins et al. 2017, 143).

Beyond the impact of national governments and social norms, commercial mining companies, media, and international actors, including the World Bank, IMF, and NGOs, are all part of the network of actors involved in placemaking for ASM sites. The media perpetuates the image of ASM sites and miners as uncivilized and uneducated, claiming they are hampering the economic development of the country and posing a threat to society due to the immoral activities

fostered at ASM sites (Hilson and Potter 2005, 114). The international community contributes to the negative image of place surrounding ASM by perpetuating the conflict minerals discourse, suggesting that ASM is closely linked to discord and often run by non-state armed groups (Kelly et al. 2014, 97). The conflict minerals discourse both ignores the role of the state and local government in addressing exploitative labor issues, public health problems, and sexual violence and reinforces a victimhood narrative (Kelly et al. 2014, 97). The perpetuation of these narratives minimizes the role of agency on behalf of miners, particularly women, as it suggests that structure, rather than individual agency, is the driving force behind ASM workers (Kelly et al. 2014, 98). NGOs and other international actors, such as governments, then structure their own responses to meet these narratives, pushing for policies, such as trying to find ways to remove women from ASM communities, rather than providing services to support them, such as sexual health services (Kelly et al. 2014, 99).

In addition to how the state and society view ASM communities, miners themselves are strongly influenced by the experience of place. Their daily lives are entirely dependent upon the existence of ASM spaces. As Huggins et al. elaborate, “members of ‘mining communities’ are constantly engaged in ‘emplaced’ activities which implicitly or overtly inscribe certain kinds of identity claims and relations on the physical and social landscape” (2015, 150). These identity claims and placemaking activities are inherently gendered, evidenced by the gender-divided jobs that inscribe particular roles with masculinity or femininity. Though outside perspectives homogenize ASM environments with a singular vision of what these places entail (Huggins et al. 2015, 145; Kelly et al. 2014, 98), the lived experience of those within mining communities depends on their specific locality.

Case Study: Ghana

In Ghana, the government began regulating ASM as its own sector in 1989 with the passage of the *Small-Scale Gold Mining Law*. This sought to formalize the ASM sector, requiring licenses for and the registration of small-scale mining operations. However, rather than incorporating ASM into the formal sector, the registration process was so bureaucratic, inefficient, and expensive that it dissuaded formalization, leading to the creation of both legal and illegal, or informal, groups of miners (Yakovleva 2007, 30). One estimate suggests that around 200,000 miners are illegal, of which 50 percent are female (Yakovleva 2007, 31). Few women work in the legal portion of ASM as it is easier to gain access to the informal sector through channels outside of formal structures, such as that of transactional sex. Despite the perception of miners as illegal, many miners express interest in trying to register their business, largely in order to avoid fines and other ramifications for unregistered mining; however, the process is difficult and oftentimes licenses for large tracts of land are given to large-scale and commercial mining companies, covering areas where small-scale miners and ASM communities are already working, thus making it impossible for the smaller businesses to acquire licenses (Hilson and Potter 2005, 118). Additionally, even with registration, there are few benefits and no formal support programs or technical assistance are provided to help miners acquire skills, knowledge, and expertise to grow their businesses (Hilson and Potter 2005, 118). Moreover, due to the categorization of ASM sites as illegal spaces, governments view people associated with mining communities as uncooperative and do not offer assistance in the form of technical support or environmental health assistance (Yakovleva 2007, 37). This is particularly detrimental to the women in these spaces, many of whom would benefit both from technical education, which

would improve their status as laborers (Yakovleva 2007, 37), and from environmental and health services, which would improve their lives as women and caretakers.

Case Study: Tanzania

The Tanzanian government began regulating ASM on a slightly later timeline than Ghana, passing the Mining Act of 1998 and the Mining Regulations of 1999, both of which are still in place today (Fisher 2007, 737; Jönsson and Bryceson 2009, 255). These acts, similar to the regulatory policy passed in Ghana, have sought to incorporate ASM into the formalized mining sector. Through these acts, miners are able to get transferable titles to mineral claims, and there are efforts to simplify the process of formalization further in order to align with wider government initiatives to modernize land legislation (Fisher 2007, 744). The policy framework for regulation is simpler in Tanzania than in Ghana, allowing for a greater incorporation of ASM into the formal sector; however, it also reinforces and reproduces existing economic insecurities and power hierarchies (Fisher 2007). Additionally, the process favors large-scale miners and those with existing connections and/or access to material resources, which further perpetuates material inequality in the mining sector (Fisher 2007, 737). In addition to the regulatory frameworks, economic factors, such as the deterioration of subsistence farming and lack of employment opportunities, push women who need to support their households into ASM due to the accessibility of economic opportunities in the informal sectors (Yakovleva 2007, 31). The legal regulation process, which favors powerful pit owners and others with previous mining experience, often in the form of contracting with commercial companies (Fisher 2007), changes the dynamics of place in ASM sites as it emphasizes inequalities in access to economic opportunities. These spaces, a mix of formal and informal ASM operations within a single community, are ambiguous in-between spaces that open livelihood options to men and women, but they are also inherently exploitive (Huggins et al. 2015, 146) and often insecure due to the power structures at work.

In examining the placemaking interactions of political, social, and international actors and perceptions, it is imperative to make use of a gendered lens and recognize the ways in which external factors influence the lived experience of miners in specific localities. In doing so, it becomes evident that how place is created and experienced is determined by the individual's positionality within social and economic strata. Additionally, the realities of place at specific mining sites vary greatly in contrast to the perceived image of mining communities widely shared by national publics and international actors, with detrimental homogenizing effects that remove the agency of those involved in the ASM sector.

Exploring Agency: Mobility, Vulnerability, and Economic Stability

This final section will examine how mobility, economic stability, and vulnerability interact within the spaces of ASM, taking a gendered approach to understand how ASM provides opportunity to women seeking employment, as well as the choices available to women. The goal of this section is to examine the role of agency and the degree to which women are able to exercise agency within the structures that define how women can move, find economic freedom, and live within society. Women choose to go into mining and move to mining communities because of the economic and social freedoms and opportunities available to them. However, the decision often involves risking the loss of support from home communities and the acquisition of a social stigma due to the reputation of mining sites themselves (Werthmann 2008, 18). This

contradiction epitomizes the tension between structure and agency that women must navigate in these spaces.

Mobility

Mining is transitory in nature, with people moving to mining sites both internally and across borders. The sector is made up of a constantly fluctuating group of people as there are seasonal, rush, shock-push, and year-round miners seeking employment and opportunity in mining communities (Cuvelier 2017). For women, questions of mobility are often the first moment when agency and structure interact in decisions to work in ASM. Women's experiences in ASM are often framed by migration as they make decisions to travel to find employment in mining communities (Kelly et al. 2014, 100). This decision counters the victimhood narrative associated with women in ASM as it demonstrates an active choice.

For many women, the economic opportunities available in ASM offer enough security to make the choice to leave, a liberating experience. The option of having mobility with ASM as a destination allows women to exercise a degree of power within the household vis-à-vis husbands or other relatives (Werthmann 2009, 21). This opportunity can be used by women to leave an unhappy marriage or to pursue economic freedom and autonomy after divorce, widowhood, or a decision not to marry (Werthmann 2009, 21). In Ghana, female mobility is closely associated with employment mobility, a factor evident in terms of the women working in ASM communities (Yakovleva 2007, 35). However, structural factors, such as the risk of social stigma, rejection by one's husband, and increased risk of sexual violence and HIV/AIDS, are all factors that women must consider as they make decisions concerning mobility (Jönsson and Bryceson 2009, 253). ASM is similar to smallholder agriculture in that it is becoming a key component of rural livelihood strategies and requires hard labor. However, as Jönsson and Bryceson note, smallholder agriculture generally takes place on family land "amidst an extensive social support network" (2009, 251), whereas those involved in mining often migrate and become part of mining communities with no existing support systems or kinship ties. While Jönsson and Bryceson portray this difference in a mobility context, when examining it from a gendered perspective, the absence of family land inheritance patterns, gender role expectations within family hierarchies in agriculture, and a lack of other employment opportunities for women provide motivating factors to move to mining areas.

Economic Opportunity

ASM offers openings for women to find economic opportunity through the possibility of jobs in mining communities, both those directly and indirectly related to the mining of gold or other minerals. There are several components that contribute to ASM becoming an attractive livelihood option for women, including the variety of employment opportunities for women in ASM communities and the restrictions women face in rural communities and households, largely as a result of limited access to assets such as land. Women are able to earn comparatively high wages upon entry into the ASM sector due to the informal nature of the industry; however, they are often compensated less and on a different scale compared to their male counterparts (Brottem and Ba 2019, 56; Yakovleva 2007, 36–38).

In both Tanzania and Ghana, women are able to transgress traditional boundaries through the accumulation of wealth in ASM work, further opening their opportunities for increased autonomy and giving them greater bargaining power within their household (Fisher 2007, 741;

Yakovleva 2007, 36). In Ghana, women involved in ASM tend to view it as a temporary employment opportunity that provides a more stable source of income that can be invested in future business endeavors or used to access credit to grow a current business (Yakovleva 2007, 36). In Tanzania, due to the difference in structure of the regulation frameworks, women view ASM as a viable long-term option once entry to becoming a licensed claim holder or self-supporting pit owner is achieved (Fisher et al. 2009, 34). However, achieving more powerful positions within ASM requires access to knowledge and capital, and is thus a difficult road for women, who are often viewed as secondary laborers due to the perception of mines as masculine spaces (Brottem and Ba 2019, 56). Despite gendered barriers to more influential positions within ASM, the availability of work means mining is viewed as an avenue to a better life and thus is seen as a preferred livelihood option (Fisher et al. 2009, 36).

A second component of the economic opportunity offered by employment in mining communities is the limited access women have to land and other assets. Their lack of clear and secure control over land combined with the domestic labor expected of them means that agriculture does not represent a very viable livelihood strategy for rural women, and thus they turn to mining, which is viewed as more profitable. This is also seen in the responses of West African women in one study when asked how they were planning to use their earnings from mining, which the majority planned to invest in commerce rather than agriculture (Brottem and Ba 2019). Brottem and Ba identify a “tenure pivot space” (2019, 60) characterized by overlap between customary and freehold land tenure. They argue that this space provides women with an opportunity, through labor and earnings, to buy their way from one set of rights to another, in the process securing a higher degree of autonomy (Brottem and Ba 2019, 60). However, land also plays a role in ASM, as access to land and the customary rights to exploit gold are heavily intertwined (Brottem and Ba 2019, 56). Thus, women face decisions within a limited structure on how to gain access to employment within the mining sector, which often results in increasing the risk and vulnerability faced by women in ASM communities once they manage to find employment there.

Vulnerability

In addition to the high-risk environment endured by all members of ASM communities, women experience increased sexual and reproductive vulnerabilities along with exploitative labor conditions (Kelly et al. 2014, 97; Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 529). Sexual interactions are common in ASM communities; however, the lines between sexual violence and other forms of sexual transaction, such as sex as an economic transaction and sex as a social transaction, are blurred (Kelly et al. 2014, 99). In the ASM context, sex is used as an economic tool in the form of prostitution in order to gain access to particular employment opportunities through pit owners, and as a social bargaining tool to gain access to physical protection and material support from men (Brottem and Ba 2019, 56; Yakovleva 2007, 37). Sexual transactions occur regardless of the woman’s marital status, which contributes to the social stigma around women who engage in sex work, and, more broadly, around all women who live and/or work in mining communities (Kelly et al. 2014, 101). Sexual violence and transactional sex are closely linked. The choice to enter into transactional sex is largely one of structural forces that leave little room for agency due to the need for survival; thus, transactional sex can be viewed as sexual violence, particularly in cases in which the women are not paid afterward or the price is not agreed on beforehand (Kelly et al. 2014, 101).

Due to their position in society, women and other vulnerable groups who seek employment in mining communities lack representation and are often prevented from seeking political participation or advocacy for fair working conditions by those in power, as they are able to intimidate and dissuade people from reporting abuses (Kelly et al. 2014, 102). Additionally, institutions or mechanisms to address the exploitative nature of ASM do not exist for the majority of people in ASM communities (Kelly et al. 2014, 102). It should be noted that while women are placed in high-risk situations through employment in ASM, agency is exercised by the majority of women who work there (Kelly et al. 2014, 98). Victimhood narratives in the context of ASM remove the agency that does exist and undermine the ways in which women negotiate their own spaces within the greater setting of ASM communities. Rather than signifying a helplessness on behalf of women, the lack of options for addressing causes that increase the vulnerability of women in ASM communities is indicative of structural factors limiting the agency of women.

Conclusion

While ASM is a labor-intensive and high-risk sector, it also provides economic opportunities for women through offering more reliable employment opportunities that justify migration and allow women to exercise agency in terms of mobility and the decision to leave their homes. Artisanal and small-scale mines offer unique sites of rural livelihood opportunities for women, evident in the interaction between placemaking and the structural components of mobility, economic opportunity, and vulnerability. In complicating the narrative surrounding ASM communities, it becomes evident that a nuanced approach is needed when addressing ASM as a site for rural development and poverty reduction initiatives. Key to the conversation around the role occupied by women within mining communities is the tension between structure and agency. Thus, these narratives must be examined with a gendered perspective to fully engage with the lived experiences of female laborers in mines and those who work in adjacent positions. Looking forward, further research should be conducted examining the possibility for programs and assistance that aim to support the agency of women in ASM communities, such as increasing public health facilities and emphasizing environmental health, rather than viewing women through a victimhood lens.

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Social Work within the National Association of Colored Women: Clubwomen as Othermothers and Captive Maternals

Miriam Madison

ABSTRACT

Racial uplift, self-determination, and mutual aid function as mechanisms for Black communities to combat racial discrimination within the United States. Within the earlier formative education of social work, Black women were largely excluded from formal training and thus exercised their own discretion to create networks that allowed them to practice social work informally. This article explores how clubwomen of the early twentieth century performed social work through their commitment to the National Association of Colored Women. More specifically, the focus of this research examines the work of Mary McLeod Bethune and Mary Church Terrell as they contributed to the uplift of Black women and youth. The research draws upon the primary sources of the Mary Church Terrell Papers, Mary McLeod Bethune Papers, and the National Association of Colored Women's archival materials within online databases. Secondary sources provide context to the evidence of social work, the modality of clubwomen's practices, and the implications of their roles as Black women within the early civil rights movement of the 1930s and 1940s. By classifying the Black clubwomen as othermothers and captive maternals, one can understand their role as social workers grounded in embodied discourse.

Keywords: clubwomen, social work, Black feminism, Mary McLeod Bethune, Mary Church Terrell

Introduction

The National Association of Colored Women (NACW) was formed after a conference in Washington, D.C. on July 12, 1896. It was initially a merger of the National Federation of Afro-American Women (NFAAW) and the Colored Women's League (CWL). The NFAAW was based in Boston, Massachusetts, while the CWL was based in Washington, D.C. The merger occurred due to the fact that both organizations dealt with issues based on sexism. This sexism was especially exemplified by the president of the Anti-Slavery Society, James W. Jack. In a letter he wrote in 1895, he stated that the Black women were "prostitutes and were natural thieves and liars" (as quoted in Jones 1982, 22–23). Women of the NACW were faced with gendered oppression due to their lack of respectability as a result of their exclusion from occupations and roles claimed by their male counterparts. Understanding the organization from this angle is especially important as the NACW sought to improve conditions for the race on the basis of gender-based services. However, not only did the members of the NACW concern themselves with women and children, they were also concerned with issues of state-sanctioned violence through imprisonment and convict leasing (Campbell 2013). The club women supported elderly homes as well (NACW 1992). This article takes a critical look at the social welfare

efforts of the NACW at the national and local levels and measures them according to the concepts of embodied discourse, othermothering, and the captive maternal.

At its core, this article is concerned with the impact of Black women on the field of social work. Historically, the work of African Americans as influential figures in securing support programs and resources for their communities has received little recognition. Segregationist policies of structural racism caused many of the issues plaguing Black communities, and as a result, African Americans have traditionally developed mechanisms to combat the discriminatory institutions that created these inequalities. In order to advocate for self-determination and foster the advancement of Black people, social clubs such as the NACW were founded. This article is thus informed by the following questions: How did Black women's clubs use theory to guide their social work? How was the relationship to power defined for leaders within the NACW's clubs and for club members? Were there any differences between national and local chapters of the NACW? This article argues that the contributions of Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune within the NACW's clubs and their organized local chapters elevated the field of social work through embodied discourse as well as the role of club women as othermothers or captive maternals.

In order to chronicle the contributions of these two women, this research will explore the manuscripts and trace their involvement with the club movement of the 1920s to 1940s. The NACW papers are rich with meeting minutes, convention notes, and club histories that detail happenings at the local and national levels. Both the Mary Church Terrell Papers and the Mary McLeod Bethune Papers highlight the two women's personalities, leadership styles, and attitudes. Their leadership of the NACW led to the creation of local chapters that propelled the welfare practices of the national organization and its local chapters. Terrell and Bethune contributed to the formative practices of Black feminist thought and, subsequently, to the concept of intersectionality. This canonization of an as yet unnamed theory informed their social work practices. To explain their practice, Brittany Cooper's concept of "embodied discourse" provides a frame for the relationship between the social work of club women and the communities they intended to serve (2018, 13–14). According to Cooper, "embodied discourse is a form of Black female textual activism wherein race women assertively demand the inclusion of their bodies and, in particular, working-class bodies and Black female bodies by placing them in the texts they write and speak" (2018, 13). In this research, embodied discourse provides the foundation for practicing social work through the NACW and its local federations. In addition to the concept of embodied discourse, the "captive maternal" as theorized by Joy James (2016) lays out the space that club women occupied within their relationship to power in the United States. To understand the captive maternal in this sense, it is useful to provide a definition. Captive maternals are individuals "feminized into caretaking," and they involuntarily "stabilize the culture and wealth" of the West (James 2016, 255–56). Club women such as Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune occupied roles as captive maternals through their leadership in the NACW, along with the women who helped to lead efforts of community care, such as elderly homes and welfare for youth. While they sacrificed their time for causes that required great attention, the state used this to its advantage by refusing to adequately address the issues that plagued African American communities. The operative definitions of the social welfare of the Black women's club movement and modern-day tenets of social work highlight the prominence of Black women as pioneers of the social work profession as they sought to improve the material conditions of African Americans. Moreover, a deep analysis of their work is

necessary not only to understand their contributions to social work as a field but also their legacies as social work professionals.

Literature Review

Mutual aid has been a feature of many communities for several decades, and it exists to help individuals gain access to resources that would otherwise not be efficiently distributed to vulnerable populations. The issues that inspired the founding of the NACW were related to the provision of social services to children and the need to combat stereotypes of Black criminality. To do this, Black club women who were middle to upper class came together for the common goal of uplifting the race. Firsthand accounts of these experiences clearly demonstrate the temperaments of Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune. The Mary Church Terrell Papers include several speeches and addresses related to causes that could be classified as forms of social work. The National Association of Colored Women collection and the Mary McLeod Bethune papers indicate the political condition of African Americans through significant historical shifts in American history. The Bethune papers edited by Audrey Thomas McCluskey and Elaine M. Smith in *Mary McLeod Bethune: Building a Better World* (2001) provide a timeline of Bethune's involvement in the New Deal as a result of her pioneering educational work. However, the primary documents provided in several collections do not explicitly address the connection between the embodied discourse of Bethune and Terrell and their humanitarian contributions as social work formations. Nor do these documents refer or allude to the NACW as an institution of social work.

As stated previously, embodied discourse asserts the positionality of Black women out of their intersectional identities. Brittany Cooper explains in *Beyond Respectability: The Intellectual Thought of Black Women* (2018) that the necessity for embodied discourse is due to the invisibility of the Black body since the onset of chattel slavery in the West. As a result of being subjected to inhumane conditions and being further dehumanized in relation to whiteness, Black clubwomen found a way to make themselves intellectually legible through their social work formations. The concept that Cooper provides relies heavily on developing a framework that privileges personal experience, but her research does not marry the theory of embodied discourse to the practice of social work to illuminate other possibilities of Black women's legibility. Part of the project to maintain legibility occurs through motherhood, and *Black Feminist Thought* (2000) by Patricia Hill Collins offers insightful variations of motherhood that help to understand the NACW as an extension of family. Collins defines these relationships by recognizing the women in women-centered networks as "othermothers" (2000, 177–80). Family separation played a major role in dehumanizing the enslaved Africans brought to the United States. Subjecting the Black body to treatment as property meant that familial ties were not always based on blood relation and thus fictive kinship provided a substitute for biological family.

A tradition that played out in the NACW's clubs was that Black women with material means created networks for the racial and "moral uplift" of the Black community. Collins (2000) offers a classification of these women that illustrates what may have helped to guide their work within social clubs. To be seen as an othermother would mean that reverence and recognition of one's engendered understanding of femininity would be performed through the nurturing of community members. Programs that create a supportive structure for young women such as with homes for delinquent girls are important to consider, as Collins does not explicitly name club women as part of this classification of othermothers, and as not much prior research has been

done to make this connection. In line with the nurturing involved in being an othermother within relationships to community, Joy James (2016) explains that the Black maternal figure, within their relationship to the theory of the West or the state, maintains a role of caregiving that is contextualized through captivity. Nurturing is not just an autonomous choice by the clubwomen. It is a choice that requires their affective labor to support African Americans as the state does not support the Black community sufficiently. Thus, clubwomen are feminized into caretaking through gender roles, but also through the exploitation of the United States in that their sacrifices are necessitated by the state's neglect. This is useful for understanding how the social work of the NACW stabilized the economy of the United States, especially during the Great Depression. In *The Womb of Western Theory: Trauma, Theft, Time, and the Captive Maternal*, James defines the captive maternal in terms of caretaking and argues that it is important to situate social work within this sphere. In relation to othermothering, surrogate maternals step in to take care of community members whose immediate families may not have the resources, time, or emotional drive to provide support. As such, one could argue that clubwomen become hypervisible to the state as they are sacrificing their time to uplift the community ravaged by the disregard of the state. Thus, the moral mandate of leaders such as Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune to provide care is not entirely out of their own volition. It is due to the neglect and abandonment of government agencies, exclusionary welfare programs, and the criminalization of Blackness.

Social Work and Black Club Women

Up until the 1960s there were not many integrated professional spheres that allowed for Black social workers to learn about the profession alongside their white counterparts. Consequently, differences in modes of practice and theory developed that informed the treatment of issues within the Black community. In regard to the approaches of Black women, the theoretical application of social work can be understood in terms of embodiment. Standards of intellectual thought have been heavily censored and policed. For the Black club women of the early twentieth century, their bodies functioned as “sites of theory production” (Cooper 2018, 19). Thus, when Anna Julia Cooper states, “when and where I enter in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole race enters with me” (1988, 31), she emphasizes the embodiment of her Blackness and womanhood. Moreover, this challenge edifies the Black woman as an authority of her being, and while not in compliance with the standard representations of femininity, she makes her racialized and gendered self visible.

African Americans during this time were marked not just by Blackness but also by its racial connotations. Much like Anna Julia Cooper understood that her womanhood was unique, America during the early twentieth century levied specific punishments against the indocility of the Black body. As Black people faced mistreatment by whites in the South, including lynchings, low wages, Jim Crow segregation, and other forms of violence, there was an influx of Black southerners to northern states in America (Gary and Gary 1994, 69). According to Edward Franklin Frazier, “Since the mass migrations of Negroes to northern cities, there has emerged a relatively large and influential group of leaders who are primarily concerned with the social welfare of Negroes. In fact, the field of social welfare has provided one of the chief fields of employment for the educated Negro” (1949, 550–52). What Frazier highlights is the necessity of Black leaders addressing the social woes ailing the Black community in the North. This brought many questions to the fore. How would this social welfare be conducted? What does it mean to

practice social welfare within the parameters of being a captive maternal? Who will step up to the plate to concern themselves with the issues facing African Americans? Also, how does embodied discourse enhance the practice of social work? Without intertextual analysis of the importance of embodiment and social work, the work of Black club women as social workers is nearly impossible to understand.

In a curriculum study, the Council of Social Work Education defined social work as the following:

Social work seeks to enhance the social functioning of individuals, singularly and in groups, by activities focused upon their social relationships which constitute the interaction between man and his environment. These activities can be grouped into three functions: restoration of impaired capacity, provision of individual and social resources, and prevention of social dysfunction (Boehm 1958, n.p.).

This definition of social work provides a guide for measuring the work of several African American leaders during the Progressive Era in American history. The field of social work acts as a corrective institution to establish a healthy relationship between individuals and their society. What has to be addressed is the dysfunction that interrupts the right to self-determination, agency, and dignity. Brittney Cooper explains in *Beyond Respectability* that dignity is “not socially contingent” (2018, 16). In other words, not only does social work operate as a practice to combat dysfunction and inequality, but it is also of use due to its mandate on dignity as a humane imperative. The activities of social work do not allow for partiality on the consideration of these rights. Anna Julia Cooper alludes to the intersectional struggle in her book *Voice of the South* when she states: “While our men seem thoroughly abreast of the times on almost every other subject, when they strike the woman question they drop back into sixteenth century logic” (1988, 75). To highlight how social work needs to be practiced to be of use to those who are impaired, Anna Julia Cooper offers an explicit example of how gender is considered an impairment, showing how the issues within the African American community cannot be properly addressed without confronting sexism.

The exclusion of Black women from conversations about racial issues facilitated the dominance of the Great Race Man ideal. St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton defined race men as having “race consciousness, race pride, and race solidarity” (as quoted in Carby 1998). This definition emphasized uniformity, as race man placed the race before himself. Silence on the matter of race women left little room for their development during the Progressive Era. The exclusion of Black women as marginal to the pursuit of racial solidarity meant that Black women had to forge their own paths to produce knowledge on their embodiment and the possibilities of their leadership. Phillip Bryan Harper calls attention to the role of masculinity in achieving dominance by asserting,

Since the dominant view holds prideful self-respect as the very essence of healthy African-American identity, it also considers such identity to be fundamentally weakened wherever masculinity appears to be compromised. While this fact is rarely articulated, its influence is nonetheless real and pervasive. Its primary effect is that all debates over and claims to “authentic” African-American identity are largely animated by a profound anxiety about the status specifically of African-American *masculinity* (as quoted in Carby 1998; emphasis original).

This theorization of authenticity as determined by masculinity hints not only at the exclusion of women but at the erasure of Black women's contributions. Social work was a vehicle to assert racial pride and self-help. The masculinity inscribed within the Black identity discounts the feminization of those who perform gender as women. If one deviates from the masculinization, then the influence one has becomes questionable, unstable, and inauthentic. With this in mind, Black women who became race women were tied to or held captive by their classification as women and caregivers. Race men maintained their dominance by pushing prominent Black women to the margins and to the feminization of uplift around child welfare, education, and so forth. However, the categories of femininity and masculinity proved to be unstable as women such as Mary McLeod Bethune and Mary Church Terrell took up the same responsibilities and duties as the race men of their age. Their roles as captive maternals illustrate their relation to power and influence in accordance with their investment in caregiving as members of the NACW.

The self-help work of Black women in the social clubs of the 1920s to 1940s cannot be divorced from embodied discourse and the relationship between themselves and the environment in which they sought to enrich their communities. Mary Church Terrell, the first president of the NACW, exhibited through her speeches the mark of a race woman. In an address to the students of M. Street High School on September 15, 1915, Terrell informed the student body of the "certain conditions which confront the Colored-American today." She went on to say that "some of us are doing everything we can to improve these untoward conditions under which we are obliged to live" (Terrell 1915). These sentiments highlighted the role she occupied as a captive maternal as she sacrificed for the uplift of the Black community. Much like the race men described by Drake and Cayton as committed to the pursuit of racial solidarity, Terrell advanced a similar stance. In particular, throughout the speech, Terrell emphasized the use of "we." This "we" speaks to the group-centered mentality expected of a race woman. However, beyond that, Terrell maintained a position of agitation, stating later that if we "agitate continuously" (Terrell 1915) then justice will prevail. This leads to the understanding that some Black women maintained a perspective of rebelliousness, and purposely chose not to be respectable. Terrell challenged the assumptions that Black women should be subservient and should not be outspoken about their disappointment regarding their mistreatment within the Black community. Instead of remaining silent, Terrell voiced her complaints about injustice and thus inserted herself as a race woman, just as Black men had done.

However, of even more importance is that Terrell emphasized the uplift of the race. In understanding social work in relation to this statement, it is important to understand that social work can be practiced in terms of its theoretical foundations. According to John G. McNutt (2013), the Settlement House Movement of the early 1900s was one of the earliest professional forms of social work that laid the groundwork for the social work profession today. At that time, some training was available to Black social workers. Robenia B. Gary and Lawrence E. Gary provide a list of priorities for Black social workers in the early twentieth century as follows:

- 1) demonstration to the public that everybody "with love in his heart" could not do social work in a professional manner; 2) identification of knowledge and skills necessary for the practice of social work; 3) the establishment of schools for the training of social workers; 4) the development of professional organizations; 5) the publication of major books dealing with social work theory and practice; 6) the development of professional journals; and 7) an identification of values shared by social workers (1994, 67).

While such activities were characteristic of Black social workers, not all social work at that time was labeled specifically as social welfare. As discussed previously, race men and race women felt obligated to establish a unified racial consciousness as a way to morally and materially uplift African Americans. Similarly, embodied discourse functioned in a manner that resonated with Black club women who found ways to improve the conditions of their communities. The first activity explains that not everyone is skilled to do social work simply because they feel compelled to help. This makes it even more important that the work of Black club women leaders be accorded recognition and merit. Because their efforts were grounded in what the Combahee River Collective (1977) refers to as the “personal is political” ethic, past presidents of the NACW such as Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune used their understanding of the world to establish the NACW as a site of social work practice. This provided the contextual environment necessary for producing effective social workers. Unlike educational institutions such as the Atlanta School of Social Work, the NACW functioned as a physical gathering place to sharpen the minds of social workers in training.

Leadership in the National Association of Colored Women

The speeches and biographies of Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune act as the recorded documents of theory that informed the social work of the NACW. For example, during the early 1940s, Bethune addressed the Division of Negro Services in a speech in New York and explained the pressing issues of “poor farm incomes; poor wages; crowded housing condition[s]; hazard[s] to health that accompany these decisions; [and] the need for education, for job training, for job possibilities” (Bethune n.d.). Bethune believed that these issues required the attention of every individual, a claim that evokes embodied discourse and the use of the personal politics of oneself to seek self-determination and self-advocacy.

Iris Carlton-LaNey’s *African American Social Work Pioneers’ Response to Need* (1999) illuminates the values and principles of social work practiced by African Americans in the early twentieth century. Carlton-LaNey outlined “self-help, mutual aid, race pride, and social debt” (1999, 311) as the motivations behind the practice of social welfare. To mobilize and spread the word on mutual aid and self-help, the NACW’s clubs effectively used the *Women’s Era* literary magazine for outreach (Carlton-LaNey 1999, 311). As stated earlier, the concept of race pride is adjacent to the representations of race men and women. Social debt, however, was the motivation behind using one’s esteem and class to “Lift As We Climb,” which is the motto of the NACW. One of the more notable ways in which this motto was exemplified can be found in the establishment of schools. Mary McLeod Bethune founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Women in 1904 for the purpose of contributing to the racial uplift of African American women (Peebles-Wilkins 2013). The fact that a Black woman was purposely establishing a school for other Black girls and women further entrenches the value of embodied discourse in the case of Bethune’s social work, and I would argue it uses tenets similar to Black feminist thought. Central to this theory of embodiment is the use of Black women’s experience as another dimension of social work practice. If Mary McLeod Bethune had not been a Black woman who used her identity to inform her work around education and racial uplift, the prospects for improving the lives of Black women in need of support would have been more limited.

Mary McLeod Bethune occupied an interesting position within society during her tenure as a world-renowned educator. She served as the president of the NACW from 1924 to 1928. Bethune had a philosophy of education specifically for “negro girls” (McCluskey and Smith

2001, 84). In 1926, she wrote an essay on her philosophy that stated that “a great deal of new freedom rest[s] upon the type of education which the Negro woman will receive” (McCluskey and Smith 2001, 84). The essay also asserted that domesticity was the highest extent to which Black women could be rendered visible and successful; however, the education of the Black woman would be foundational to the continued emancipation of the Negro. While emancipation had been achieved legally, there were still areas in which Black people were bound. Intellectual freedom was one such area, and Mary McLeod Bethune advocated especially for the freedom of education as it would be the means through which total freedom could be achieved. Moreover, what was important to the quest for freedom was the embodiment of Black femininity and the notion that the freedom of the race would not be guaranteed until the freedom of the Black girl was actualized.

Bethune’s life is a testament to this fact, as she led by example to be able to mentor and lead the charge for other Black girls to follow in her footsteps toward educational advancement. In 1894, Mary McLeod Bethune graduated from Scotia Seminary (Barber-Scotia College) in Concord, North Carolina, and she later went on to the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago with the intent of becoming a missionary (Peebles-Wilkins 2013). By taking a closer look at her relationships through the framework of embodied discourse, it’s clear that Bethune led by example. Her commitment to education meant that she situated herself within the fight for educational equality. What made institutions like her Daytona Literary and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls successful in their fundraising were the connections that Bethune had within the NACW. For example, her tribute to Frances Reynolds Keyser in 1932 indicated that the former president of the State Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs in New York and Florida was supportive of Bethune-Cookman College (McCluskey and Smith 2001, 87). Networks of support helped to fortify the mission of Bethune’s institutional endeavors. In this way, she not only used embodied discourse to define her relation to the work she did while president of the NACW, but she also formed bonds with othermothers within the organization.

In looking at Mary McLeod Bethune as a captive maternal, it is helpful to highlight her role in the New Deal. As part of the National Youth Administration, Bethune concerned herself with the state of affairs of Black youth, especially as the United States was gearing up for World War II. In a speech to the Second National Conference on the Problems of the Negro and Negro Youth, Bethune explained that “no such united democracy can possibly exist unless...common opportunity is available to all Americans regardless of creed, class, or color” (McCluskey and Smith 2001, 87). Later, in a drafted letter to President Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune stated that one of the shortcomings of the New Deal legislation was that there were inadequate “safeguards for federal aid to education and health which would insure equitable distribution of federal money” (McCluskey and Smith 2001, 236). As Joy James (2016) describes the relationship of the captive maternal to the state, the resistance of Black women does not necessarily grant access to the aid that many have struggled for. In the case of Mary McLeod Bethune, her advocacy was a form of social work in that she used her experiential authority as a Black woman to help uplift the community through her roles in the Roosevelt administration. Despite her commitment to social work and her pleas to President Roosevelt and other cabinet members, federal assistance was not guaranteed for the African American community. Thus, she continued to sacrifice her time, often to no avail. This illustrates the theft of women’s time, as Black women with fewer systemic advantages than their white counterparts continued to bear the brunt of racial uplift in the name of social work. In addition to this, Bethune aligned with the part of social work concerned with the provision of individual and social resources. She stood in

proxy for other Black people who had not entered with her in her role as the special advisor for minority affairs in the Roosevelt administration, yet she entered for them by advocating for services. This advocacy was what she referred to as equal opportunity under a united democracy. Bethune made her intentions known and championed services to prevent further social dysfunction in the African American community.

Mary Church Terrell used her intellectual prowess to mobilize club women toward work that would “remedy [the] evils” of lynching, convict leasing, and Jim Crow segregation (Terrell 1899). She served as the first president of the National Association of Colored Women for five years. Terrell was well educated and had received both a bachelor’s and master’s degree from Oberlin College. She was proficient in English, German, French, and Italian. This enabled her to address multiple crowds abroad and apprise them of the state of race relations in America. Her training and intellect also distinguished her from other working-class women.

In a letter addressed to the NACW on the duties of the organization, Terrell lamented the burden that working women faced when trying to care for their own homes and the residences in which they worked (Terrell 1899). Terrell stated that it was the duty of club women to endeavor to secure proper care for the children of working women who could not afford it themselves. This points to the differences and similarities between the community the club served and the population of the club. The club was primarily composed of middle- to upper-class Black women who had obtained an education and who used racial solidarity to connect them to the less fortunate of the race.

In this same letter, Terrell (1899) insisted on the importance of establishing kindergartens and day cares. According to Terrell, the race problem must be solved by providing adequate services to children. This inclusion of the race problem in Terrell’s letter also points to a theoretical appeal of intellect. Asking her audience, comprised of Black women, to concern themselves with race signifies embodied discourse through a discursive sequence of thought, and she situates Black womanhood in the middle of that sequence. It was similar to how Mary McLeod Bethune insisted that the freedom of the Negro was predicated upon the right to education for the Black girl. These two leaders were in line with one another in terms of their approaches to racial uplift.

The captive maternal is also a useful template for understanding what Mary Church Terrell proposed as an alternative for the “unfortunate women and tempted girls” (Terrell 1899). For example, she advocated for the involvement of these women in “schools of domestic science” (Terrell 1899). What Terrell proposed was the continuation of the captive maternal in modes of caretaking, especially for those who were “not blessed with advantages of education and moral training” (1899). For Terrell and many other club women, domesticity was an American ideal that had to be adopted by all women in order to gain respect. The elevation of morality was important for Terrell as she felt that the race would be judged based on the behaviors of the uneducated. Thus, she attempted to reach these women through the modes and practices of home life.

The appeal to motherhood through the othermothering of working-class women’s children presented another avenue to achieve ideals culturally attuned to what American society expected of women. The only issue was that for the longest time, Black women were not seen as capable of much, and thus Terrell concerned herself with the welfare of youth in order to counter these low expectations at a young age. Terrell herself had lost three children shortly after their birth, and she subsequently treated the youth work of the NACW as a substitute for the children she never had the chance to raise and nurture. Thus, one could conclude that Terrell functioned as a

captive maternal who othermothered those served by the NACW. On at least one occasion, she suggested as much:

So tenderly has this child of the organized womanhood of the race been nurtured, and so wisely ministered unto by all who have watched prayerfully and waited patiently for its development, that it comes before you to-day a child hale, hearty and strong, of which its fond mothers have every reason to be proud (Terrell 1899).

Child welfare was integral to the mission of the NACW. Without making efforts to ensure that children were cared for in terms of nurseries and kindergartens, the mission of the club would be devoid of much of its communal meaning. However, these interests were also self-righteous. Although genuinely concerned with the well-being of working-class women and their children, the NACW also led paternalistic efforts to regulate the behavior of women, projecting upon them the expectations that white Americans had of them (Roberts 2005, 963).

Conclusion

Both Bethune and Terrell relied on putting their efforts toward the welfare of children and other working-class women as a way to uplift the race. However, the leadership style of Bethune was more focused on education and government agencies. Terrell concerned herself with home life, and while she did travel abroad on behalf of the NACW and other women-centered organizations, she was not as extensively connected with the White House as Bethune. Bethune relied heavily on her connections to ensure funding for Bethune-Cookman College. In their capacities as leaders, the two women realized that the education of youth was an important principle behind the NACW. In addition, they used their privileges to secure opportunities for others.

Social work functions similarly today. Many social workers are educated and can provide services at the macro and micro levels. The macro level deals with institutional concerns, while the micro level addresses interpersonal aspects. Both Terrell and Bethune demonstrated their ability to influence other women to rally behind those less fortunate. They did so by fostering collective action within their club networks, but also by concerning themselves with the need for proper education for community members, particularly youth.

This article has illuminated the ways in which service was a major feature of the NACW and its membership. However, it is also important to note that the NACW and its members' contributions to social work should be carefully considered and analyzed to determine the modes of their practice. Examining the utility of othermothering, captive maternals, and embodied discourse helps to provide some tools to understand their role in social work, but these frameworks build upon Black feminist thought. While this study of the NACW has been primarily historical in focus, the imprint that the organization left on intellectual traditions has been generative for understanding contemporary theories within the field of social work. Focusing on the efforts of Mary Church Terrell and Mary McLeod Bethune as leaders of the NACW highlights the various ways in which social work has been conceived and practiced, as well as the relevance of these two women to this field and to the larger American society of their time and beyond.

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Rebellious to Revolutionary: SNCC and its Transformative Activism

Saskia Staimpel

ABSTRACT

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced “snik”) was formed in 1960 to give an organizational expression to the unprecedented rise in student activism during the civil rights movement. In its beginning, SNCC sought to use nonviolent tactics to confront and dismantle the Jim Crow segregation that oppressed Black Americans across the country. As SNCC’s focus shifted from dismantling segregation to organizing outside of the political institutions that did not represent them, its members recognized the systemic nature of the oppression and injustice they were fighting. This revolutionary understanding of Black oppression led SNCC members to both realize the limitations of nonviolent tactics and to embrace Black self-determination, self-empowerment, and self-defense. SNCC’s full embodiment of these principles at the height of its activism in the late 1960s coincided with the emergence of the Black Power movement that held these principles and grassroots organizing as some of their major tenets. This article examines SNCC’s activism from its inception in 1960 to its peak in 1966, demonstrating how its grassroots activism in the face of extreme racial violence and lack of government protection and support transformed what its members believed Black liberation should look like and how it could be achieved.

Keywords: SNCC, Black Power movement, civil rights movement, grassroots activism, voter registration

Introduction

When members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) began chanting “Black Power” at the Meredith March of June 1966, it frightened some but empowered many. “Black Power” had yet to be publicly addressed or defined by any organization or activist, but it resonated deeply with SNCC members. The iconic phrase was giving a name to notions of political empowerment, Black self-determination, and grassroots organizing that SNCC had already been practicing through its demonstrations, voter registration projects, and political organizing. SNCC’s grassroots activism had allowed its members to become intimately familiar with the systemic injustices that severely and violently affected poor Black people in the South. Activists’ experiences with intense racial violence and the failure of the United States government to protect and empower Black people radicalized them and directed their focus to critiquing the systemic nature of racial oppression and finding solutions through the building of alternative political and educational institutions for Black people. This focus on systemic oppression and on building empowering alternatives for Black people would become a major tenet of the Black Power movement. This article will thus demonstrate how SNCC transformed into a Black Power organization by analyzing how its activism caused the organization to

develop and practice principles like Black self-determination, self-empowerment, and self-defense. This study will focus on the organization's programs and major events, showing how the nature and experiences of its work helped shape its development from a rebellious civil rights organization into a revolutionary Black Power one.

The Founding of SNCC

When four Black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, decided to sit peacefully but defiantly at Woolworth's all-white lunch counter on February 1, 1960, they did not anticipate how much their courageous act would resonate with Black students across the nation. Much like other young people in the South who faced the injustice of segregation daily, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University students Ezell Blair Jr., Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil, and David Richmond had increasingly been feeling angry and frustrated about segregation and its indignities (Gaillard 2001, 13–14). In talking at length about their rage at both segregation and the perceived inaction of their parents' generation, the Greensboro Four came to realize that just talking about their disappointments made them no better than the generation they were criticizing (Gaillard 2001, 13). Deciding to take matters into their own hands and draw the line they wished their parents had drawn, the Greensboro Four demanded to be served at the all-white counter and refused to leave until closing. This act held Black self-determination at its core, and everything that came from it, including SNCC and its activism, was infused with this principle.

This sudden wave of student protest revitalized the civil rights movement that had been losing momentum since the successes of the Montgomery Bus Boycott (Morgan and Davies 2012, 2). But the boldness, youthfulness, and determination were new elements that the students brought to the movement. The success of the students' direct action was impressive. As historian Barbara Ransby notes, "students' direct assaults on Jim Crow had done more to demolish the most ubiquitous and offensive everyday forms of segregation than years of carefully orchestrated national campaigns" (2003, 252). Ella Baker, the executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) at the time, recognized this impact and believed it imperative to the success of the movement that the students be supported and mentored. The SCLC and Martin Luther King Jr. also recognized what the students could do for the movement and supported Ella Baker in organizing a conference for everyone to come together and collaborate (Morgan and Davies 2012, 7). However, the SCLC and Baker had different expectations around how the students would organize.

The SCLC had hoped that the students would organize as a youth wing of their organization, but in direct defiance of its wishes, Baker encouraged the students to organize independently (Ransby 2003, 252). This act of defiance greatly upset the SCLC's leadership, but Baker was uncompromising in her mission to foster the creation of an independent student-led and driven organization. She organized a conference for the students to meet and hear from civil rights movement leaders at her alma mater, Shaw University, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Out of that conference, held in April 1960, the Temporary Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was created, later renamed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. While the committee would embody the radicalism and defiance of the students, the "affirmed philosophical or religious ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of [their] purpose" (SNCC Constitution 1962) in their constitution showed how influential civil rights era ideals were in their formation and early thinking.

Despite having nonviolence as a major tenet in SNCC's constitution, many of the students did not accept nonviolence as a way of life, like other civil rights organizations did and urged them to do. Instead, nonviolence was regarded as primarily an effective tactic to combat segregation (Stoper 1977, 16). It was the students' determination to challenge segregation and injustice directly and in a way that would effect immediate change in their daily lives that motivated them. This distinction marks a fundamental difference between SNCC and the established civil rights organizations. It also alludes to the students' propensity to seek other avenues and tactics that would work for their independent goals and purposes, even if they did not align with already established ones. The defiant and courageous spirit that characterized the birth of the organization would live on to become a defining tenet of the organization and its programs.

SNCC's Civil Rights Activism

As determination, self-empowerment, and defiance had become the founding principles of the organization, SNCC's involvement in the Freedom Rides reflected and strengthened these principles. Diane Nash, James Bevel, and John Lewis of SNCC had been working on a desegregation campaign in Nashville, Tennessee, when they and other students around them learned that the Greyhound bus carrying Freedom Riders had been bombed (Catsam 2008, 1). The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the organization behind the Freedom Rides, was prepared to abandon the mission because of the intensity of the violence. SNCC took initiative and independently decided to aid in the continuation of the rides by sending new people to the program. They were emboldened by the violence they knew they would face, and their experiences with it would only contribute to their radicalization and determination. Diane Nash, who had dropped out of college to become a full-time staffer for SNCC, felt that not continuing the rides would give "the impression...that whenever a movement starts all you have to do is attack it with massive violence and the Blacks will stop" (Catsam 2008, 1). In offering unsolicited help, even against the warnings of the movement's leaders, SNCC exercised Black self-determination in a way not typical of the civil rights movement.

While advancing its direct-action strategy through the Freedom Rides and other demonstrations, SNCC began turning its attention to the more pressing issue of voter registration. Initially, SNCC activists were hesitant to divert their energy from direct action to voter registration. They did not want to validate the Kennedy administration's stance that civil rights organizations should work on voter registration efforts rather than direct action (Morgan and Davies 2012, 13). The lack of enforcement of desegregation and the lack of protection for the Freedom Riders from the government made SNCC members distrustful of the institution and its motives. More importantly, they were hesitant because they saw demonstrations like the Freedom Rides, which elicited strong opposition and violence, as more meaningful and impactful than other projects, like registering voters (Morgan and Davies 2012, 13). However, after meeting with Black residents from counties experiencing the most violent voter suppression, SNCC soon began to see "the emerging reality that there...were many more serious evils to be confronted than getting a cup of coffee or hamburger at the Five and Dime" (Brown 2015, 0:41:20 to 0:41:44). The violence that Black people were facing in poor rural communities for trying to vote would convince them that the cause, in fact, would involve direct action. Following Baker's advice, SNCC decided they would take on both approaches. They began going to rural communities in the Mississippi Delta, and the fieldwork would radicalize and transform their thinking.

Bob Moses, a SNCC field secretary, began leading voter registration efforts in the Mississippi Delta in 1962. It was in these rural areas where poor Black people in towns faced life-threatening racial violence for trying to get registered to vote. It was a grassroots effort, as SNCC worked closely with community leaders to establish Freedom Schools where Black residents who only had substandard educational facilities and resources could be educated and politically empowered. Additionally, SNCC would accompany and protect residents as they went to the courthouse to get registered, risking their lives as they were often met with intense racial violence from white residents and plantation owners (Forman 1985, 225). Not long after they began their organizing in the area, Herbert Lee, a resident of McComb who assisted SNCC in voter registration efforts, was murdered. It was devastating to SNCC and the Black residents of McComb, and they were forced to reduce their efforts (Forman 1985, 231). However, SNCC members had already been deeply affected by what they saw and would return to continue educational programs and voter registration efforts in 1964.

From working closely with community leaders, SNCC workers became intimately familiar with the poverty and violence that the Black people in the Mississippi Delta were subjected to. They became firsthand witnesses to the lack of quality in the education given to Black students, and to how sharecroppers worked for very little pay. They were thus able to recognize the systemic nature of the oppression faced by Black residents, as it was the state that refused to provide adequate funding and resources for their education, and the government and law enforcement that allowed and enabled violence against them. This recognition led SNCC workers to be open and harsh with their criticisms of the government and its various policing and economic institutions. These realizations would classify them as radicals, and their calls for a revolution made them militant. Their censorship at the March on Washington of 1963 would only strengthen their desire to make their “radical” critiques known and further their vision of Black political freedom and power.

Formative Activism, Conflicts, and Disappointments

By the time of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, SNCC activists had already become radicalized by their fieldwork and wanted to draw attention to the systemic poverty and violence that they had witnessed. From its grassroots organizing in the Mississippi Delta, SNCC had begun to turn away from seeking inclusion in the political system that actively worked against them and refused to represent them. They were thus very critical of the March on Washington because it was led and organized by the civil rights leaders and organizations who were still very much committed to working within the law and with the United States government to achieve their goals (Carson 1981, 92). However, SNCC members recognized the significance of the demonstration and the support they could gain if they were present and spoke alongside major civil rights leaders. They joined the event with the intent of making their criticisms of the government, society, and political institutions known. John Lewis, the newly elected SNCC chair, prepared a speech that would announce their rejection of the civil rights bill and express their resentment of the government’s failures in protecting Black people and allowing them to be economically exploited (Carson 1981, 93).

Lewis’s original speech was incendiary, and civil rights leaders were upset at SNCC’s seemingly militant and radical stance, which was not shared by any other organization present. In the original speech, Lewis stated, “in good conscience, we cannot support wholeheartedly the administration’s civil rights bill” (Lewis 1963, 1). This stance greatly offended many civil rights leaders, particularly Archbishop O’Doyle, who refused to give his invocation unless the speech

was edited (Forman 1985, 334). Even though SNCC members felt strongly about what they were saying and how important it was that they express the suffering of poor and working-class Black people on such a large platform, they compromised. In the new speech, Lewis stated “we support [the bill] with great reservation” (1963, 1). He also had written phrases like “we shall pursue our own ‘scorched earth’” and “all of us must get in the revolution” (Lewis 1963, 1), which had to be removed as part of the compromise, as the other speakers saw the statements as harmful to the movement and to their goal of getting the civil rights bill passed. SNCC was not completely censored, however, as the press printed the original speech that they had received before the march. They thus still managed to “[articulate] to the nation a militancy not heard before from civil rights organizations” (Forman 1985, 333). SNCC would only become more emboldened to continue their activism in opposition to compromises and with a focus on generating change through independent channels. This would lead them to delve deeper into their grassroots organizing in the Deep South for voter registration through the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project of 1964.

More determined than ever to continue and to expand their grassroots voter registration work in the Mississippi Delta, SNCC created the Mississippi Summer Project of 1964. They recruited hundreds of college students and volunteers, a vast majority of them being white or from the North, and they sent them to live in the communities they were mobilizing in (Moses 1965, 3–4). During Freedom Summer, as those few months of 1964 came to be known, SNCC sought to establish freedom in many ways, not just through registering Black people to vote.

SNCC knew voter registration efforts in the Mississippi Delta to be dangerous given the racially violent response to the programs they had established in the area back in 1962. However, the increase in volunteers from their recruitment for Freedom Summer gave SNCC the number of staff needed to engage in more activism and to protect themselves and the residents from the constant threat of racial violence. According to county organizer Hollis Watkins, volunteers going into the Mississippi had to be “prepared to go to jail...prepared to be beaten...and ultimately...prepared to be killed” (as quoted in Hogan 2007, 155). This was because white locals were so committed to exterminating the efforts of SNCC and the Black residents because they feared the power they would have if they succeeded in politically mobilizing a large population of Black people (Cobb 2015, 5). Black people were the majority in these counties, and the local government, controlled by local whites, recognized that their power would be severely diminished if Black residents exercised their right to vote. They had been adamantly fighting Black residents’ efforts to register to vote since the 1950s, by enacting laws meant to disenfranchise and monitor the Black population and by killing or driving Black community leaders and activists out of town (Cobb 2015, 5). SNCC entered the area both despite and because of this, as they could not ignore the repression that they had become aware of during their first round of projects in McComb in 1962. SNCC felt compelled to “share their terror with them” (Hogan 2007, 166).

In addition to the voter registration efforts, SNCC built Freedom Schools that exemplified their commitment to building alternative institutions for Black people that encouraged self-determination and self-empowerment. SNCC witnessed firsthand the consequences of the public schools for Black children being severely underfunded. The schools were overcrowded and understaffed, resulting in extremely high illiteracy rates and, consequently, a lack of political understanding and power. This was, of course, intentional. As historian William Sturkey notes, “the curriculum in Mississippi’s Black public schools was specifically designed to discourage resistance to white supremacist structures and practices” (2010, 365). SNCC came to believe, as

Bob Moses said, that the “level of education is the immediate key, not the integration as such” (as quoted in Warren 1965, 40). Moses’ statement demonstrates how SNCC had become distinctly removed from many civil rights goals and ideals, as their goals centered around integration and reforms of existing educational structures and institutions. Freedom Schools became places where Black people were able to educate themselves and young students on various literature and African American history—independent of state control. Doing so independently was the ultimate exercise of ideological resistance to white power structures. Students were given the tools to become more politically aware and involved, with the intent of encouraging them to build alternative political, educational, and economic institutions that served their needs and those of the community. In this, SNCC was also resisting the co-opting of Black people into a two-party system that they believed continually failed them.

The terror SNCC faced revealed to them how essential armed self-defense was when engaging in activism, distancing them further from their civil rights movement roots that practiced and lived nonviolence. In this violent climate, Black residents could not afford to not be armed, and many owned firearms for self-defense. Assaults and attacks were commonplace, leading many to be “haunted” by Malcolm X’s question of “how the black people [can] afford to be nonviolent when our churches [are] being bombed and our little girls murdered” (Brown 2015, 0:47:02 to 0:47:09). Those who had seen nonviolence used as an effective tactic as opposed to a way of life were predisposed to becoming radicalized, which was a large number of SNCC members. James Forman, based on his experience with Freedom Summer as an organizer, came to “[know] that our struggle would eventually take a violent form, and I was ready for the transition whenever it occurred” (1985, 376). Others, however, had accepted nonviolence as a way of life and struggled with the implications of committing to it in the face of terror. Many in SNCC began to understand how essential armed self-defense was, as it was necessary in the face of the death threats and drive-by shootings that had become commonplace in the area (Forman 1985, 376). While SNCC as an organization was ultimately never able to sustainably grow into and assert their stances on armed struggle and self-defense, these foundational Black Power principles were being practiced and thought about by many individuals in SNCC throughout their activism in the Mississippi Delta.

Freedom Summer was a pivotal point for SNCC. Through organizing as adoptive members of the community, SNCC experienced violent and state-sanctioned repression where change was the most desperately needed. SNCC’s expansion of activism into creating Freedom Schools showed that they understood how immediate change needed to come to these areas—and ultimately to the nation as a whole. By the end of Freedom Summer, many had undergone an ideological transformation that departed from civil rights era ideals. SNCC’s engagement in armed self-defense, in criticizing political institutions, and in building tangible alternatives to oppressive institutions led to the development of principles rooted in Black self-determination that would become foundational Black Power movement ideals. Their experiences had made founding Black Power movement principles such as Black self-determination, self-empowerment, and armed self-defense integral to their developing student movement. However, SNCC lacked an established declaration of their beliefs that reflected their growing political awareness and that they would be able to refer to while navigating times of ideological development such as this (Stoper 1977, 15).

Many SNCC leaders would lament how they did not take time to confer and develop a foundational set of beliefs, like the Ten-Point Platform the Black Panther Party would go on to establish. It would have allowed them to work through the questions of nonviolence, armed

struggle, armed self-defense, and radicalism as an organization, rather than allowing individual beliefs and perceptions to come into conflict in the destructive way that they eventually did. It would have also allowed the organization to establish a curriculum or political education program that would have created a sustainable way to integrate the large number of new volunteers who stayed after Freedom Summer. Because SNCC wanted the country to recognize the extent to which Black people suffered from poverty, racial violence, and a lack of political representation, they encouraged white college students from the North to volunteer for Freedom Summer (Forman 1985, 371). They knew from past programs that the involvement of white students, especially from elite institutions like Yale and Stanford, would get them the attention they wanted. Having so many volunteers enabled the program to be so expansive, but SNCC was unprepared for the sudden growth in their organization, and their practices in Black self-empowerment would conflict with the leadership roles that many white people held in the organization (Wallach 1997, 113).

The over one hundred white students who decided to stay and work in Mississippi after the summer transformed the composition of the organization drastically, and SNCC's growing commitment to Black self-empowerment and self-determination complicated their stance on having white members. This massive growth could have led to an expansion of programs and activism. Instead, it led to major disputes about how to deal with the issues that arose from having a large influx of new members who did not share the unifying experience of racism and racial violence (Stoper 1977, 22). As Bob Moses described, "it's very hard for some of the students who have been brought up in Mississippi and are the victims of this kind of race hatred not to begin to let all of that out on the white staff" (as quoted in Warren 1965, 41). Black people in the rural communities were facing violent retaliation from the Klu Klux Klan and police for attempting to register to vote, and they were not eager to trust the white SNCC members and their motives. This would hinder their advances as the trust and confidence that residents put in SNCC members were imperative to making their voter registration efforts successful. The larger problems from the influx of new members arose from SNCC trying to decide the extent to which white people should be organizing Black members. Their decisions would be heavily influenced by their developing principles of Black self-empowerment.

Because the new white members were mostly college students from the North who were more educated than many of the southern members, they began taking on larger roles in SNCC. Their skills in typing and writing had many of them working on the *Student Voice*, the organization's newspaper, creating a path for them to be involved in bigger decisions within the organization (Stoper 1977, 23). This naturally upset many in SNCC who had been working hard for years in the field, where the violence and true challenges were. SNCC's lack of a platform to which they could refer for guidance on this change led to the problem being dealt with through a myriad of individual opinions and beliefs. The presence of white people in SNCC would only become more of a divisive issue as the organization embraced notions of Black self-empowerment and simultaneously tried to manage tensions over white members leading projects. The issue was very delicate from the beginning, as direct conflict often arose between Black and white SNCC members. Moses once recalled witnessing "a tirade...for about fifteen minutes, just letting out what really was a whole series of really racial statements of hatred" (as quoted in Warren 1965, 41). Black SNCC students were defensive of their organization, as they felt a sense of pride and ownership over the movement they were heading (Stoper 1977, 23). Having white students take over leadership roles elicited emotional reactions that would long go unresolved.

The structural problems that having so many new white members caused would follow SNCC for years.

The culminating event of Freedom Summer was a challenge of the all-white delegates of the Mississippi Democratic Party. During their voter registration efforts in the Mississippi Delta, SNCC had witnessed firsthand the voter suppression tactics that excluded Black people from having a political voice and political power. Even with their success in getting some Black people registered, SNCC began to recognize that just being able to vote did not equate to political power when the parties were racist and openly touted white supremacy. This realization transformed the group's thinking about what political empowerment truly meant, and how it could be achieved. With opposition from all directions, SNCC members looked inward, and their self-determination to be heard led them to establish the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) in conjunction with Mississippians from across the state. The party was built to address the Mississippi Democratic Party's failure to adequately represent Black interests. SNCC brought together Black and white people from across the state and chose a racially integrated group of delegates that they wanted to secure seats by contesting the regulars at the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey (Ransby 2003, 43). The convention, held in August 1964, would allow SNCC to make it known throughout the nation that Black people were more than capable of organizing and building alternative institutions to the ones that had failed them. However, their party's rejection would show SNCC the suffocating limitations of America's two-party system.

The rejection of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) at the Democratic National Convention was a loss for SNCC, but it revealed the necessity of developing political alternatives to the Democratic Party, which they saw as inherently exclusionary toward Black people. Their intentions at the convention were to both address the failures of the Democratic Party to represent Black interests and to establish an avenue for Black political participation. Fannie Lou Hamer, a native of the Mississippi Delta who had organized with SNCC throughout Freedom Summer, delivered a powerful speech that illuminated their goals. Addressing America at the televised event, Hamer described being forced off the plantation her family lived on because their getting registered to vote had infuriated the plantation owner (Brooks and Houck 2010, 64). She talked about drive-by shootings at the homes of people who were involved in the efforts, being physically assaulted while imprisoned, and the racially motivated murders of several Black people. She concluded by stating that the horrific violence she had just described was enacted solely because "we want to register to become first-class citizens" (as quoted in Brooks and Houck 2010, 65). Despite her moving speech, the Democratic Party—including President Johnson himself—rejected the MFDP's challenge, but it offered a compromise (Ransby 2003, 349).

SNCC's rejection of the compromise offered by the Democratic Party sent the message that they would not betray their principles for symbolic representation in the powerful two-party system. For all their arduous grassroots organizing throughout Freedom Summer, the MFDP was offered a mere two open seats, without the removal of any regulars (Hogan 2007, 189). Civil rights organizations like the SCLC and the NAACP saw the compromise as generous, but SNCC was adamant about not accepting anything less than what they had gone for (Stoper 1977, 21). The compromise was an insult to the MFDP, whose formation was the epitome of democratic values. While many considered the rejection a failure, it exemplified Black self-determination in a way not imagined before. The organization of a parallel political party was a success in itself

for grassroots organizing. It politically engaged Black people from throughout the state of Mississippi in a process that was designed specifically to uplift and represent them.

Building Black Power in Lowndes County

More determined than ever to focus their efforts on the construction of alternative political institutions for Black people, SNCC would continue political mobilization where it was needed most. In March 1965, the SCLC had planned a protest march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to protest the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson, a civil rights activist and deacon killed by an Alabama state trooper (Carmichael 2003, 448). SNCC was hesitant to participate in the march because it would be going directly through Lowndes County, an area notorious for its racial violence and extremely low voter registration for Black people, despite them making up the majority of the population. Stokely Carmichael was one of the SNCC organizers who saw a mission to be conducted in the county. Shortly after the march, SNCC began working closely with the community through meeting with residents individually and building relationships with them, educating the people through workshops and mediums they could understand about politics and literacy (Carmichael 1966). The grassroots element of their organization was essential to SNCC's success in galvanizing the people, as the amount of violence and threats they faced for trying to register to vote made them initially resistant to attempting voter registration. Working so closely with residents meant that SNCC staff endured a lot of the violence and opposition the residents did, and it built between the two groups a mutual trust and sense of community. This facilitated meaningful collaboration between SNCC and the residents that birthed a local political party whose black panther symbol would go on to represent its ideals at the national level.

The formation of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization signaled SNCC's embracing of ideas of Black self-determination and political empowerment that would go on to become their defining characteristics. Lowndes County, nicknamed "bloody Lowndes," was one of the poorest in the nation. It was a notoriously inequitable area, as a handful of powerful white families owned 90 percent of the land (Carmichael 2003, 457). Before SNCC began mobilizing in the area, only one Black person was registered to vote out of a population of about twelve thousand (Carmichael 2003, 473). There was a significant amount of work to be done, and SNCC, with Carmichael as its lead organizer in the area, worked closely with residents to get it accomplished. John Hulett, the only registered Black voter in the county, worked closely with Carmichael to organize the county around voter registration efforts and Freedom Schools. Registering Black people was a slow process, as there were many legal and violent barriers to getting registered. However, the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was a breakthrough that broke down many of the discriminatory barriers to voting. This enabled many more Black people to register, and Carmichael and Hulett began looking into how to fully leverage the untapped power that Black people had by being the majority in the county. They found their answer in a forgotten law that allowed for the formation of independent political parties at the county level (Carmichael 2003, 462).

Organization for the party soon began in earnest. The Lowndes County Voters League was formed, with Hulett as the chair. SNCC and local organizers began recruiting people to join and support the party. Some were ecstatic to participate in the founding of something that was their own, and others who needed convincing were won over through the dismantling of their internalized white supremacy through education. For the many people suffering from their internalization of the thought that Black people were incapable of working in politics, the

breaking point was being shown the Democratic Party's symbol, which featured a ribbon stating "White Supremacy for the Right" above a white rooster (Carmichael 2003, 463). Not wanting to support the party that had enacted so much violence upon them, the Black residents were more than ready to build their own independent party. In contrast to the Democratic Party, SNCC activists and the residents chose to adopt a black panther as their party's symbol. The organizers identified with the powerful animal and its instinct to fight when attacked or provoked. Hulett described it as "a political symbol that we was here to stay and we were going to do whatever needed to be done to survive" (as quoted in Carmichael 2003, 464). Carmichael would later explain that the black panther "symbolizes the strength and dignity of Black people, an animal that never strikes back until he's backed so far against the wall, he's got nothing to do but spring out" (Carmichael 1966, n.p.). With the help of more organizers, the Lowndes County Voters League turned into the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO), and they participated in the 1966 county elections.

While the party did not win any races that year, its creation was a transformative process for SNCC. SNCC members and Lowndes County residents mobilized for the county election as much as they could, but they were unable to elect any officials, largely because plantation owners forced their workers to vote for the Democratic Party against the LCFO (Carmichael 2003, 473). However, SNCC recognized how unprecedented and impactful their organizing was. They had instilled confidence in the residents who had previously believed the lie that politics were for educated white people. SNCC and Black residents had resisted working with their oppressors and had instead independently organized in defiance of them. This project was SNCC's most prominent exercise and lesson in Black self-determination, armed self-defense, and political empowerment. The project would go on to inspire many, most notably, one of the founders of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, Huey P. Newton. He asked Carmichael for permission to use the black panther as the symbol for the organization, which embraced the principles SNCC had exemplified as its foundation. Carmichael responded to Newton's request by saying that permission was not needed because "[the symbol] really belonged to the people" (2003, 477). SNCC had effectively established "a model of an alternative politics" that Black organizations would follow and build upon throughout the following years, when the Black Power movement would take full effect (Stoper 1977, 31).

Conclusion

The formation of the LCFO was SNCC's last major successful project. Many factors prevented SNCC from being able to cohesively organize within the Black Power movement, the foundation of which they had contributed to immensely. SNCC's downfall as an organization stemmed largely from its inability to navigate the radical and militant position they had developed throughout their years of grassroots activism (Wallach 1997, 114). The controversy of Stokely Carmichael's election as SNCC chair in 1966 showed how the organization struggled to embrace the shift in their ideology as a whole. Carmichael's exclamation of "Black Power" at the Meredith March of 1966 caught on because many felt it expressed all the principles of Black self-determination, political empowerment, and armed self-defense that SNCC had cultivated. However, it caught many off guard because SNCC had not taken the time to systemically define their new direction. This caused Carmichael to publicly define Black Power as an individual, which led to tensions within the organization over how Black Power should be defined. Unfortunately, SNCC would never be able to collectively define Black Power. The organization was dealing with too many divisive issues at the time, including discipline, unresolved problems

with white people's role in the organization, and heavy surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (Wallach 1997, 114). By 1966, these and other problems had become too large to overcome, and the organization as it was known before Carmichael's election as chair fell apart.

SNCC's transformation from an organization that embodied prominent civil rights movement ideals to one that developed Black Power principles was made possible by their experiences with grassroots and direct-action activism in the Deep South between 1960 and 1966. The nature of SNCC's activism involved working within communities to build trust with Black residents of rural towns plagued by racial violence and voter suppression. This thrust SNCC workers into the violently oppressive reality that many poor Black people suffered through daily, where they developed principles of Black self-determination and self-empowerment by trying to alleviate that suffering through registering Black voters and creating Freedom Schools. The failure of the government to protect SNCC staff and Black residents, and its enabling of violence toward them, also contributed greatly to their radicalization, as witnessing these failures and inaction contested their civil rights era beliefs that working with the government and through law would bring large-scale improvements to Black American life. SNCC activists rejected civil rights era tactics and looked within themselves for the power and tools to be liberated. In doing so, they found the skills and passion needed to create alternative political and educational institutions that did them justice. SNCC was never able to fully participate in the Black Power movement as a cohesive organization, but they inspired others to find Black Power principles within themselves, with the Black Power movement taking off after SNCC's proclamation of Black Power at the Meredith March as proof.

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Rethinking the Post-Colonial through Nadine Gordimer's *Burger's Daughter* and *July's People*

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ABSTRACT

This article critically engages with Nadine Gordimer's fictional pieces *Burger's Daughter* (1979) and *July's People* (1981), both of which possess unique underpinnings of reimagining the post-colonial state in the global African diaspora. The article focuses on *Burger's Daughter* (1979) by analyzing the politics of white resistance in Black liberation within the context of the anti-apartheid struggle. Its examination of *July's People* (1981) highlights the ways in which settler colonialism, historically and currently, influences the Black family unit and disrupts the conventional conceptualization of the "post-colonial era." Through highlighting Gordimer's literary footprint within post-colonial intellectual thought, this article argues that Gordimer, as a white South African woman, uniquely informs our imagination of a world beyond colonization in which Black liberation is realized through fictional storytelling and elucidates the vast implications of colonization present in the global African diaspora.

Keywords: postcolonialism, postcolonial literature, Nadine Gordimer, race, fiction

Introduction

Nadine Gordimer was a white South African writer and activist. She was the child of immigrant parents, with her father born in Latvia and her mother in England. Born in 1923, Gordimer grew up during the formative years of the apartheid state. Thus, her literary work is a contestation, existing in many forms, of the world around her. During the 1960s and 1970s, her words intertwined with her political activism, as her novels were set against the backdrop of the emerging anti-apartheid movement. During the 1980s and 1990s, her work critically engaged with the apartheid state and its implications for whites, coloreds, and Blacks in South Africa. In the early 2000s, the emergence of a democratic South Africa served as a framework for Gordimer's work (Lange 1997, 80). Gordimer's highly acclaimed novels moved through time and space to discuss different themes that arose within colonial domination. In 1991, she received the Nobel Prize in Literature, and her work was deemed "the most outstanding work in an ideal direction" (Wästberg 2001, 1). Furthermore, in the field of fictional literature, Gordimer's collective works were known for their unprecedented effort to expose the injustice of her time in a nuanced and critical manner.

Prominent anti-colonial discourses, including works by David Walker, Cheikh Anta Diop, Kwame Nkrumah, W.E.B. Du Bois, Amie Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, and Steve Biko, largely focus on colonial systems that were considered to be in decline by the 1960s. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was promulgated, and the world was regarded by many as now being in a "post-colonial era." Some African studies scholars contest the term post-colonial, as colonization and its remnants are arguably still present worldwide (Chrisman et al. 1994, ix and

25). However, considering the designated period of the post-colonial, which is signified by the development of humanist thought and the adoption and proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, South Africa and the atrocities of apartheid are particularly egregious.

Furthermore, apartheid anti-colonial discourse is especially salient and relevant because it relates to a legal system of subjugation that socially engineered race and racism to exist at the forefront of society. This occurred concurrently around the globe, with most regions of the world enacting legislation of integration and equality. Nadine Gordimer's literary works informed the anti-colonial discourse of this period through a range of perspectives. Her fictitious narratives depict the profound realities of dissonance and resistance. Furthermore, she navigated the roles and experiences of South Africans—white, Black, and colored—who contested the institutionalization of hate and oppression in their country.

In this article, I examine two of Gordimer's literary works with the objective of understanding their contributions to post-colonial thought. First, I discuss *Burger's Daughter* (1979), her novel most intimately associated with the anti-apartheid struggle, and I analyze the politics of white resistance to Black liberation. I then examine *July's People* (1981), which addresses the implications of settler colonialism for the Black family unit and grapples with the notion of a "post-colonial era." Next, I discuss the legacy of Gordimer's intellectual thought. Lastly, examining Gordimer's work and literary imprint, I argue that Gordimer, as a white South African woman, cogently informed anti-colonial rhetoric through storytelling and highlighted colonial themes not only present in South Africa but in the global African diaspora as well.

Burger's Daughter

Gordimer's work *Burger's Daughter* takes place between 1948, the year the Nationalist government came to power, and 1976, the year of the Soweto Uprising. The novel follows the life of twenty-six-year-old Rosa, a white Afrikaner. Rosa grew up in a household that actively supported the overthrow of the apartheid government. Both of her parents belonged to the South African Communist Party (SACP) and died in prison. The resistance was deeply embedded in Rosa from her youth, as she lived in a home that welcomed all races and grew up with a Black brother, Baasie, until the age of nine.

As readers learn, Rosa is attempting to fit her parents' legacy into her own narrative. Furthermore, the historical-political moment of 1948 is juxtaposed with Rosa's coming-of-age story. At first, she forgoes her parents' nationally renowned social justice legacy, burdened by their abandonment of her due to their commitment to change. But she ultimately comes back to the resistance movement and ends up in jail as a political prisoner. Rosa then writes her memoir, which employs analepses and prolepses to explore the descending political change and moments of internalized reflection that bring her back and away from the side of resistance (Tecucianu 2014, 159). In her reflection of her work, Gordimer explains that the novel's theme is "human conflict between the desire to live a personal, private life, and the rival claim of social responsibility to one's fellow men—human advancement" (Newman 2003, 149).

To be the subject of oppression is a strikingly different experience compared to being a bystander. In the words of many South Africans I have met, if a bystander does not actively resist the system imposing oppression, they consequently become an oppressor. However, at the same time, as Gordimer writes, the white person's role in the resistance movement should be navigated methodically and they should not expect gratitude (1979, 237). In its discussion of this role, *Burger's Daughter* contributes to anti-colonial discourse, a distinctive contextualization of

the dilemmas that arise when a white person attempts to engage with political contestation and aspiration.

Rosa is on a journey of self-definition throughout the novel. In a moment of realization, she sits with a college friend, Conrad, in her childhood home, reminiscing about life and the development of one's thoughts, when he says to her, "I have the impression you have grown up entirely through other people. What they told you was appropriate to feel and do." She then describes moments of celebration in her childhood, "when somebody got off, not guilty in a political trial. Leaders came out of prison. A bunch of blacks made the success of a boycott or defied a law. There was a mass protest or a strike." Conrad responds, "But where are they, those miseries, and *your* great wild times?" (Gordimer 1979, 58). An upbringing filled with parental tyranny and the all-encompassing forces that determined her future for her has prompted Rosa's journey of self-definition. From a very young age, she knew no other life than the life of resistance, one where imprisonment was part of the responsibilities of being an adult. Upon this conversation with Conrad, Rosa begins to reflect on her life, arriving at the thought that she has never been in control of her own life. For example, her only "love" was a false engagement to a man that her father chose, so that she could carry political messages more easily back and forth from the prison.

The burden of her father's legacy lies close to Rosa's heart. As political and social unrest worsens throughout the country, she attempts to commit herself to the resistance movement. In addition to the struggle of understanding her identity, she confronts the notion that her existence as a white activist contradicts the aim of the Black consciousness movement within anti-apartheid resistance. A Black university student activist denounces white anti-apartheid activists as futile, asserting whites are inherently incapable of understanding the Black struggle and the movement's goals (Gordimer 1979, 169). He exclaims that it is Blacks and only Blacks who can be leaders and resisters of their oppression. Rosa internalizes the words of the Black student activist, reflected in a moment of bewilderment she experiences after returning to Johannesburg from Soweto, when she comes across a donkey brutally beaten by a Black man:

I didn't see the whip. I saw the agony. The agony that came from some terrible centre seized within the group of donkey, cart, driver, and people behind him. They made a single object that contracted against itself in the desperation of a hideous final energy. Not seeing the whip, I saw the infliction of pain broken away from the will that creates it; broken loose a force existing of itself, ravishment without the ravisher, torture without the torturer, rampage, pure cruelty gone beyond of the humans who have spent thousands of years devising it (Gordimer 1979, 208).

This scene is a defining moment in Rosa's life. She believes that if she intervenes, it reflects a belief in her authority over this Black man as a white person. She explains, "I had only to career down onto that scene with my car and my white authority...with my knowledge of how to deliver them over to the police" (Gordimer 1979, 210). In realizing her impotence, she states that she does not know how to live in "Lionel's country" anymore. Grabbing hold of this moment, she steps out on a journey to know herself and chooses to leave South Africa behind and travel to France.

Rosa's desire to leave South Africa arises from the accumulation of a few different feelings. First, growing up in her parents' shadow, it became unwaveringly clear to her that she did not know who she was, only the person her parents wanted her to be. Rosa attempts to withstand this lack of control over her life and remain committed to the resistance movement, but she is then

abruptly shaken by her lack of belonging in the movement. She cannot digest her position as a white South African, feeling as though her existence perpetuates Black oppression. Lastly, Rosa's plan to leave her country illustrates the debilitating psychological effects of apartheid. Rosa can no longer withstand the injustices occurring in front of her daily.

Rosa finds the fulfillment that she is looking for while in Europe. Embracing the identity that she has chosen for herself, she makes friends and falls in love with a French teacher. She is invisible in her new world and feels free from her parents' strings. But then, Rosa reunites with her childhood brother, Bassie, which brings readers to the third section and defining part of the book.

Bassie denounces Rosa and the role her family had in his life. He first explains to her that his real name is Zwelinzima Vulindlela, which Rosa cannot pronounce and views as "an estrangement from her past; she has forgotten her suffering land along with her brother" (Tecucianu 2014, 162). Later that day, he calls her to discuss ruminating thoughts that he has had for years. He rejects the ways in which her parents deprived him of being a part of his culture and knowing other Blacks, a way of exercising their paternalism. Most importantly, he tells Rosa that her father is celebrated and deemed a hero throughout the country for dying in prison in the name of the resistance, but that this is what thousands of Blacks have done who remain nameless. In an ultimate expression of disgust, he tells her that "whatever you whites touch you take over"; hearing this leaves Rosa physically sickened and catalyzes her desire to return to South Africa (Gordimer 1979, 333).

Rosa's confrontation with Zwelinzima is symbolic of the larger contribution this novel makes to anti-colonial discourse. Zwelinzima is a representation of the Black consciousness ethos (Dimitriu 2016, 1046). Despite Rosa's father Lionel's—who is depicting the role of any white person involved in resistance against white oppression—well-intended actions and genuine desire to dismantle colonial forces, he is a hypocrite for accepting and relishing in the fame and glory of doing so. Zwelinzima, at this moment, is relating to a larger issue of white presence in any anti-colonial movement, and his assertions parallel those of bell hooks in *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1981) and of Awa Thiam in *Speak Out, Black Sisters: Feminism and Oppression in Black Africa* (1986). bell hooks argues for the feminist movement to acknowledge and address Black women's intersectional discrimination and highlights the embedded patriarchy and unique experience of Black female oppression (1981, 15). Thiam argues that Black women have been silent for too long. She explains, "women must assume their own voices—speak out for themselves. It won't be easy, and the ones who up to now have been enjoying all the privileges—the men—and who have been making use of women's voices, will not give them up easily" (1986, 11). Furthermore, Gordimer, hooks, and Thiam position their work to explain that the voice of the resistance must be from those who are oppressed.

The first part of *Burger's Daughter* discusses Rosa's parents' revolutionary legacy of activism, representing the empty shoes Rosa must fill. In the second part of the novel, Rosa rejects this inheritance and chooses to make her own life—one distinct from the struggle for liberation that is all she's ever known. In the third part of the book, she reunites with that inheritance. She simultaneously finds her longing for a part in the liberation of her country under her own identity, a self-narrative in which she lives like everyone else, and like everyone else she merely "does what she can" (Gordimer 1979, 315). Rosa no longer seeks to fill her parents' shoes, but wants to merely be a political prisoner, among others who are resisters. As she explains, "the resistance movement is about suffering. How to end suffering. And often it ends in suffering" (Gordimer 1979, 349). Rosa has chosen the identity of an ordinary resister who is not

concerned about recognition for her actions, but who is a part of the achievement of progress for those who are suffering—for those who the movement is mobilizing for.

Burger's Daughter disrupts conventional anti-colonial discourse and navigates the intricacies of being part of a resistance movement while holding the identity of the oppressor. Much of anti-colonial discourse highlights the necessity for Black leadership and denounces white people's dominant roles in the resistance movement. Although some believe it reasonable to assert that whites should not hold prominent roles in anti-colonial resistance, defining the role white people can have in the movement is necessary. Furthermore, white people's acknowledgment and desire to address oppressive systems that privilege them should not be rebuked. However, anti-colonial literature has failed to define this role comprehensively and to engage with the role in a meaningful way. Out of all of Gordimer's novels, *Burger's Daughter* is most relevant to anti-colonial discourse today, as we enter an era in which more white people than ever are armed to join the resistance. *Burger's Daughter* helps define and illuminate whites' position in the movement without appropriating Blackness, and it does this through intimate storytelling that details realistic transgressions of white overstepping and the glorification of their own commitment to Black liberation (Yelin 1999, 117).

July's People

Another literary work produced by Gordimer that is a unique contribution to anti-colonial literature is *July's People* (1981), which is set in a future in which the Black liberation revolution prevails. In an ultimate representation of the power struggle between the colonizer and the colonized, Gordimer interrogates a world in which white authority is systematically overthrown. The novel contributes to anti-colonial discourse, in that it provides a nuanced perspective of settler colonialism's implications and how it alters the Black family structure, and also raises relevant questions about the manifestation of a "post-colonial" era. Similar to *Burger's Daughter* and many of Gordimer's other novels, the fictitious tale of *July's People* is a portrayal of realistic social conditions and a critique of oppressive governance. In the story, South Africa is in a state of chaos as the Blacks and coloreds of the country have risen up against their oppressor and seized power. They now have control and possess Mozambique's and Botswana's militant support. The novel follows a white South African family, the Smales, as they endure the changing political times of war and unrest. The country is in a transitional moment, what many scholars who have analyzed Gordimer's work define as an interregnum, "struggling between the dying old and the new which cannot take its birth" (Mufti 2013, 64). And in this rare moment of shifting control, understanding power relations between Blacks and whites is illustrative of a world in which white authority is non-existent and their existence deplorable.

The novel begins by overtly depicting the power relationship between the Smales family and their former servant, July. The opening line asserts, "July bent at the doorway and began that day for them as his kind has always done for their kind" (Gordimer 1981, 6). Gordimer's placement of this statement at the very beginning of the novel elucidates the focal characteristic of settler colonized societies: that Blacks exist "for them" (whites) so that they (Blacks) can subsequently exist for themselves. However, the novel's backdrop is not a settler colonized society but a fictitious revolutionary war, during which July is a host to the Smales family. They now find themselves to be refugees in their own country. July's continued role as a servant, despite the changing social and political conditions that position July to have more authority than the Smales, illustrates that the cemented relations between the colonizer and the colonized endure in the post-colonial era.

Furthermore, in July's continual engagement in his tasks for the Smales, he acts as he did during colonial rule—to protect the settler's position and privileges, despite having obligations to his own family who do not live with him. The immediate repercussions of prioritizing the desires of the Smales over his own family are represented by July's wife, Martha, and her frustration that she has not heard from him in a long time. Migrant labor has historically induced family communication to exist through letters (Tyali 2019, 3). July lives in Johannesburg, physically separated from his nuclear family and forced to communicate with them through letters. But Martha has only a fading memory of July due to his lack of communication. However, the looming question is why July is there with the Smales in the first place. The liberation war has given July the power to be with his family again, but he is still amongst the colonizers serving as the colonized.

The deep-rooted repercussions of July's absence from his family's life and presence within the Smales' life are exemplified in the mere erasure of July's longing for and engagement with his own family. Furthermore, the fact that readers are unable to discern anything about July's family throughout the novel, in terms of who they are and what their life looks like, is illustrative of his dismemberment from their life. As suggested by Ramphela and Richter (2006), the impact of settler colonialism on the Black family structure in South Africa was not only felt at the level of physical abandonment by Black fathers and their families. Rather, the emotional distance, which has become endemic due to the migrant labor system, also became a form of abandonment (Ramphela and Richter 2006, 74). In July's case, physical distance is compounded with emotional distance to create a particularly disparaging form of desertion.

The issues coursing through *July's People* are inextricably linked to the history of settler colonialism and its effects on the Black family unit in the global African diaspora. In South Africa, “[Black] households and families were harassed and torn apart by a restriction on people's movements, by migrant labor, by forced resettlement, and by resulting poverty and disarray in the most painful ways” (Ramphela and Richter 2006, 81). Illustrating this, July's family is ultimately relegated to the novel's background, while the most intimate details of the Smales family exist at the forefront.

Throughout the novel, the absence of July's family structure works to construct his existence as an extension of the Smales' family structure. A reader's intimate understanding of the Smales family's moments and a lack of understanding of July's family's moments is a literal representation of the disintegration that settler colonialism inflicts on the Black family. As July explains, “Fifteen years I work for your kitchen, your house, because my wife, my children, I must work for them” (Gordimer 1981, 75). This quote illustrates how the dismembering of one's family manifests in dismay regarding the settler-colonial superstructure. Despite South African Blacks and coloreds newly possessing the foundational political system to support their freedom, July's inability to escape this structure represents the hypnotic and cemented ramifications of colonialism in the post-colonial world.

Despite the fictitious content of *July's People*, Gordimer grapples with relevant and pressing questions within anti-colonial discourse. In a nuanced way, her work requires confronting the future that Black liberation is struggling for, one in which the chains of colonial subjugation are not only released but transitioned into mechanisms for repair and reparations. However, in Gordimer's depiction of this confrontation with liberation, Blacks are still constrained. Therefore, in many ways, she raises pressing questions: Are we ever going to exist in a post-colonial world? If so, what does this post-colonial future look like? Feel like? How do the remnants of colonialism endure and cement themselves within the post-colonial future?

Gordimer's literary works know no bounds. In addition to her commitment to a compelling national context, her intellectual world expands beyond national confines and addresses globalization, Black liberation across the African diaspora, and migrant displacement. In representing her own internal conflicts as a white anti-apartheid activist, she intimately engages with the ethical questions relevant to navigating this role. The synonymous relation of "privilege" and "white" that represented her reality shapes much of her plot structure. Still, her novels' storylines follow an open future, one where that privilege is unpredictable or potentially dangerous. Thus, her commitment to her own socio-political location, and her sense of responsibility to it, shape her critical reception within her discourse (Barnard 2015, 935).

The politics of her novels are set in outright opposition to apartheid's injustices. In an interview with Stephen Gray in 1980, Gordimer stated: "I'm reckless when I write, and I always have the feeling that, oh well, it doesn't really matter, I'm *going* to do it. It's got to be done completely, or not at all" (Gordimer 1990, xi; emphasis original). Gordimer's work is fearless in telling the truth about the society in which she lived. In her work *The Muzzled Muse: Literature and Censorship in South Africa*, Lange notes that "writers write to be read. Nadine Gordimer is no exception," when speaking about Gordimer's disregard for the censorship of her work by the ruling South African National Party (1997, 56). Her respectful literary rival, J.M. Coetzee, praises her for "producing a body of work in which the South Africa of the late twentieth century is indelibly recorded for all time" (Coetzee 2014, as quoted in Barnard 2015, 936).

Conclusion

Nadine Gordimer has been a guide for a global audience in understanding the South African colonial system's complex layers and how that oppressive system relates to colonial oppression across the globe. Her work delivers to the reader, in intimate detail, the atrocities and human rights violations perpetrated by the apartheid government. In the novels I have explored in this article, Gordimer offers a particularly unique contribution to anti-colonial discourse by navigating the role of the oppressor in the movement to liberate the oppressed, an issue that anti-colonial discourse has yet to fully explore. She also critically dissects the implications of settler colonialism on the Black family unit with the objective of revealing the enduring nature of colonizer-colonized relations. Her novels play on the social and political contestations of the time, while also informing the future. In an unwavering commitment to speak the truth, she endeavored to relay lasting manifestations of subjugation on humanity. In her own words, "There is a paradox in retaining this integrity, the writer sometimes must risk both the state's indictment of treason and the liberation forces' complaint of lack of blind commitment. The writer is of service to humankind only insofar as the writer uses the word even against his or her own loyalties" (as quoted in Simon, 2014, 1).

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Review of Patrisse Khan-Cullors and asha bandele's *When They Call You a Terrorist: The Power of Black Communities and Righteous Anger*

Hannah Motley

In *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir* (2017), Patrisse Khan-Cullors recounts events from her personal life that spurred her to activism on behalf of Black communities. It was through this turn to political activism that Cullors became allied with her co-author asha bandele. While social ills like mass incarceration, racial profiling, and redlining may be abstract concepts to many Americans, Cullors' and bandele's lives have been fraught with fallout from these and other anti-Black policies. In this memoir, Cullors traces a path from the everyday injustices she has endured to her activism as a co-founder of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement. Though the work focuses on Cullors' experiences, her story is hardly unique. However, by interweaving the story of BLM with her own, Cullors demystifies the connection between anti-Black policies and their effects on ordinary Black Americans. The inclusion of personal experiences of loss, anguish, injustice, and righteous anger imbue Cullors' activism with a sense of propriety and even inevitability. This thoughtful framing of her life and work (as well as those of her co-author) combats the stereotype of the needlessly angry Black woman and insinuates that Americans who are not outraged are not paying enough attention.

Cullors brings readers into her narrative at the beginning, making them intimate observers of a lifetime of escalating trauma and racial violence. Over the course of the work, this intimacy cultivates a sense of urgency, as Cullors invites readers to share not only in her suffering but also in the restorative pathways she blazes.

Cullors opens the memoir with a description of the conditions of her childhood neighborhood, Van Nuys, in California. In this food desert with little wealth or social mobility, Cullors' family was heavily policed—subjected to racial profiling and random arrest (2017, 14). Early exposure to state surveillance was formative for Cullors. She writes, “I carry the memory of living under that terror—the terror of knowing that I, or any member of my family, could be killed with impunity—in my blood, in my bones, in every step I take” (8). As young Black males, her brothers were especially affected. They were frequently targets of law enforcement officers, who harassed them for participating in ordinary activities, like gathering with friends outdoors (26).

In her retelling of events, Cullors describes the incarceration of her brother Monte and birth father Gabriel. Narrating their interactions with prison, law enforcement, and the criminal justice system, Cullors illustrates just how cruel these institutions are and how inadequately they serve Black Americans. She identifies these as natural consequences of the American tradition of devaluing and regulating Black bodies, one that authors and academics alike have noted (Coates 2015; Douglas 2017).

Through anecdote and analysis, Cullors details the convergence of her personal experiences with a call to activism. Mobilizing community support and common frustration, Cullors began constructing a network of activists that would grow to take on national and international issues Black people face.

Interwoven throughout the memoir is the story of Monte. A gentle child and faithful friend of Cullors, Monte develops a schizoaffective disorder as a young adult (59). His illness exacerbates the already challenging consequences of poverty and police surveillance. Like many Americans with severe mental illness, Monte finds himself incarcerated, following a string of arrests in his teen years. Rather than receiving treatment for his condition at a psychiatric facility, he joins the roughly 350,000 adults with severe mental illness in American prisons and jails (Bloom 2010, 731).

While incarcerated, Monte is treated unconscionably. His basic physical and medical needs are wholly neglected, and he is then released from prison without proper stabilization of his disorder (63). In the years that follow, Cullors slowly learns more about the brutality of Monte's treatment in jail, as well as about the systematic torture of prisoners within the L.A. County system (160). This ultimately inspires the formation of an organization called Dignity and Power Now that advocates for civilian oversight of county prisons and sheriff's departments (165).

The story of Cullors' birth father varies slightly. Over the course of his life, he struggled with drug addiction and was incarcerated for substance use and dealing. Though this history is mentioned and informs Cullors' relationship with her father, she seems most interested in giving a full account of Gabriel as a *man*, rather than a prisoner. Thus, she captures her father's vibrancy and his penchant for bringing people together and loving deeply. She uses his struggle to expose the "War on Drugs" as a deliberate attempt to erase a generation of Black and brown people. Cullors also sharply condemns "personal responsibility" narratives, which blame Black communities for the devastation caused by deadly combinations of drugs, mass incarceration, and institutional anti-Black biases (124).

Through writing about her father's life and death, she illustrates the human cost of such rhetoric—the way it batters and torments those who never face fair odds. Cullors' father dies a "forgotten veteran of wars he never knew had been declared on his one thin brown body that in the end would succumb to a heart that was broken...the cumulative effects of hatred, racism and indignity" (107). Describing these intangible causes of death, Cullors makes plain the systematic barriers and burdens that Black and brown individuals face. She does not mince words when she asserts that these obstacles were deliberately crafted to cause Black Americans to stumble—even as they theoretically possess legal equality. She writes:

What is the impact of years of strip searches, of being bent over, the years before that when you were a child and knew that no dream you had for yourself was taken seriously by anyone, that you were not someone who would be fully invested in by a nation that treated you as expendable? What is the impact of not being valued? How do you measure the loss of what a human being does not receive? My father was part of a generation of Black men who spent a lifetime watching hope and dreams shoved just out of their reach until it seemed normal, the way it just was (107).

This epitomizes Cullors' thoughtful employment of lived experience to illustrate the inhumanity of anti-Black violence. One drawback of this narrative approach is its assumption of a level of familiarity with the historical roots of anti-Black violence and its evolution that readers may not have. Thus, when the work addresses contemporary issues (post-War on Drugs) and merely alludes to "the terrorism that had always been the primary experience of Black people living in the United States" (210), it is not always clear exactly what that experience entailed.

In its second half, the memoir turns to BLM, the current chapter of Cullors' activism. Impassioned by her life experiences and trained in community organizing, she partners with two

other women to protest police brutality (180). Sparked by the murder of Trayvon Martin and subsequent acquittal of his killer, Cullors helped launch the Movement for Black Lives, and it caught on like wildfire.

Though the support BLM has garnered so far is encouraging, Cullors reminds readers that a significant amount of work remains. The United States has a long way to go before Black and brown Americans will be able to enjoy the liberties they have been promised without abridgement or delay. Cullors situates the fight for the realization of these rights as the task of each generation—one that people of color cannot afford to abandon. Alongside this charge, Cullors expertly lays out the systematic and institutionalized ways that America's white supremacist society devalues and criminalizes Blackness. This discussion shatters the myth of personal responsibility and calls for serious reforming of these institutions, rather than seeking to clumsily retrofit them.

Finally, her memoir is attentive to the interactions of racial identities with others, namely gender and sexual identities. Cullors identifies herself as a queer Black woman and speaks candidly about the impact these identities have had on her intimate and community relationships. Her frequent emphasis on simply loving people as they are runs throughout the work. Through accounts of her own encounters with discrimination, she connects to the broader experience of Blackness in America, layering in the disparate effects of factors like poverty, homophobia, and heterosexism. Drawing from her own life to make these connections, Cullors reveals the strong grip of white supremacy and anti-Blackness in America, emphasizing the need for individual and collective combativeness to force a release from their vise.

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Drowning Their Sorrows in the Ocean: A Review of Black [Mask]ulinity, Drugs, and Water in Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight*

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“You just roll out into the water, right? Roll out into the water like all these other motherfuckers around here trying to drown they sorrows” (*Moonlight* 2016). Representations of Black queer men in media have long been distorted to portray them as feminine, hyper-sexual, messy individuals with no valid space to fully exist. Based on Tarell Alvin McCraney’s play, *In Moonlight Black Boys Look Blue*, Barry Jenkins’ 2016 award-winning film *Moonlight* tells the story of a Black gay youngster growing up in a poor neighborhood of Miami and allows for a marginalized voice to have a seat at the table. Separated into three different parts, *Moonlight* follows the life of Chiron and demystifies stereotypes related to hyper-masculinity, drug dealers, and sexuality in the Black community, giving audiences a peek into a life many have never thought twice about. It hones in on the meaning of love, both romantic and platonic, and the need to feel a connection through relationships and friendships. This review examines the ways toxic masculinity fuels internalized homophobia, how drugs act as a silencing tool for homosexuality, and how water is a symbol for maturation, independence, empowerment, and the overall struggle for a sense of identity.

Beginning with the song “Every Nigger is a Star” by Boris Gardiner prior to any dialogue, Jenkins levels the social playing field in the Black community, as it is a film that puts oppressed identities in the spotlight. It extends to the audience that no matter one’s identity in the Black community, they are worthy of being viewed as human and respected as such. The song sets the tone for the film and begins to deconstruct the toxic masculinity that will be shown to viewers by giving silenced groups—gay and poor, in this case—the agency to tell their story. Chiron’s father figure Juan gives meaning to the song, as he unapologetically accepts Chiron for who he is and grants him the space to create and deliver his story to the audience as he sees fit. Chiron’s story entails much heartache and turmoil, with one aspect being the toxic masculinity he endures.

In the first scene with Chiron, or Little, as he is called in part one, a group of boys are violently chasing him while shouting homophobic slurs. From “Get your gay ass right here,” to “Goin’ around with that faggot ass, bro,” to “Catch that faggot ass nigga” (*Moonlight* 2016), their slurs make it clear that Little is literally running away to save his life. Based on their language, it is clear that Little’s mob has homophobic motives for trying to capture him, which immediately places him as an “Other” in the film. Although there is no evidence of Little actually being gay, this scene grants access to the world of toxic masculinity at a young age. Little’s small physique and his reserved personality deem him gay to his peers, so their idea of masculinity is warped to believe that he is lesser than they are on the basis of emasculation. While watching a group of boys play with a paper ball, Little nearly becomes another target to be bullied, but his friend Kevin comes to his rescue. During their conversation, Kevin gives Little an explanation that is coded with toxic masculinity: “All you gotta do is show these niggas you ain’t soft” (*Moonlight* 2016). This statement raises the question of what it means to be a man, but it also expresses how many young Black boys view masculinity. Kevin, in choosing to have this conversation with Little in private, shows the construction of masculinity as something never

openly discussed but subconsciously learned; Kevin is trying to teach Little how to disguise himself with the other boys. Researchers Theresa Rajack-Talley and Derrick R. Brooms describe this phenomenon as Black “*mask-ularity*” in the context of *Moonlight*, as Black hyper-masculinity is a mask to be worn and an “equal but opposite force against the societal forces that push down and pressure Black males who might be ‘soft’” (2018, 143).

Part two of *Moonlight* entails more violent and blatant acts of toxic masculinity in the school. The opening act begins with Chiron being called out for not paying attention in class, and his childhood bully Terrel completely emasculates Chiron, saying, “Hey, yo, that nigga forgot to change his tampon. I’m sorry, Mr. Pierce. He just having woman problems today” (*Moonlight* 2016). This incident, coupled with background chuckles by his peers and Terrel’s humiliating comments, leads Chiron to suppress his sexuality and internalize the hateful denigrations thrown at him. In the following scene, this internalized homophobia can subtly be detected in the character of Kevin. As he explains to Chiron how he got detention—by getting caught having sex with a girl in a stairway—Kevin says, “That stays between us, a’ight? I know you can keep a secret, dawg” (*Moonlight* 2016). The unnecessary detail Kevin provides in his sexual story and his desire to keep it between him and Chiron shows his struggle with his own sexuality. Kevin asserting that he knows Chiron can keep a secret invites the audience to ponder what secret he could be referring to, implying that they had a sexual encounter either as younger children or as adolescents.

Following Kevin’s and Chiron’s teenage sexual experience on the beach in part two, Kevin’s internalized homophobia increasingly builds up until he acts on his sexual suppression. When Terrel is searching for a person to receive a beating and points out Chiron after lunch, Kevin adheres to his choice and punches Chiron in the face to prove himself worthy. Although Kevin and Chiron are closer than any other pair of friends in the film, Kevin compromises their friendship for the sake of reinforcing toxic masculinity. A background voice says, “Hit his faggot ass” (*Moonlight* 2016), and Kevin continues hitting him. Because this physical altercation is moments after the two boys exchanged a sexual experience, it is clear that Kevin will use violence to hide his true self, even if it means beating his lover.

In part three of the film, while it is clear that Chiron, now called Black, still has a reserved personality, he also perpetuates toxic masculinity through his internalized homophobia. For example, while riding around with another Black man, the man asks, “So where the hoes at?” (*Moonlight* 2016), with a misogynistic tone designed to objectify women. After smiling at his question to mask his discomfort with subscribing to heteronormativity, Black eventually answers, “I don’t know. You tell me” (*Moonlight* 2016). This shows that he lacks pride in his sexuality as an African American man, and that he will conform to the standard in order to comfortably exist in the closet. The scene directly correlates with C. J. Pascoe’s idea of “getting girls” in her book *Dude, You’re a Fag*. “Getting girls” refers to a game that men play to reinforce their masculinity. If a boy does not engage in the game, he loses his masculine capital (Pascoe 2007). Black, by slightly answering the guy’s question, is granted further access into the straight world, and this access remains solely because of his developed hyper-masculine identity as a drug dealer. Black’s image as a thug in part three relates to one finding on Black gay men in a 2015 study from Quinn et al. that, “Individuals with higher levels of internalized homonegativity may be more likely to attempt to be perceived by others as masculine” (221). Having served time in juvenile detention, it is clear that Black is a product of his environment and feels the need to hide his sexuality by displaying himself as a “hard” man. Throughout *Moonlight*, it is evident that the construction of masculinity poses dangers both from physical violence and internalized

homophobia, but the use of drugs in the film poses a different perspective for the conversation—or lack thereof—surrounding sexuality.

The character of Paula, Little's mother, is a critical component to analyzing sexuality discourse among families in the Black community. In one 2012 report, researchers examined the role community, religion, and family played in the experiences of Black gay men. Coupled with his fear of family rejection, stigma, and isolation, one Black man disclosed that his reason for not opening up to his family was that it would make him the "black" sheep (Balaji et al. 2012, 734). This narrative is extended in *Moonlight* when Juan confronts Paula for doing drugs that he sold her. She takes a puff of her joint and cries, "You ever see the way he walk, Juan? You gon' tell him why the other boys kick his ass all the time? Huh? You gon' tell him?" (*Moonlight* 2016). This implies that she knows her son is gay, but she is unwilling to have a conversation with him. The inhale she takes before asking Juan the aforementioned questions shows her use of drugs to avoid talking with Little about his sexuality, as she is on drugs for the majority of her and Chiron's relationship. In the following scene, while she is high, Paula screams at Little in the hallway. With the instrumental music increasing in tension, the angle and slow motion effect of the camera, and the hate emitting from her eyes, Paula's homophobia is clear-cutting as her lips form the words, "Don't look at me" (*Moonlight* 2016) and she retreats back into her room. The shame she has of her son is reflected back onto Little, as he disappointingly drops his head and exits the room.

In the second part of the film, when Little becomes a teenager and begins going by the name Chiron, he still has a reserved nature about him. One day after school, when Chiron arrives home, his mother sternly tells him, "You cannot be here tonight. I got company coming. Find somewhere for you to be" (*Moonlight* 2016). It is clear that Paula is high during this interaction, which implies that she and her company coming over will be taking drugs. Her willingness to put her son out of the house portrays drugs as being more worthy of acknowledgement, as she completely dismisses him and agitatedly climbs the stairs. Moreover, Paula not wanting Chiron in the house whatsoever suggests that she is shameful of his entire being and fears her company might potentially detect her son's homosexuality. During the final part of the film, Chiron, now Black, visits Paula, now at a rehabilitation center, on his way to Kevin's restaurant. The conversation they have highlights the importance of drugs as a silencer throughout the film, as Paula attempts to discuss her son's troubles. Her sobriety allows her to see Black as a whole person, regardless of his sexuality. This is observed when she says, "You ever thought about talking about it with somebody? Maybe not even a counselor, maybe somebody like your mama?" (*Moonlight* 2016). Black's chuckle at her questions uncovers the irony in her concern and the effect she had on him as a child, as she had never wanted to talk about anything personal with him. With her admittance that she messed up and reassurance of her love for him, Paula's drug-free status finally permits her to see Black at face value. Her use of drugs throughout the film acts as a disconnect between her and her son, and the addiction she has causes their relationship to deteriorate over time.

Water gives humans the ability to survive, and its power in the context of *Moonlight* not only empowers Chiron in certain situations, but it guides and warrants him opportunities for maturation and identity exploration. The first sign of water as a symbol for maturation is observed when Juan brings Little to the beach and teaches him how to float and swim. During their practice, Juan notes, "Feel that right there? You're in the middle of the world, man" (*Moonlight* 2016). Juan teaching Little how to swim and letting him do it on his own gives Little the space to be himself, and the water acts as a start for the exploration of his sexuality.

Immediately when they are finished swimming, a scene of Little running away from the water as it approaches his feet shows the hesitance he has throughout his journey, and the fear he holds in not knowing the unknown. In a part with Little bathing himself, water is seen as a sign of independence as Little boils his own water before pouring it in the bathtub. This scene also scrapes the surface of the intersections of growing up Black, gay, and low-income in America.

Part two includes more sexual undertones, and water again reveals Chiron's struggle for a sense of identity when he has a dream about Kevin having sex with a girl. The waves crashing in the background of Chiron's dream represent the uneasiness he feels watching Kevin have heterosexual relations, and the position in which the two have sex—commonly known as “doggy style”—could suggest to the viewer that Chiron imagines himself in the girl's place. Additionally, the sexual position suggests Chiron's perception of how Kevin views women, in that he lacks passion and intimacy when sexually involving himself with them. In one scene of the film, while Chiron is sitting on the beach, Kevin approaches him and begins a conversation. The waves in the background induce a calming sensation for the interaction as the teens begin to open up to one another. Chiron's desire to explore his sexuality is noted as he says, “I wanna do a lot of things that don't make sense” (*Moonlight* 2016). Kevin's response, “I didn't say it don't make sense” (*Moonlight* 2016), implies that he knows what Chiron is referring to, and that he is okay with reciprocating that exploration. Chiron offers a direct representation of water as a sense of struggle through the act of crying when he utters, “Shit, I cry so much, sometimes I feel like I'mma just turn into drops” (*Moonlight* 2016). After moments pass, the couple exchange a kiss and Kevin masturbates Chiron's penis, bringing him to an orgasm; the waves during this moment symbolize both men's struggle with their identity, as Chiron whimpers and apologizes for the entire interaction.

In part two, water as a sense of empowerment is noted immediately following the beating Chiron receives from Terrel and his friends, and directly preceding the revenge he seeks on Terrel. To soothe his pain, Chiron submerges his face into a sink of iced water, which acts as a form of power when he arises. With slow, droning music in the background as he looks at his reflection in the mirror, it is clear that Chiron has had enough of the bullying, and the subsequent scene emphasizes this frustration as he releases his anger onto Terrel; Chiron's defense ironically lands him in juvenile detention. One of the most significant signs of water as a symbol of maturation comes when Chiron, as Black, in part three of the film, develops into an adult.

The final part begins with Black having a nightmare of his mother yelling at him as a child, and he awakes frantically, sweating. To suppress this memory, he submerges his face into a sink of iced water that numbs his pain—now emotionally charged, unlike his physical pain as an adolescent. The water gives him a reminder of his upbringing and the struggles he faced, and the upbeat song in this scene shows the viewer that Black has grown from his past. When Black visits Kevin at his restaurant and they finish having dinner, the sound of waves can be heard in the background. Before Kevin takes some leftover dishes into the back, he disappointingly asks Black, “Why you got them damn fronts, man?” (*Moonlight* 2016). The waves in this instance represent one of the final signs of a struggle for a sense of identity, as the “fronts” Kevin refers to include not only Black's gold grills, but the front that he is putting on to portray himself as a straight man. This struggle is noticed as Black stares outside of the restaurant and listens to the waves, the sound that was with him during his first sexual experience with Kevin. Once they arrive at Kevin's place, Black looks at the beach with nostalgia and smiles, indicating his sense of growth and appreciation of the encounter he had with Kevin as a teen.

The final scene of the film comes full circle, with Little, the child, turning his head toward the camera as he stands on the beach and the waves rage in the background. The water in this scene represents the maturation, independence, empowerment, and identity exploration recognized throughout the film. It shows maturation through Little as his adult self is caressed by Kevin once more, before his younger self looks into the camera. Independence is revealed as he is standing on the beach alone, where his first encounter with a beach was learning how to swim with Juan. Empowerment appears through the look on Little's face, as he has just finished telling his story to the audience and lends that same sense of vulnerability with his lookback. Lastly, an overall struggle for a sense of identity is expressed in the picture of Little as a child, showing the journey he had to take to develop into the man he has become. He looks back at the audience to reflect on his identity and empowers each viewer to do the same. Little's lookback represents him finally coming to peace with himself and his gay identity, as the waves of the ocean bring the serenity he was searching for his entire life.

Having won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2016, *Moonlight's* vibrant colors, striking instrumentals, and silent scenes make the film well deserving of every award, but also make it a moving film to watch. The character of Chiron is represented through a heartfelt lens and delivers an intersectional framework on what it means to grow up as a Black, gay, poor man in America. It tells the story of struggle, love, acceptance, the meaning of family, friendship, and much more. *Moonlight* demands the start of an ongoing conversation of queerness in the traditional, masculine Black spaces that foster much stigma and prejudice still today. Chiron's childhood sorrows give him strength and resilience to persevere into adulthood, and his relationship with Kevin helps prevent him from turning into drops, rolling out into the water, and drowning his sorrows, as Kevin describes in the film. Giving struggling queer teens of color a face in the media and other viewers an alternative perspective on sexuality in America, *Moonlight* beautifully demonstrates the notion that Black men loving Black men is *the* revolutionary act.

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