# FCH Annals

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Michael S. Cole, Editor

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***Published in memory of Dr. Thomas (Tom) M. Campbell, the driving force behind the creation of the Florida Conference of Historians.***

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## Thomas M. Campbell Award

*Beginning with Volumes 6/7, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the Thomas M. Campbell Award for the best paper published in the* Annual Proceedings (*now* Annals) *of that year.*

Thomas M. (Tom) Campbell was the driving force behind the creation of the Florida Conference of Historians, at that time called The Florida College Teachers of History, over 40 years ago. It was his personality and hard work that kept the conference moving forward. Simply put, in those early years he was the conference.

Tom was a professor of U.S. Diplomatic history at Florida State University. The Thomas M. Campbell Award is in his name so that we may recognize and remember his efforts on behalf of the Florida Conference of Historians

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## Blaine T. Browne Award

*Beginning with volume 22, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the Blaine T. Browne Award, given to the best paper written by a graduate student who presents at the annual meeting and publishes in the* Annals.

Dr. Browne earned a doctorate in American history at the University of Oklahoma in 1985. He subsequently taught at several universities and colleges before joining the faculty at Broward College in 1988. An active participant in the Florida Conference of Historians since 1994, Dr. Browne has presented at annual meetings and published in the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*, the predecessor of the *Annals*. Now retired from Broward College, in 2014 Dr. Browne generously provided the seed money for this award.

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## J. Calvitt Clarke III Award

*Beginning with volume 20, the Florida Conference of Historians has presented the J. Calvitt Clarke III Award for the best undergraduate research paper published in the* Annals.

In 2012, Dr. Clarke, Professor Emeritus at Jacksonville University and a strong supporter of undergraduate research, graciously provided the seed funding for this important award. He is a frequent contributor and the founding editor of the predecessor to the *Annals*, the *Selected Annual Proceedings of the Florida Conference of Historians*.

### *Recipients*

2022: Andrew Kishuni University of Central Florida
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## A Note from the Editor

After some unforeseen delays in the editorial process, it is with great pleasure that we present the latest volume of *FCH Annals: Journal of the Florida Conference of Historians*. The disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic were compounded by a number of related and unrelated complications that led to a long gap of time between publication of volume 28 and the present volume (29), which includes articles presented at the 61st Annual Meeting of the Florida Conference of Historians, hosted by Florida Southern College Lakeland, February 19-20, 2021. It is with the dedicated work of our reviewers and a small number of other volunteers that we are able to present the articles on the pages that follow.

Michael S. Cole
6 February 2024

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# *La Frontera*: Key West and the Cuban Independence Movement, 1850-1890

Kayleigh Howald
*Florida Atlantic University & University of South Florida*

In May 1850, Cuban general Narcisco Lopez led a filibustering campaign in Cárdenas, Cuba. He attempted to persuade the population to join his insurrectionist army against the Spanish, but the coastal town proved unresponsive. As the Spanish army descended, Lopez and his remaining rebel soldiers boarded his ship, *Creole*, and escaped to the closest U.S. port. When Lopez arrived in Key West, Florida, the Spanish navy frigate *Pizarro* was not far behind. In front of Fort Taylor, a newly completed fortification on the west side of the tiny island, the *Pizarro* caught up to its prey, willing to fire upon the renegade vessel. The *Creole*, however, flew American colors. As the ship docked safely, the United States authorities sent a warning to the *Pizarro*, promising cannon fire if the Spanish acted against Lopez. The *Pizarro* returned reluctantly to Cuba, and Key West's population "welcomed the expeditionary soldiers into their houses and their hearts."[1]

This was neither the first nor the last encounter Key Westers would have with Cuban revolutionaries. At the outbreak of the Ten Years War, or Cuban Civil War, in 1868 many Cubans fled the violence and economic turmoil for the southernmost U.S. city, bringing their families, their radical traditions, and their skilled labor. Cigar manufacturers, many from New York, recognized the potential of such a large labor force in Key West. Tobacco enthusiasts often settled for domestic cigars but craved the sensation of true Havana tobacco. Finished Cuban cigars suffered a high import tax, making it nearly impossible for smokers to purchase and manufacturers to sell. Businessmen, like German-born Samuel Seidenberg and Spanish exile Vicente Martínez Ybor, recognized, however, that duties on Cuban tobacco leaves were relatively low and Key West's humid climate was remarkably similar to Cuba's. This combination of skilled Cuban laborers using Cuban techniques and Cuban tobacco to create American cigars established a new industry in South Florida.[2] In 1867, the clear Havana cigar industry opened in Key West, transforming the island and its economy.

Cuban Civil War veterans also brought change, helping to establish community centers and mutual aid societies, like the San Carlos Institute. There, Cuban émigrés were further exposed to revolutionary rhetoric and Cuban nationalist movements. When a fire swept through the commercial district of Key West in April 1886, quickly destroying eleven cigar factories and the main tobacco warehouse, rumor

[1] Tom Chaffin, "'Sons of Washington': Narciso López, Filibustering, and U.S. Nationalism, 1848-1851," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 15, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 85.
[2] Loy Glenn Westfall, *Key West: Cigar City, USA* (N.P.: Historic Florida Keys, 1997), 12.

spread throughout the island that the fire was set by a Spanish government agent.[3] Key West cigar factories, contemporary conspiracy theorists argued, funded the *Cuba Libre* movement and the Cuba Convention, an organization determined to oust Spain from Cuba by force. In May 1886, Spanish consul Joaquin Torroja alluded to these activities, writing, "the centers for the insurgent movement in the United States, such as New York, New Orleans, Tampa, and Key West, all rely on the cigar industry to support their activities."[4] Torroja also sent an "informant to Tampa to report on the activities there."[5]

Tampa, Florida became increasingly important throughout the late-nineteenth century, both as a major site of Cuban nationalism and later as one of the ports of departure in the Spanish-American War. Key West's social, political, and economic climate, however, contributed to the area's rise in prominence. Ybor City, an area just outside Tampa, was founded in 1886, after Martínez Ybor moved his *El Principe de Gales* factory from Key West. Overall, Key West offered few incentives for Martínez Ybor, as the island lacked a fresh water supply and land access. Furthermore, the "militant and sometimes mercurial Cuban labor force" traveled back and forth to Cuba and Key West, making them difficult to control. Martínez Ybor, still encouraging his laborers to follow, built affordable housing around the factory, creating a planned "company town."[6] Although the city of Tampa annexed Ybor City and neighboring North Tampa only a few years later, the Cuban community flourished in the Florida pinelands. "Within five years after the founding of the new town," Durward Long explained, "it was well established with people and industry, institutional beginnings were under way, and a structured community was developing all of which gave Tampa a unique flavor in its social and political development."[7]

As such, most historical interest in Florida's Cuban communities focused solely on Tampa and Ybor City.[8] Research on the clear Havana cigar industry flourished in the 1960s and 1970s, spurred primarily by the work of Florida historians. Here, labor historians concluded a combination of Cuban cultural traditions and capitalist pressures influenced how cigarmakers organized and negotiated.[9] Scholars in the

[3] Maureen Ogle, *Key West: History of an Island of Dreams* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 98.
[4] Joaquin M. Torroja in Consuelo E. Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution: A Documentary History of Key West in the Nineteenth Century* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2007), 194.
[5] Ibid., 194.
[6] Paula Harper, "Cuba Connections: Key West. Tampa. Miami, 1870 to 1945," *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 22 (1996): 283.
[7] Durward Long, "The Historical Beginnings of Ybor City and Modern Tampa," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 45, no. 1 (July 1966): 44.
[8] Based on my review of the literature, there are several factors to support the innumerable, sustained scholarly focus on Tampa and Ybor City, including Martínez Ybor's influence, the area's accessibility, and, of course, the cigar industry's longevity in Tampa in comparison to Key West.
[9] Durward Long, "'La Resistencia': Tampa's Immigrant Labor Union," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 44, no. 1 (1965): 193-213; Durward Long, "Labor Relations in the Tampa Cigar Industry, 1885-1911," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 12, no. 4 (1971): 551-559; Durward Long, "The Making of Modern Tampa: A City of the New South, 1885-1911," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 49, no. 4 (1971): 333-345; Louis A. Perez Jr., "Reminiscences of a Lector: Cuban Cigar Workers in Tampa," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 53, no. 4 (Apr. 1975): 443-449; Louis A. Perez Jr., "Cubans in Tampa: From Exiles to Immigrants, 1892-1901," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 57, no. 2 (Oct. 1978): 129-140; Joan Casanovas, *Bread Or Bullets: Urban Labor and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850-*

1990s began exploring the daily lives of cigarmaker émigrés, specifically labor practices and racial divisions.[10] Historians only began to consider nineteenth century Cuban émigrés in terms of foreign relations within the past fifteen years. Previously, the scholarship focused on Cuban immigration after 1959 and the Cold War's impact on U.S.-Cuba relations. In the late 2000s, however, numerous texts emerged, exploring various impacts of the Ten Years' War on North America. While some scholars took purely diplomatic approaches, others, such as Louis A. Perez Jr. and Dalia Antonia Muller, wrote sweeping cultural histories about Cuban influences on both the United States and Mexico.[11]

While Tampa's role in Cuba Libre and the cigar industry, and Cuban émigré populations in the United States were well-documented by scholars, historians tended to overlook Key West's role in regional, national, and international history, despite the island's critical geographic location. What little scholarship existed approached the subject with numerous methodologies, including rhetorical, architectural, and statistical analysis.[12] There was also very little debate within the scholarship. In 1982, historian Gerald E. Poyo, then a doctoral student at the University of Florida, concluded "Key West became central to the separatist cause through a patriotic and dedicated populace, able and spirited local leaders, and a prosperous cigar industry that provided the necessary financial resources to support the revolutions, but not without considerable sacrifice and frequent setbacks."[13]

Although Poyo and other scholars expanded on this notion, few historians have challenged it, directly or indirectly. Poyo was present throughout much of the Key West scholarship, though he was cited minimally by other historians. Occasionally, Poyo deviated from this topic, but many of his articles from 1977 to 1991 explored slightly different aspects of the Cuban experience in late-nineteenth century Key West. "The exile centers," he argued consistently, "did represent an important segment of the Cuban separatist community that cannot be ignored if we hope to advance our understanding of the Cuban independence process in general."[14] The argument's steadfastness remains equally intriguing and frustrating.

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*1898* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998).

[10] See George E. Pozzetta and Gary R. Mormino, "The Reader and the Worker: Los Lectores and the Culture of Cigarmaking in Cuba and Florida," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 54 (Fall 1998): 1-18; Nancy Raquel Mirabel, "The Afro-Cuban Community in Ybor City and Tampa, 1886-1910," *OAH Magazine of History*, 7, no. 4 (Summer 1993): 19-22.

[11] Rodrigo Lazo and Jesse Aleman, ed., *The Latino Nineteenth Century: Archival Encounters in American Literary History* (New York: New York University Press, 2016); Dalia Antonia Muller, Cuban Emigres and Independence in the Nineteenth Century Gulf World (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

[12] Elizabeth Lowry, "The Flower of Cuba: Rhetoric, Representation, and Circulation at the Outbreak of the Spanish-American War," *Rhetoric Review*, 32, no. 2 (2013): 174-190; Harper, "Cuba Connections"; Antonio Rafael de la Cova, "Cuban Exiles in Key West during the Ten Years' War, 1868-1878" *Florida Historical Quarterly* 89, no. 3 (2011): 287-319.

[13] Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Patriots in Key West, 1878-1886: Guardians of the Separatist Ideal," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 61, no. 1 (July 1982): 20.

[14] Gerald E. Poyo, "Key West and the Ten Years War," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 57, no. 1 (Jan. 1979): 289-307; Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics, 1868-1876," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 57, no. 1 (1977): 407-422; Gerald E. Poyo, "Cuban Patriots in Key West, 1878-1886: Guardians at the Separatist Ideal," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 61, no. 1 (July 1982): 20-36; Gerald E.

Furthermore, after comparing émigré colonies and nationalist impulses in Tampa and Key West, Poyo's ultimate argument easily applied to both cities. Where it counted, i.e., financially and politically, they were not remarkably different. Thus, as sites of revolutionary support, they should be historically equal. Yet scholars placed far more emphasis on Key West's role in Cuba Libre and other movements despite analyzing it less often in comparison to Tampa. What, then, made Key West the explosive center of Cuban nationalism, especially in contrast to safer, larger Tampa? Was it just because it was the closest American port? What made Key West exceptional?

Arguably, historians exploring the impact of Cuban nationalism on Key West (and vice versa) failed to consider the island's unique Caribbean and, more important, maritime context. In 1822, John Whitehead and John Simonton purchased the barren island from St. Augustine postmaster, Juan Pablo Salas, hoping to capitalize on its lucrative location in the Florida Straits. When Simonton sold several parcels to other entrepreneurs that same year, Navy Secretary Smith Thompson sent Lieutenant Matthew Perry down the coast to investigate. Between the "abundant fish and game," Perry insisted that Key West's geographic location would benefit American commerce, "being situated about midway between Florida and Cuba, the Southern States and Louisiana."[15] Beyond its location as a port city, adventurous businessmen and the War Department were attracted to Key West for where it sat along the reefs. Salvagers and soldiers alike saw the appeal of the jagged coral and rock beneath the surface. Commercial vessels and enemy ships, whether crewed by professionals or novices, would not be able to traverse the waters, leaving them vulnerable to salvage, plunder, and attack.[16]

Throughout its history, the island's proximity to Cuba and other Caribbean nations created connections and complications. It also created advantages for the U.S. federal government, namely through heated debates about the annexation of Cuba throughout the nineteenth century.[17] As Patricia Nelson Limerick noted in her study of the American West, borders were nothing more than a "social fiction."[18] It was one thing, she argued, "to draw an arbitrary line between two spheres of

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Poyo, *With All, and for the Good of All: The Emergence of Popular Nationalism in the Cuban Communities of the United States, 1848–1898* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989); Gerald E. Poyo, "The Cuban Experience in the United States, 1865-1940: Migration, Community, and Identity," *Cuban Studies*, 21 (1991): 19-36; Gerald E. Poyo, *Exile and Revolution: Jose D. Poyo, Key West, and Cuban Independence* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014).

[15] Matthew C. Perry to Smith Thompson, Mar. 28, 1822, in *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, vol. 22, *The Territory of Florida 1821-1824* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 387; Ogle, *Key West*, 7.

[16] Perry to S. Thompson, Mar. 28, 1822, *Territorial Papers of the United States*, 388; Ogle, *Key West*, 7; Jefferson B. Browne, *Key West: The Old and the New* (1912, reprint with introduction and index by E. Ashby Hammond, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973), 9.

[17] Ted Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure': Recaptive Africans and the Politics of Slave Trade Suppression," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4, no. 1 (Mar. 2014): 53-83.

[18] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988), 255.

sovereignty; it is another to persuade people to respect it."[19] This was certainly the case for nineteenth century Key West and Cuba, whose border lay within a ninety-mile stretch of the Florida Straits.

As such, the history of Key West was more than just geopolitical borderlands, but also ideological borderlands or a contact zone. Unlike Fredrick Jackson Turner's ethnocentric definition of a frontier (the "meeting place between savagery and civilization"), Mary Louise Pratt's concept of contact zones described Key West more aptly, as where American and Cuban cultures met, "clash[ed], and grapple[d] with each other."[20] According to Gerald E. Poyo, politically, Cuban exiles were involved in two ways. Émigrés engaged in "activities related directly to the independence cause and actions connected with the political system in the United States."[21] The same, of course, could be applied to cultural and economic exchanges as well, particularly through the islands' cigar industries. As demand for Key West-manufactured cigars grew, so did the émigré community, both in wealth and power.

Therefore, Key West's location in the Caribbean facilitated cultural, political, and economic complexities that would enable nationalists to stage a successful revolution. It would also shape the island's future as one of the largest ports in the United States and the largest city in Florida. By exploring the impacts of Cuban politics and culture on Key West and detailing the islands' shared maritime economies, one could fully explain why Key West became so important, historically, to Cuba independence movements in the nineteenth century. After all, a history of Key West "which does not treat of the several revolutionary movements in Cuba . . . would fail in its purpose of faithfully portraying the events which have shaped or affected its destiny."[22]

While cigars solidified Key West as an important contact zone, another trade formed its place in the Caribbean and the United States: slavery. U.S. expansionist policies toward Cuba emerged in the 1850s during Franklin Pierce's administration as he pushed for the annexation of Cuba, following James K. Polk's annexation of Texas in 1845. In 1854, James Buchanan, then the U.S. minister to Great Britain, drafted the Ostend Manifesto, outlining strategies to acquire Cuba for "national security, commercial, as well as domestic political reasons."[23] Abolitionists in the North, however, argued the manifesto was simply a plot to "admit new slave states and European liberals frowned on it as naked American imperialism in a region contested by Britain and France."[24] While Pierce was compelled to abandon his pursuit, Buchanan was more persistent. As President, from 1857 to 1861, he

[19] Ibid., 256.
[20] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 7.
[21] Poyo "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics," 408.
[22] Browne, *Key West*, 115.
[23] Michael J. Connolly, "'Tearing Down the Burning House': James Buchanan's Use of Edmund Burke," *American Nineteenth Century History* 10, no. 2 (June 2009): 211.
[24] Ibid., 212.

launched a strict campaign against the transatlantic slave trade, made illegal in 1808, though it was largely symbolic.[25] According to historian Ted Maris-Wolf, Buchanan's "suppression of the slave trade served to counter proslavery extremists and abolitionist critics at home by demonstrating America's willingness to live up to its obligations as a moral world power."[26]

In Cuba, many also desired annexation. While sugar planters hoped to join the United States as a slave state, revolutionaries sought refuge from Spanish oppression under American liberty and democracy. Exiled Cubans, however, often used contradictory language. In his study of Cuban and Cuba-American newspapers, Rodrigo Lazo discovered that the "annexationist position of some newspapers at times clashed with the discursive development of Cuba as its own distinct country."[27] This confusion, it seemed, was a part of a larger negotiation among early Cuban exiles and "antebellum U.S. political culture that promoted independence of U.S. states," with a particular emphasis on eighteenth century revolutionary states' rights positions.[28]

Nevertheless, in 1858, Buchanan used the USS *Dolphin's* capture of the *Echo*, a Portuguese slaver, off the coast of Cuba as a catalyst for his crusade. "The late serious difficulties between the United States and Great Britain respecting the right of search, now so happily terminated, could never have arisen if Cuba had not afforded a market for slaves," he maintained.[29] By annexing Cuba, however, "the last relic of the African slave trade would instantly disappear…I am encouraged to make this suggestion by the example of Mr. Jefferson previous to the purchase of Louisiana from France and by that of Mr. Polk in view of the acquisition of territory from Mexico."[30] Two years later, mere months before the 1860 presidential election and less than a year before the Civil War, Buchanan would make one final push for annexation. This time, however, Key West entered the national spotlight.

On 26 April 1860, while patrolling the Old Bahama Channel off the coast of Cuba, the United States Navy MS steamer *Mohawk* spotted a suspicious bark. When prompted, the vessel hoisted American colors, but Lieutenant Tunis Craven was not satisfied. After boarding, Craven and his crew discovered that the *Wildfire* of New York had carried 508 men, women, and children from the West African coast to the Caribbean. These refugees were promptly brought to Key West (being the closest American port) and placed under the custody of Fernando J. Moreno, marshal for the Southern District of Florida. "Having no means at that time, at my

[25] In 1858, the British Royal Navy searched American ships near Cuba, claiming suppression of the slave trade. Diplomatic pressure caused the British to restructure their fleet, allowing Buchanan to add several more ships to the African Squadron, a group of Navy ships responsible for capturing illegal slavers in the Atlantic. See Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure,'" 56-62.
[26] Ibid., 59.
[27] Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 65.
[28] Ibid., 65.
[29] Maris-Wolf., "'Of Blood and Treasure,'" 59.
[30] Ibid., 60.

command, to secure them, I determined at once to erect temporary quarters on the lands of the United States, adjacent to Fort Taylor," Moreno wrote to the Secretary of the Interior, Jacob Thompson.[31] Two days later, Moreno sent another dispatch to Washington, notifying the government of yet another slaver. MS steamer *Wyandotte* captured the *William*, also an American bark, bringing an additional 550 Africans to the island.[32]

A logistical panic set in. Moreno insisted on government action, warning, "I must call the attention of the Department to the great necessity of removing these Africans from here at the earliest possible moment. Their continuance here for a period of two or three months will exhaust the supply of water on the island… The supply of provisions is also small, and with this unexpected addition to our population, will soon be consumed."[33] With the fear of dwindling resources and the threat of yellow fever, Moreno and other officials in Key West had cause for alarm. Less than two weeks later, however, the possibility of mass causalities became a closer reality after an unnamed slaver (later revealed to be the *Bogota*) was captured by the USS *Crusader*. By 26 May 1860, there were 1,432 African recaptives in Key West. This island, only two miles by one mile, already held nearly 3,000 people, including approximately 200 free blacks and mulattoes and over 400 slaves.[34]

Although yellow fever did not take hold on the island that summer, tragedy still struck. The unsanitary conditions of the slavers and close quarters of the barracoons constructed at Whitehead Point (now Whitehead Spit) caused 294 deaths in one to two months. Many victims of diseases, such as dysentery and ophthalmia, were teenaged boys and had been onboard the *William*. A six-week-old baby, born on 28 May, also perished. By 26 July 1860, nearly 300 bodies were interred along the shoreline in small, wooden caskets beneath the white sand.[35]

In his address to Congress, Buchanan repeated Moreno's messages to Secretary Thompson, explaining the threat of yellow fever. Buchanan, however, expressed more concern over the cost of caring for the refugees. "It is truly lamentable," he stated, "that Great Britain and the United States should be obliged to expend such a vast amount of blood and treasure for the suppression of the African Slave-trade; and this when the only portions of the civilized world where it is tolerated and encouraged are the Spanish islands of Cuba and Porto Rico [sic]."[36] The annexation of Cuba, by Buchanan's standards, benefited the United States in two

[31] Fernando J. Moreno to Secretary Jacob Thompson, 10 May 1860, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior Relating to the Suppression of the African Slave Trade and Negro Colonization, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. and College Park, Maryland (hereafter cited as RSI, NARA).
[32] Ibid.; Maris-Wolf, "'Of Blood and Treasure,'" 54.
[33] Moreno to Thompson, 13 May 1860, RSI, NARA.
[34] United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States, 1860* (cited hereafter as "1860 Monroe County Census"), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).
[35] Moreno to Thompson, 13 May 1860, RSI, NARA.
[36] James Buchanan, "The Slaver Wildfire.; Special Message from President Buchanan," *New York Times*, 22 May 1860.

ways. It saved government funds otherwise directed toward the Navy's efforts or toward the American Colonization Society and Liberia. Annexation would also rid Spain of its most profitable colony, thus asserting American power in the Western hemisphere. Questions of annexation impacted Key West on an economic level as well. With annexation, the increased trade with Cuba would lead to more ships passing near the precarious reefs, a benefit for salvaging crews, wharf owners, lawyers, appraisers, and auctioneers. Annexation, though, was a small piece of the larger slavery question, one that would alter Key West, the United States, and its surrounding nations.

While news of the Emancipation Proclamation took several weeks to reach Key West, after 1863, slavery could no longer be used as a justification for annexing Cuba. In fact, the Confederacy never controlled Key West. Instead, the military took the opportunity to seize Fort Jefferson and declared the island a Union stronghold. Like the rest of nation, however, the war changed Key West indefinitely. The wealthier Key Westers' pockets were no longer bolstered by slave leasing, a common practice on the island, but were forced to rely on more traditional maritime trades such as fishing and sponging. The wrecking industry too waned as steamships became more popular for shipping purposes. By the late 1860s, Key West, it seemed, was falling behind the growing industrial New South. The island needed a new industry or scheme to keep it afloat in the changing economic and political tides of Reconstruction. So, as Cuba prepared for its own civil war, a symbiotic relationship emerged.

Key West, throughout much of the nineteenth century, was one of the largest and wealthiest cities in Florida, second only to Pensacola on the Gulf coast. As Cubans fled war and violence in their homeland, they established new communities in Key West and bolstered the island's weakened economy. Seidenberg and Martínez Ybor capitalized on the clear Havana industry and other cigar manufacturers began to take notice, both in Cuba and New York. Cayetano Soria and other wealthy manufacturers moved their factories to the southernmost city and began employing the "twelve hundred Cubans residing on the island."[37] By the early 1870s, according to Consuelo E. Stebbins, approximately eight thousand Key West cigar workers, almost entirely Cuban émigrés, produced "1,350,000 cigars, which equated to a $10,000 a day industry."[38]

The island had certainly known this level of wealth, but not at such a consistent pace. Previously, Key Westers had lived solely off the reefs, either through live-well fishing, turtling, or sponging.[39] Rather suddenly, though, Key West's economy went from being strictly a maritime economy to one based on manufacture and

[37] Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 84.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Live-well fishing was another Caribbean influence on Key West. Live-well fishing was a modification to the hulls of fishing vessels that allowed water to flow in and out, keeping the fish alive longer and enabling a larger payload in Havana, the Bahamas, or other U.S. coastal markets.

marketable goods. By 1885, as more Cuban exiles settled in Key West, the city became the thirteenth largest port in the United States.[40] Census data from 1870 and 1880 certainly reflected this increase. While the wealthiest men tended to be cigar manufacturers and mariners (including steamship agents, boat builders, sailmakers, and retired sea captains), other wealthy men were engaged in professions reflecting a growing society, not unlike boom towns in the American West.[41] They were lumber merchants, grocers, bakers, butchers, and shopkeepers for clothing, dry goods, and fruit.[42] Here, the Cuban cigar industry, combined with early American industrialism, created a space for negotiation in the island's power dynamics. By 1885, Cubans and Cuban-Americans outnumbered those born in Key West or the Bahamas, who had made up the population's majority a mere generation earlier. If American economic frameworks enabled Cuban cigar manufacturers' wealth, then distinctive Cuban labor, skill, and techniques were responsible for supporting its non-Cuban residents.

The money made by cigar manufacturers enabled growth and opportunity for Cuban émigrés. New architecture dotted the landscape. In addition to new hotels, saloons, and elegant conch houses, factory owners built shotgun style houses for their workers and their families, establishing "colonies" or neighborhoods. These shotgun style homes, as they are described today, were simple one-story structures, only as wide as a single room and elevated for better ventilation. Although called shotgun because a shot could be fired from the front door through to the back door without hitting anything, the construction of the house allowed a cross-breeze in the summer heat if both doors were open.[43] The new architecture blended almost seamlessly with the more traditional Queen Anne-style Victorian homes – complete with turrets and gingerbread detailing – an arguably more tangible example of Key West as a contact zone. Cigar manufacturers also invested money in city-wide improvements. For example, Eduardo Hildalgo Gato, the first Cuban to own a major clear Havana cigar factory, invested heavily in Key West's streetcar system, a hospital, and a baseball team.[44]

In 1874, several émigrés founded the San Carlos Club, a mutual aid and benevolent society named for Ten Years War veteran Carlos Manuel de Cespedes. As Cuban exiles arrived in Key West, the Club helped with the "transition and adaptation to cultural change" and the "necessities of employment, housing, and food."[45] It also offered its members "spiritual revitalization, politicization,

[40] Westfall, *Key West*, 77.
[41] United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States, 1870* (cited hereafter as "1870 Monroe County Census"), NARA; United States Census Bureau, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1880* (cited hereafter as "1880 Monroe County Census"), NARA; The wealthier Key Westers were natives, born either in Florida or in the Bahamas and then brought to the island as children. They were raised on the water, in the uncertainty of a maritime culture where one had to rely on good luck and bad weather to make a significant living.
[42] 1870 Monroe County Census; one man, John Dixon from Madeira, owned a curiosity shop, also a common feature in boom towns.
[43] Westfall, *Key West*, 23.
[44] Ibid., 24.
[45] Ibid., 16.

education, and entertainment."[46] More important, however, San Carlos provided a venue for workers and revolutionaries alike. Cigarmakers often met to discuss issues relating to strikes, such as wages, the growing number of Spanish workers, and owners' threats to "increase the amount of stripped tobacco leaves imported into Key West."[47]

Cuban revolutionaries also frequented the San Carlos Club and other Cuban benevolent societies, such as *Sociedad de Beneficencia*, especially throughout the 1880s. By the mid-1880s, the Key West clear Havana industry grew rapidly. From 1880 to 1884, the number of factories rose from forty-five to ninety-one, while "capital investments expanded from $429,400 to $683,000, and the average number of hands rose from 1,377 to 2,811."[48] Cigarmakers' wages also increased significantly during this period, from "$337,966 in 1880, to $2,500,000 four years later."[49] Cigar manufacturers in Key West (and the United States in general) paid skilled workers significantly higher wages than they received in Cuba. They reportedly earned "forty to fifty dollars per week," with cigar packers earning up to "sixty dollars per week."[50] Workers fed their higher wages back into the revolutionary cause. Although labor strikes were common, revolutionary leaders both in Key West and from New York *juntas* often entered into negotiations with workers and factory owners to settle disputes.[51] The longer cigarmakers were out of work, the longer it would take to fill revolutionary club treasuries in Cuba and in the United States.

The Spanish consul in Key West observed these collection attempts. In 1884, Joaquin Torroja reported that, unlike previous assignments, it was difficult for him to "observe the movements of the Cuba insurgents" due to a lack of informants and further lack of cooperation from customs house authorities.[52] He had, however, observed Cuban military commander General Máximo Gómez Baez, Afro-Cuban guerilla leader General Antonio Maceo, and a "local man" organizing the Sociedad de Beneficencia, which, Torroja argued, acted as "a front to collect money for the revolution."[53] Several members, he recounted, "have agreed to go door to door to get pledges. In one week alone, they collected somewhere between $10,000 to $30,000 in cash and pledges . . . Those who refuse to donate are often forced to leave Key West because they either lose their jobs in the cigar factories or they are threatened with bodily harm."[54]

[46] Ibid. Even after being destroyed by fires numerous times throughout the 1880s, the San Carlos Club (later Institute) rebuilt and carried on its social and cultural events.
[47] Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 84.
[48] Poyo, "Cuban Patriots in Key West," 29.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Walter C. Maloney, *A Sketch of the History of Key West, Florida* (1876; reprint, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1969), 26.
[51] Westfall, *Key West*, 28.
[52] Torroja in Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 100-101.
[53] Ibid., 100.
[54] Ibid., 101.

Cuban exiles in Key West also used the San Carlos to celebrate the *Grito de Yara*, commemorating the Ten Years' War. A band would lead the "parade of clubs with men, women, and children proudly carrying their banners" through the streets of Key West to the cemetery, where "speeches were given by prominent leaders," including veteran and general Francisco Carrillo, Florida state legislator Fernando Figueredo, cigar manufacturer J. R. Estrada, and physician Dr. Eusebio Hernández.[55] The crowds would meet afterward in the San Carlos's solarium, where they could discuss the speeches and further celebrate their revolutionary leaders. In his reports, Torroja noted the presence of "other notorious criminals" and city officials to many of these events.[56] These mass demonstrations through the narrow streets of the island signified an important cultural exchange and negotiation. While Key West was hardly the egalitarian paradise historians often described (African Americans were still subjected to harsh curfews and other Jim Crow laws, for example), Cuban traditions were accepted and supported by the politically dominant population of native, white Americans.

Mutual aid societies, however, were not the only avenues for Cuban workers to receive revolutionary information. Cigar laborers were exposed to radical texts through the readers, or *los lectores*, in the cigar factories. *La lectura*, or the reading, was a tradition from Havana cigarmakers, where a reader, *el lector*, chosen and paid by the workers, would read novels, newspapers, or pamphlets to inform and entertain on the shop floor. They "embraced la lectura with a fervency that underscored their independence and solidarity."[57] As skilled laborers in an immensely profitable industry, Havana cigarmakers felt they "represented the aristocracy of labor," and the readings often elevated them further.[58] The readings tradition continued in North America, especially in Tampa and Key West, though texts varied significantly as los lectores would translate English newspapers and keep workers informed of events in their homeland. Revolutionary leader Jose Martí also applauded the practice, describing cigarmakers as "intellectuals who toil in 'factories that are like colleges with their continuous reading and thinking, and those schools where the hand that folds the tobacco leaf by day, lifts the text at night.'"[59]

The longstanding tradition of la lectura proved deeply influential to both the Cuban independence movement and Key West society. Key West cigar factories, historians George E. Pozzetta and Gary R. Mormino argued, "attracted an extraordinarily talented cadre of readers" and the readers' influence "ranged far beyond the factory."[60] One of the most prominent readers was José Dolores Poyo.

[55] Ibid., 104. Although there have been numerous cemeteries in Key West due to destructive hurricanes and beach erosion, the cemetery mentioned here is the current location of the Key West Cemetery on Angela, Francis, and Olivia Streets.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Pozzetta and Mormino, "The Reader and the Worker," 3.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 5.

Martínez Ybor employed Poyo as a reader in his El Principe de Gales factory, where Poyo promoted his separatist ideas. Outside of the factory, he was an accomplished journalist.[61] He edited several Spanish-language newspapers, such as *El Republicano* and *El Yara*, that openly supported the revolutionary movement. Ramón Rivero y Rivero also "helped organize several revolutionary clubs and founded or edited fourteen newspapers and periodicals, among them *La Revista de Florida* and *Cuba*."[62] Figueredo, prior to his turn as a politician, "read at the [Blas and Estanislaus] O'Halloran factory" as did other notorious radicals, such as Pedro Esteve, Carlos Baliño, Cornelio Brito, and Francisco Segura.[63]

In many exile communities – including both Key West and even more heterogeneous Tampa with its Cuban, Spanish, and Italian communities – el lector functioned as "a bridge between the New and Old worlds," creating a "broad and flexible community ethos" and enabling "discourse among the cigar center's various groups, factions, and races, an important function in such a diverse settlement."[64] This was especially true in Key West. Although readers often expressed anti-Spanish sentiments, they actively sought to connect Cuban interests with American institutions. Juan Maria Reyes, a reader in Samuel Wolf's cigar box factory, was the most successful in this particular realm as he was able to bridge the gap between cigar workers, other sectors of the Cuban population, and Key West at large.

Reyes was well-known throughout Key West for both positive deeds and negative fallout. Though he co-founded the San Carlos with Poyo and established *El Republicano*, in 1870, he challenged pro-Spanish Havana newspaper editor Gonzales Casteñón to a duel. A day after arriving in Key West, unknown assailants shot Casteñón in his hotel, causing an uproar on the island and in Madrid.[65] Although Torroja suspected the previously mentioned "notorious criminals," the authorities never caught the perpetrators. In 1871, in a rather ironic turn of events, Monroe County officials appointed Reyes Justice of the Peace and he began a short but successful career in local politics. The Republican Party, desperate to secure the Cuban vote, quickly recognized Reyes's influence and appointed several of his compatriots to local office, as well.[66]

Here, United States law and Reconstructionist politics worked in favor of the large group of politically-minded émigrés. According to historian Loy Glenn Westfall, the United States required "five years residency before foreigners could

[61] Ibid.; 1870 Monroe County Census; Poyo was listed in the 1870 census only three households away from Martínez Ybor, possibly denoting close ties with the tobacco giant. Poyo was also one of the few readers to be designated as such in the census data. Many reported that they worked in the cigar factory or were cigar workers. Poyo was also the great-great grandfather of historian Gerald E. Poyo cited throughout this essay.
[62] Pozzetta and Mormino, "The Reader and the Worker," 5.
[63] Ibid., 6.
[64] Ibid., 7.
[65] Westfall, *Key West*, 14; Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 149.
[66] Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 150; Poyo, "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics," 419.

become citizens. Participation in state elections required one-year residency, while voting in local politics necessitated living in a county for only six months. This relatively short time period allowed Cubans to create considerable political leverage in Monroe County politics," especially during the tumultuous Reconstruction Era.[67] This was especially important for Florida Republicans, who watched white Floridians join the Democratic Party in droves.[68] "The Republican Party," Westfall argued, "gained substantial votes since most educated Cuban leaders supported Republican ideals since the party had opposed slavery. Cuban and political leaders had tremendous influence over working class Cubans and convinced them that voting Republican was in their best interest."[69] Florida Republicans also seized the opportunity to control previously Democratic Monroe County and Key West, the county seat.[70]

The Republican-Democrat dichotomy, however, was hardly the émigrés' top concern. "Upon arriving in Key West," Gerald E. Poyo maintained, "the Cuban émigrés had recognized the opportunity to aid the revolutionary process in their homeland through political action in their new place of residence."[71] For example, when Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, Jr. ran for mayor in 1875, after a large-scale strike among cigar workers, he "likely campaigned more as a Cuban than as an adherent of any political group."[72] As such, when Ulysses S. Grant's administration failed to support Cuban revolutionary efforts, the Republican Party in New York, Louisiana, and Florida were left scrambling in the 1872 election. In 1873, Florida Republicans actively distanced themselves from the federal platform, earning them more votes and, thus, more seats in local elections.[73]

In Key West, the Republicans' constant courting of the Cuban vote led to essential gains for the revolutionaries. The Court House Ring, one faction of the island's Republicans, worked with Cuban leaders in Key West, trading votes for customs house appointments, which, according to Stebbins, "allowed the insurgents to control the traffic of goods and people."[74] Some of the Court House Ring's members included State Senator George Allen, Admiralty Judge James W. Locke, District Attorney George B. Patterson, and U.S. Marshall Peter A. Williams.[75] This, of course, outraged Torroja, who in 1883 claimed customs collector Frank Wicker frequently met with the émigré community leaders. "Schooners such as the *Aaron Kingsland* and the *Dauntless*," both owned by Cuban insurgents,

[67] Westfall, *Key West*, 15.
[68] Poyo, "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics," 419; Despite the implementation of strict Jim Crow legislation, whites felt threatened by the growing number of Cubans and black Bahamians.
[69] Ibid., 15.
[70] Although the county was Union controlled during the Civil War and required citizens to take an oath of allegiance, many prominent families' sons volunteered for the Confederacy, fighting in Company K, and the lead newspaper, *Key of the Gulf*, was a strongly Democratic newspaper.
[71] Poyo, "Cuban Revolutionaries and Monroe County Reconstruction Politics," 421.
[72] Ibid., 419.
[73] Ibid., 418; Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 171.
[74] Stebbins, , 166.
[75] Ibid., 167.

"have been trading illegally for many years now . . . Cuban stores openly sell contraband such as *aguardiente* [a strong liquor] because Mr. Wicker refuses to put a stop to this illegal practice."[76] By allowing Cubans to sell relatively harmless contraband items, Torroja believed the customs house would also turn a blind eye to explosives, firearms, and other tools to support martial action against Spain. His assumptions were not unfounded.

Key West's maritime location, in addition to its ability to match the Havana cigar industry, gave rise to its prominence in the Cuban exile circle in the United States. It was hardly a coincidence that New York, Key West, Tampa, and New Orleans each boasted large and vibrant émigré centers and were simultaneously connected via trade routes. For many cigar workers, this was a convenient loop as they could transfer from one cigar city to another with relative ease without losing their ties to their cultural traditions or their revolutionary activism. Yet, while Tampa, New Orleans, and New York had access to land routes, Key West's limited sea route had its advantages to the revolutionary movement, namely its proximity to Havana.

Various plots to destroy government buildings in Havana provided a perfect example of how Key West's politicized and mobilized populace established a contact zone. After working directly with the Court House Ring to secure local positions, Figueredo, Poyo, cigar manufacturer Francisco Gil Marrero, and Dr. Manuel Moreno began working on their revolutionary activities. In 1883, Figueredo became inspector at the customs house, an appointed position that allowed him to "facilitate the transportation of explosives from New York."[77] From Spanish consuls in New York, Torroja received numerous warnings regarding plans to send small groups of arsonists, Remington rifles, revolvers, and ammunition to Key West and subsequently on to Cuba. He also tracked clandestine notes regarding kidnappings and bombings.

Two incidents involving Gil Marrero demonstrate how the Court House Ring supported Cuban revolutionary activity. Gil Marrero was arrested and tried twice by the "collector of the customs house" in Key West for crimes related to the group's "terrorist operations."[78] The first time in 1884, when Gil Marrero was found in possession of explosives and paraphernalia, Judge Locke ruled that he had no jurisdiction over the accused as the crime occurred in New York.[79] During his second trial in 1887, a Key West jury found Gil Marrero not guilty of illegally transporting explosives. Immediately afterward, he filed a claim at the Key West customs house to have the aforementioned explosives returned to him. The same authorities granted his request and Torroja, who had kept detailed records for his superiors in Madrid, made no further mention of the group's activities again. Key

[76] Torroja in Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 169.
[77] Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 129.
[78] Torroja in Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 137.
[79] Stebbins, *City of Intrigue, Nest of Revolution*, 139; Locke also returned the fuses, explosive, thermometers, and glass tubes found on Marrero when he left Key West.

West, it seemed, through location and its residents' tradition of self-preservation, created a place for negotiation. Here, the rule of law of the United States and Cuban revolutionary ideologies were uniquely intertwined. The Court House Ring, Torroja likely recognized, controlled the customs house, just as the judicial and legal systems had controlled the often-questionable wrecking industry. As long as Cuban political, cultural, and economic leaders were willing to persuade the community to vote Republican and continued to bring wealth via cigars, the island's most powerful men were certainly willing to overlook something as small as international laws. In this frontier, perhaps, Turner's thesis held true: Key West was a meeting place between American politicians' savagery and Cuban insurgents desire for a better civilization.

In conclusion, throughout the nineteenth century, Cuba and Key West had a sometimes volatile, sometimes beneficial, but always complicated relationship. Through the immense amounts of population growth, wealth, cultural exchange, and political intrigue brought on by the success of the clear Havana cigar industry, one can see that Key West was a littoral in flux. Although it was one of Florida's largest and fastest growing cities, the island remained caught between its past as a maritime frontier (full of pirates, yellow fever, and insurance scams) and its future as an industrialized hub of international significance, much to the benefit of Cuban revolutionaries. Revolutionary leader, journalist, and poet Jose Martí expressed this relationship best in an 1889 letter to editor of the *New York Evening Post*:

> There are some Cubans who, from honorable motives, from an ardent admiration for progress and liberty, from a prescience of their own powers under better political conditions, from an unhappy ignorance of the history and tendency of annexation, would like to see the island annexed to the United States. But those who have fought in war and learned in exile, who have built, by the work of hands and mind, a virtuous home in the heart of an unfriendly community… those who have raised, with their less prepared elements, a town of workingmen where the United States had previously a few huts on a barren cliff; those, more numerous than others, do not desire the annexation of Cuba to the United States. They do not need it.[80]

Key West was, in fact, a "few huts on a barren cliff," dangerously clinging to a frontier past at the edge of the Atlantic. Cuba nationalism may have struggled longer without the frontier spirit of Key West. Without Cuban émigrés, however, their traditions and work ethic, Key West would likely have faded quietly into the watery background.

[80] José Martí, "A Vindication of Cuba," *New York Evening Post*, 25 Mar. 1889.

# "Denounce!" - The Chinese YWCA and the 1951 Christian Renunciation Campaign in the People's Republic of China

Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb
*University of Tampa*

On 11 April 1951, the world's attention was focused on U.S. President Harry Truman's dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur, the supreme commander of the U.N. forces in Korea. In China, leaders of the Chinese Christian community were focused on their upcoming meeting with Premier Zhou Enlai scheduled to begin on 16 April. Those leaders may or may not have known that MacArthur's determination to wage war on China was what had drawn their country into the conflict the previous October and his continued determination to wage an all-out war with China was among the reasons for his dismissal. They did know that heightened anti-Americanism was making their efforts to maintain affiliations with American home boards and American colleagues more difficult. The premier, along with radical Christian leaders, were about to make anti-Americanism a test of loyalty.

Among those following the Cold War's first "hot war," and China's entry into it, were the women of the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) headquartered in Geneva.[1] The World YWCA provided women in many parts of the world with a framework to work professionally, speak openly on social issues, and make forays into the fraught world of contemporary politics. That had been especially true in China, the oldest of its Far East Asian constituents. Beginning with the formation of its first national committee in 1899, Chinese women transformed their YWCA from a foreign transplant wedded to the missionary enterprise to a wholly Chinese, liberal Christian, and pro-communist organization.[2]

In March 1950 the Association formally declared its support for Chairman Mao Zedong and his state-building project.[3] They did not, however, sever their ties to the World YWCA. Then, in April 1951 a Christian renunciation campaign began. It is a lesser-known episode in the history of Christianity in China and, had it not been for the July 1951 issue of the *YWCA Magazine*, an unknown event in the history of the Chinese YWCA. In their renunciation meetings, YWCA women virulently attacked their Western YWCA colleagues. Yet they maintained their relationship with the World's headquarters in Geneva, and the Chinese YWCA continued to

[1] The YWCA was an international women's organization that had its genesis in middle class women's reform efforts in Great Britain and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. The World YWCA was established in 1894. Its headquarters were originally in London but were moved to Geneva in 1930.

[2] I date the national YWCA (the women's organization) from the formation of its first national committee in 1899. The most commonly used date is 1890 when Presbyterian missionaries organized a YWCA student association at their girl's mission school in Hangzhou.

[3] "Report of the Enlarged Executive Committee meeting of the Young Women's Christian Association of China and Extracts from the Minutes, Shanghai, March 1950," 6-7, China Country Files, Correspondence 1950, Box 416, World YWCA Archives, World YWCA Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland (hereafter World/China).

be listed in the World's handbook of national constituents. What compelled the YWCA to participate in the Christian renunciation campaign? This study argues that it was situational politics. On the one hand, the Chinese YWCA supported the liberal Christian community which had implemented the renunciation campaign because the state demanded it prove its loyalty. On the other, its leadership used the campaign to make a public performance of their personal and organizational loyalty to the communist state.

The catalyst for the renunciation campaign was a conference of Christian leaders called by Premier Zhou Enlai in April 1951. The meeting dealt with regulations being added to those issued in late December 1950 by the Chinese State Administrative Council. Those first regulations were designed to gain knowledge of and control over all foreign funds sent to organizations in support of cultural, educational, relief, and religious work in China. They included strict reporting requirements until organizations verified that they no longer received foreign funds.[4] Many Christian organizations complied quickly. The regulations discussed in April dealt specifically with subsidies being sent from the United States.[5] The meeting's larger agenda, however, was to implement the renunciation campaigns as a test of loyalty for the Christian community.

Among the 150 church leaders who met in Beijing from April 16 to 21 were several from the Chinese YWCA. National general executive secretary[6] Deng Yuzhi (Cora Deng) was present. Deng had worked for the YWCA since her 1926 graduation from Jinling College, a Christian union college for women in Nanjing. During the 1930s she led the national industrial (labor) department. Her writings during that time clearly identified her as a Christian socialist with radical leanings. She invited communist cultural workers to teach in the YWCA industrial night schools for factory women and invited radical expatriates to guest lecture in the advanced night school. At the beginning of the war with Japan, she met communist party leader Zhou Enlai and his wife Deng Yingchao. Her activities during the 1940s are less well-known but in 1949 she was invited to participate in the preliminary consultative meetings involved in drafting the first constitution as a representative of China's religious communities. She was on the viewing stand when Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China into existence on 1 October 1949.[7]

Also present was former national general secretary Cai Kui. Cai had worked for the YWCA since her graduation from Jinling College in 1927. She initially served

[4] "Peking Edict of 29 December 1950: Regulations Governing All Organizations Subsidized With Foreign Funds," in Wallace C. Merwin and Francis Price Jones, ed. *Documents of the Three-Self Movement: Source Materials for the Study of the Protestant Church in Communist China* (New York: Far Eastern Office of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1963), 22-24.
[5] "Methods for Dealing with Christian Bodies," *Documents of the Three-Self Movement*, 27-28.
[6] "Secretary" was the title given to college educated and professionally trained YWCA women.
[7] Elizabeth A. Littell-Lamb, "Engendering a Class Revolution: The Chinese YWCA Industrial Reform Work in Shanghai, 1927-1939," *Women's History Review* 21, no. 2 (Apr. 2012): 189-209.

as the executive secretary of the national editorial department. In 1936 Cai became acting national general secretary, a position made permanent three years later. She guided the Association through the war of resistance against Japan from 1937 to 1945, and then the civil war between the Nationalist and Communist parties that led to a Communist victory in 1949. Exhausted and demoralized, Cai resigned in December 1949 to focused on her spiritual life as a member of the Quaker Church. Also attending the April meeting was YWCA secretary Wang Xiuqing who had worked for the YWCA since 1930 and was part of a dedicated group of women with similarly long tenure.

Lu Dingyi, deputy chairman of the Committee on Cultural and Education, gave one of the opening addresses. He explained the conference was necessary because of American imperialism. Several YWCA secretaries later noted that his tirade against American imperialists' use of Christianity was well-researched, detailed, and convincingly stated. The final part of his speech discussed Christian responsibility to nation-wide movements, especially to the Resist-America, Assist-Korea movement which he described as a campaign to secure world peace by opposing American aggression. The campaign should inspire every person to "wipe out the 'fear America, worship America, fawn on America' thinking, and learn to hate, despise and vilify American imperialism."[8]

Radical Christian leader Wu Yaozong gave what amounted to a state of Chinese Christianity speech. He went on to give examples and statistics of Christian support for the Resist-America, Assist-Korea campaign. He then turned his attention to what would become the Christian renunciation campaign to root out not only those hidden imperialists in their midst but imperialist thoughts in their hearts and souls. In conclusion, Wu emphatically stated: "renunciation meetings must be held everywhere, to expose the various schemes by which imperialism tries to use the church in aggression against China and root out the imperialists and special agents hidden within the church. We must be energetic in cleaning our own house."[9]

Renunciations began during the conference, with 19 April given as the date of the first one. The renunciations sought to deepen Christian understanding of how the imperialist United States had used Christianity to achieve is goals of aggression against China.[10] Renunciations began with accusations. Speakers attacked missionaries (who were mostly absent) or colleagues (who may have been present) for their co-option into American imperialism. They then turned their attention to their own actions or inactions, criticizing their culpability in America's insidious agenda. The large meetings were followed by small study groups which created a new political awareness among the participants and engendered their genuine

[8] "Lu Ting-yi's (Lu Dingyi) Speech," *Documents of the Three-Self Movement*, 29-33.
[9] "Y.T. Wu's (Wu Yaozong) Report," *Documents of the Three-Self Movement*, 34-40.
[10] Philip L. Wickeri, *Seeking Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China's United Front* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 133, 139.

commitment to the new Protestant church and New China.[11] This would become the pattern, renunciations which aimed at "severing the linkages with the past" and re-education with the intent of "ideological remolding."[12]

One of the speakers at the April meeting was Cai Kui, according to an article by Wang Xiuqing and published in the July issue of the *YWCA Magazine*. Cai accused American YWCA secretary Lily Haass, who had been both her colleague and mentor, of fooling her into abdicating her administrative duties as national general secretary. Cai noted that Haass suggested her time was best spent writing essays and giving speeches. Cai confessed that had appealed to her intellectual side and thus she mistakenly allowed Lily Haass to usurp her position.[13]

Renunciation meetings were widespread. Some were large rallies. Others may have been smaller, in-house but not closed events. It is not known how many YWCA renunciation meetings were held. It is likely YWCA women also attended renunciations at their churches. What is known about those at the YWCA national headquarters comes from the July 1951 issue of the *YWCA Magazine* and refers to those held at the national headquarters. The magazine included an unsigned opening statement and signed articles by Deng Yuzhi, Wang Xiuqing, and senior secretary Gao Yuxin. Deng was the most significant figure in the YWCA movement in China. Wang and Gao were veteran national staff. They viciously attacked both the YWCA of the U.S.A. and the World YWCA leadership as imperialists, as well as targeting some of their long-standing Western colleagues. They also denounced their own leadership. However, they saved the harshest criticism for themselves.

The opening statement, titled "Denounce!" provided some insight into the intensity of the meeting. The Chinese YWCA had considered itself "enlightened and progressive" but finally realized that the American YWCA had used its progressive nature and financial subsidies to tie it to the "American imperialist-Chiang reactionary faction and reactionary capitalists."[14] The article went on to describe how for more than sixty years the Chinese Association had been manipulated by American imperialism and used to carry out the American imperialist policy of encroachment, muddling the people's thinking and weakening the revolutionary power of the Chinese people. The original language is emotionally striking, so much so that its intensity carries over in translation:

> because in the past we were so deeply poisoned, therefore today we must even more resolutely and thoroughly purge the poison, clean house, wash our

[11] Wickeri, *Seeking Common Ground*, 133-134.
[12] Ibid., 138-141.
[13] Wang Xiuqing, "Denounce the American imperialists that are controlling the YWCA of China to implement a policy of cultural invasion" (*kongsu meidi kongzhi zhongguo nü qingnian hui zhixing qinlüe zhengce*), trans. by Erik Avasalu, *YWCA Magazine* 5, no. 7 (July 1951): 5, Shanghai Municipal Archives, U121-0-64-4, Shanghai, P.R.C. Lily K. Haass was a YWCA secretary in China from 1914 to 1945. She held many different positions including associate general secretary, national city secretary, national training secretary. She mentored both Cai Kui and Deng Yuzhi and traveled extensively with Cai during the anti-Japan war.
[14] "Chiang reactionary faction" refers to Chiang Kaishek, the defeated leader of the Nationalist party who had formed a government in exile on the island of Taiwan.

> bodies clean of all the dirt and filth. Only then can we walk toward the light, walk toward a new life. The most effective method of purging the poison is renunciation, because renunciation itself is a very good method of study, and it is also an intense process of ideological struggle.[15]

Deng Yuzhi began her article by noting Lu Dingyi's speech had been like a spiritual awakening. Given her past, that statement was somewhat hyperbolic. Deng was no recent convert to radical Christian theologies, having embraced Christian socialism, and broadly condemned Western capitalism and the oppression of the working classes in her writings during the 1930s. In the late 1940s, she lamented to her Christian audiences over the appropriation of Christianity as a tool of imperialism, using much the same language as had Lu Dingyi and Wu Yaozong at the April meeting. Her article with the lengthy title "American Imperialists' Criminal Invasion of Southeast Asia and China via the World YWCA and the Foreign Division of the YWCA of the USA" methodically attacked not only the Foreign Division of the American YWCA and the World body but individuals, such as Cai Kui and the World's secretary for Southeast Asia, Elizabeth Palmer. She saved her severest criticism, however, for herself.[16]

To Deng it was now clear that the YWCA of the U.S.A. had kept a tight grip on the Chinese association to use it as a tool of imperialism. As an example of their methods, Deng noted that the American YWCA largely controlled the World YWCA by providing 80 percent of its budget which, in return required the World to either have an American serve as the president of the World's executive committee or as World general secretary.[17] Thus, the United States had been able to use the World YWCA as an instrument of their post-WWII imperialist plans. Deng's evidence included holding the 1947 World Committee meeting in China, creating a division for Southeast Asia in 1948 headed by American Elizabeth Palmer, and holding several important meetings in Asia, including the 1950 World YWCA Training Conference which Deng personally attended.[18]

Deng attributed the holding of the World Committee meeting in China to the "American imperialists." She claimed it was part of their plan to use China as a base to fight the Soviets after WWII. They had used the now defeated "counterrevolutionary" Generalissimo Chiang Kaishek to enhance the international prestige of the meeting and similarly used his wife Song Meiling to promote the

[15] "Denounce!" (*Kongsu!*), trans. by Erik Avasalu, *YWCA Magazine* (July 1951):1.
[16] Deng Yuzhi, "American Imperialists' Criminal Invasion of Southeast Asia and China via the World YWCA and the Foreign Division of the YWCA of the U.S.A." (*kongsu meidi tongguo meiguo nü qingnian xiehui guowaibu ji shijie nü qingnian hui jinxing dui dongnanya ji zhongguode qinlüe zuixing*), trans. Erik Avasalu, *YWCA Magazine* (July) 1951: 2,
[17] Shanghai Municipal Archives, U121-0-64-4, Shanghai, P.R.C. Up until 1947, the World YWCA tasked the British with supporting associations in its empire and YWCA of the U.S.A. with supporting those in East Asia, Latin and South America. After the 1947 World Council meeting, the YWCA of the U.S.A. shifted its monetary support to the World office.
[18] Deng, "American Imperialists." The World's Committee meeting had been scheduled to be held in China before Japan invaded in 1937.

image of an educated, modern Chinese woman.[19] The World YWCA also only included representatives who articulated counterrevolutionary views, such as the Korean representatives who supported South Korean President Syngman Rhee. Deng further criticized the effort to include representatives from the Japanese YWCA: "when an eight-year blood debt had not been fully repaid, the World YWCA wanted us to forget the atrocities committed and extend a hand of friendship to the enemy."[20]

This led Deng to attack Cai Kui, her colleague of a quarter century, for conspiring with the "American imperialist general secretary of the World YWCA" (who at the time was Ruth Woodsmall) to visit Japan after the World's Committee Meeting.[21] The World YWCA visit had been approved by General Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander of the Allied Occupation Forces. According to Deng, the intended visit was a betrayal of China and a repudiation of the "blood debt" of the Chinese people. Cai had wanted to join the World's delegation, according to Deng, but had been persuaded not to go but "it was apparent that Cai Kui was implementing the American imperialist policy of Japanese reconstruction. Cai had even planned to use the YWCA of China to help implement this policy."[22]

Deng's next target was Elizabeth Palmer and the World YWCA Training Conference held in Mussoori, India in 1950. This training was a conspiracy by Elizabeth Palmer who feared the success of the Chinese revolution and feared its influence in Asia. The official agenda was to share work experience, compare work plans, and deepen religious beliefs. That agenda, however, was a cover for the real intent of the conference which was to teach participants to idolize America and to fear and oppose communism. Deng provided examples from lectures at the conference. One she had found especially offensive compared the United States and the Soviet Union to pugnacious adolescents neither of whom would give in. Deng found it offensive to trivialize the force that stood for peace and the force of aggression and invasion by comparing them to juveniles. She found equally offensive the speeches that talked of Asian peoples as being backward and of the Unites States providing them with the foreign aid to elevate themselves. Deng believed belittling language not only made Asians feel inferior but, even worse, was intended to make Asians dependent on American imperialist support. Even worse was the World YWCA's promotion of the "third path." Neither capitalism nor communism could claim moral standards. The alternative was Christian social democracy. To Deng it was obvious that the goal of this "third path" was to break up the revolutionary will of the people in the colonies.[23]

[19] Chiang Kaishek (Jiang Jieshi) was president of China until his 1949 defeat by the Communists. He fled to Taiwan where he set up a government in exile that most Western countries recognized as China until 1971 when the U.N. seated the Peoples Republic of China as the legitimate government of China.
[20] Deng, "American Imperialists."
[21] The World YWCA's delegation to Japan was the first official visit by non-governmental organization since the end of the Pacific War.
[22] Deng, "American Imperialists."
[23] Ibid.

One of the most significant points Deng made in her condemnation of the World organization was its refusal to sign the Stockholm Peace Petition and its public statements declaring North Korea an aggressor in the current conflict, its support for the UN police action, and the fact it had not attended the World Peace Council in Warsaw.[24]

Deng then criticized herself and her colleagues for being fooled into believing that inviting Chinese women to serve on the World's Committee was a sign of honor and respect, for believing that the World's decision to have China host the World Committee meeting was an honor, that inviting secretaries like herself to attend the World's Training Conference was a sign of respect. They had been deceived:

> they used us to carry out a cultural invasion, made us work with imperialists to engage in numerous acts aimed at numbing the minds of our fellow compatriots. . . . But only today, under the leadership of the people's government, do we finally understand that our homes and our persons are covered in filth; that we must wash away all this disgusting filth before we can become a YWCA that truly serves the people.[25]

Deng took personal responsibility, admitting that American imperialists, particularly Elizabeth Palmer, used her most "advanced" side to fool her into indirectly serving as an instrument of American imperialist.[26]

Wang Xiuqing's renunciation, written in the same style, also noted she had been "awakened" at the Beijing meeting and now denounced the cultural invasion of American imperialists. Wang asserted that the Americans had controlled the Chinese YWCA by controlling its finances and its personnel. Internal reports documented the amount of money the American YWCA invested in China, more than any other country. American women outnumbered all other foreign secretaries. They were imperialists sent to implement a policy of invasion. American women trained Chinese women to be "slaves" to serve their imperialist cause. Controlling the Chinese YWCA was part of a larger American conspiracy to turn China into a colony.[27]

Wang exposed the American agenda through four historic periods: 1890-1911, 1911-1927, 1927-1937, and 1937-1950. Her evidence for the first two periods was the amount of American dollars spent on building up the YWCA movement in China and the number of American secretaries sent to advance that cause. She did not mention the number of non-American foreign secretaries, needed because of the multi-national nature of Christian missionary efforts in China. She stayed doggedly on target, and the target was American imperialists. Her argument for the

[24] Ibid. Deng Yuzhi had attended that conference.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid. The Stockholm Peace Petition was sponsored by the World Peace Council and issued on March 15, 1950. It called for a ban on nuclear weapons.
[27] Wang, "Denounce the American imperialists," 5.

insidiousness of the third period, when the amount of money sent and the number of American secretaries supported was cut back due to the Great Depression, was more persuasive. During that decade, the Americans used the "poisonous" method of using Chinese against other Chinese by making the appearance of "stepping back" and allowing Chinese to assume key positions while the few but powerful remaining American secretaries controlled their Chinese colleagues from behind the scenes. Wang attacked Lily Haass for controlling secretarial training for fifteen years, training Chinese women to assume almost every position in the association but never training one to take over her position so that when she left in 1945 there was no Chinese to take over personnel training.[28]

Wang Xiuqing's discussion of the fourth period was as complicated as the period itself. During the War of Resistance, Wang argued, the American YWCA had invested tens of thousands of dollars into the Chinese YWCA to help American imperialists secure China as an outpost in Far East and Southeast Asia. They had bolstered Chiang Kaishek as part of their anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign. After the war, the YWCA of the U.S.A. continued to subsidize the Chinese YWCA, but once again money left a trail. Individual Americans and American churches contributed money to the Foreign Division, who then allocated it to China. Money from at least one church could be traced back to John D. Rockefeller who, although he had contributed to the support of the YWCA industrial reform work in Shanghai in the 1920s, was a notable capitalist.[29]

Like Deng, Wang reflected on how she had been influenced by her Western-style Christian education, the time she had spent in the United States, the YWCA training conferences she had attended, and her friendships with American secretaries. She had idolized America and been blind to its imperialist intent. She had believed all her work, even her fundraising work, genuinely served society. She now recognized that she had been "exploiting the people and using that money to perform reformist work. I was working for them, aiding reactionary forces, and acting counter to the revolution. Recalling all of this, I am truly ashamed."[30]

She had been most deceived by believing American secretaries were truly friends. And Wang saved her most virulent attack for one of those secretaries, Margaret Brennecke. Wang and Brennecke worked together in Yantai from 1932-1937 when both were reassigned to the national staff. Home on furlough in 1949, Brennecke had insisted on being sent back even as China was being liberated. Wang criticized Brennecke's words and actions, such as stating that the People's government was alright, but it was best not to ally with the Soviets and that she hoped China would follow Yugoslavia and not be drawn into the Soviet orbit. Wang was especially angry because, despite having the air of an imperialist, Wang herself was never able to recognize Brennecke as an imperialist but simply regarded her as a friend,

[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

even traveling to see her off in Hong Kong when she returned to the United States. Now, however, she saw everything clearly.[31]

This study argued that YWCA participation in the renunciation meetings was situational politics to support the liberal and radical elements of the Christian community and to dramatically demonstrate their own loyalty to the communist regime. The language of Deng's and Wang's renunciations appear almost scripted to meet the goals set out by Wu Yaozong. A close reading of both their speeches, however, reveals they laid most of the blame at the feet of the YWCA of the U.S.A., suggesting it manipulated the World leadership, or at the feet of World YWCA secretaries such as Elizabeth Palmer who were American and thus working covertly for American interests. That left an opening to continue ties to the World headquarters in Geneva.

There was a certain intimacy about the actual renunciations. They were referred to as "spiritual awakenings." That placed them in the realm of Christian experience and Deng's and Wang's renunciations of their colleagues mirrored Christian language of renouncing the devil. Their speeches were a political theater to impress radical Christian leaders such as Wu Yaozong and state officials who most likely attended. Their renunciations were situational, pragmatic, and passionate.

The renunciations did not lead to a severance of their traditional relationship with the World YWCA. And although the World YWCA office had a rough translation of Wang's speech and her ugly attack on Brennecke, the World leadership made a concerted effort to continue the relationship with the Chinese YWCA. They sent China all documentation for it to attend the World Committee meeting held in Beirut in October 1951. It was only on the opening day of the Council meeting that China cabled that they would not attend. World leadership optimistically interpreted the timing of the cable as a message of greeting.[32] After several years of informal contacts, the Chinese national office welcomed a delegation of two representatives from the World YWCA in fall of 1957. Neither of them was American.

[31] Ibid.
[32] Correspondence from Helen Roberts to Inga-Brita Castrèn, 16 April 1956, Box 416 World/YWCA.

# Black Power Revisited: The Political Ideology and Grassroots Activism of The Young Blacks of Lawnside

Jason Romisher
*Western University*

A lot of times some of the other organizations would try to lean on us to try and convince us that we were dealing with it in the wrong way. But we told them, no! We in it for the youth — youth programs to help them get their education. For them to continue with their schooling — this is what we were all about. All that radicalization, all that fighting — go see the Black Panthers.

Gordon Higgs, Chairman, The Young Blacks of Lawnside

A white journalist named Vincent R. Zarate was surprised to report that an African American political organization called The Young Blacks of Lawnside "went to the mayor and council this summer and demanded 'black power.' The black mayor and six black councilmen and the black clerk and black tax collector and black police chief looked up in astonishment."[1] Lawnside, New Jersey, is one of at least ten self-governing African American communities in the United States and as such, is a unique location to assess the impacts of the black freedom struggle and black power ideologies.[2] The town, with historical roots as a destination on the Underground Railroad, had become a prosperous suburban community by the 1960s. Lawnside's political leaders mostly shared Zarate's confusion at the well-spring of impassioned resistance to their business as usual approach to community governance. What these conservative-minded politicians failed to realize was the generational and ideological gulf that had formed between them and Lawnside's youth activists. An analysis of the political philosophy of The Young Blacks contributes new ideas to the historiography about black power political ideology. Like other African American political organizations in the 1966-1975 timeframe, The Young Blacks employed a language of confrontation and willingness to challenge the political direction of their community. They also diverged from several major black power organizations because of their commitment to non-violent forms of activism, the promotion of women to positions of frontline leadership, and a constructive engagement with mainstream American corporations and educational institutions. The Young Blacks avoided any movement-related activity that called for acts of violence, in part because of the unique position that Lawnside held as a self-governing African American community, and because of the philosophy of the group's leadership.

[1] Vincent R Zarate, "Power is Black in Lawnside," *Newark Sunday News*, 6 Oct. 1968.
[2] Harold M. Rose, "The All Negro Town: Its Evolution and Function," in *Black America: Geographic Perspectives*, ed. Robert T. Ernst and Lawrence Hugg (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1976), 354; In 1986, Clayborne Carson proposed a new title, "black freedom struggle," to define the African American movement for racial equality. Carson's term has been utilized by many scholars and is appropriate to describe the Lawnside experience from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s. Clayborne Carson, "Civil Rights Reform and the Black Freedom Struggle," in *The Civil Rights Movement in AmDeferica*, ed. Charles W. Eagles (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1986).

Lawnside was a community on the rise in the 1960s with the construction of housing developments, the addition of new businesses and industry, and increasing migration into the community of well-educated and affluent people. Lawnside's identity as a small town or suburb open to African Americans that was located near the cities of Camden and Philadelphia caused the community to steadily grow after World War II. Many of the other suburban communities outside of major cities in the United States were historically white and continued to be so because of both institutional and informal practices. Lawnside's status as an autonomous African American community attracted families who wanted to migrate from the inner cities to realize the suburban dream. Both the new arrivals and established residents benefitted from the employment and educational opportunities that began to open up for African Americans in the previous decades of the twentieth century.

Young people in Lawnside were exposed to successful African American role models within their community. Gordon Higgs, who served as the Chairman of The Young Blacks, explained how the professional achievements and community building efforts of Lawnside's Bryant family had a profound impact on the prospects young African Americans felt they could achieve if they excelled academically and attained professional credentials. He related how the Bryant family "were all well to do" and marvelled how they were able to attain careers with the federal government.[3] This began with Horace Bryant Sr. who was the first African American calendar clerk in the state Assembly. His son, Horace Jr., advanced to become the state commissioner of banking and insurance, an achievement that made him New Jersey's first African American state cabinet member.[4] Horace Jr. also had a long and successful career in Atlantic City politics.[5] I. R. Bryant, another son of Horace Sr., had a distinguished career with the Internal Revenue Service and later served as the president of the Lawnside Board of Education.[6] I. R. Bryant's son Mark Bryant, was a long-serving Lawnside mayor, and another one of his sons, Wayne Bryant, earned a law degree and established a thriving Camden based practice before entering politics where he advanced to the position of state senator before being jailed on corruption charges.[7] Higgs credited the influential Still family as Lawnside community role models. Some members of the Still family in Lawnside claim descent from famed nineteenth century African American abolitionist William Still and his brother Dr. James Still; a legendary medical doctor known as "The Father of the Pines."[8] Higgs also cited the accomplishments of Morris Smith, a veteran, chemist, and executive at Scott

[3] Gordon Higgs, interview with the author, 23 Aug. 2017.
[4] Alan Guenther, "Lawmaker Works to Ensure Rights," *Courier Post*, 1 Feb. 1998. 12.
[5] "Horace J. Bryant Held Cabinet Post," *Courier Post*, 14 Apr. 1983, 47.
[6] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[7] Angela Delli Santi, "Former N.J. Sen. Bryant sentenced to 4 years, *Daily Journal* (Vineland, N.J.), 25 Jul. 2009, 1.
[8] New Jersey historian Paul Schopp has done extensive research on nineteenth century African American history in New Jersey and has determined that the Lawnside Stills are not the descendants of Levin and Charity Still who were William Still, and Dr. James Still's parents.

Paper company, and Lawnside school board president.[9] The fame and notoriety of such prominent African American role models was an inspiration to many in Lawnside. Higgs discussed the nature of this inspiration, explaining how "we had this air about ourselves in this town. Hey — we are the descendants of Dr. Still and people of this nature. . . . We had seen the achievements of the black man. So let's all get together and try and elevate one another and take this thing to the next level."[10] The existence of prominent role models in Lawnside who had achieved success within the American system fits within the Booker T. Washington model of African American community uplift through an emphasis on internal development through education and entrepreneurship. The existence of successful role models in Lawnside also negated much of the revolutionary fervor expressed by African American organizations and leaders in more repressive political environments.

The black power movement had various ideological strains that were formulated and popularized in the mid to late 1960s by groups at the local and national levels of political organization. Some of the most prominent aspects of black power political thought included: an agenda of racial and cultural pride, control over local institutional bodies and governments, support for alternative religious practices, educational and curriculum reform, prison reform, land-based reparations, a critique of capitalism, support for African American owned business and industry, and a linking of the domestic movement for racial equality with transnational struggles against colonialism and imperialism.[11] Historians Sundiata Cha Jua and Clarence Lang explained the transformation that took place in the movement as it evolved out of civil rights doctrines, tactics, and culture.

> Transformations produced immediate changes in ideology, practices, strategies, leadership, membership, discourses, and symbols. Indeed, they produced a new people – "black" people, . . . and was reflected at a mass level in African Americans' embrace of new cultural forms and symbols — the Afro and other natural hairstyles, as well as African-derived clothing, names, social values, and holidays. It affected styles of walking, handshakes, tastes in music and art, and language.[12]

Kwame Toure (formerly Stokely Carmichael) attempted to achieve African American political control in a community setting through his organizing efforts in Lowndes, Alabama, a rural county. There, black power would come to represent community control over local governing bodies such as the board of education, sheriff, coroner, and taxes.[13] Toure's political objective had already been achieved

[9] Gordon Higgs, interview with the author, 24 Nov. 2021
[10] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[11] Sundiata Cha-Jua and Clarence Lang, "The 'Long Movement' as Vampire: Temporal and Spatial Fallacies in Recent Black Freedom Studies," *Journal of African American History* 92, no. 2 (Spring, 2007): 274; Peniel E. Joseph, "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights – Black Power Era*, ed. Peniel E. Joseph (New York: Routledge, 2006), 5.
[12] Cha Jua and Lang, 279.
[13] Joseph, "Introduction," 5.

in Lawnside — a reality that would profoundly alter the political ideology of The Young Blacks.

The black power ideological turn which grew out of the civil rights movement has been mischaracterized by some scholars and in the popular imagination of many Americans. The civil rights movement is commonly understood as a just and virtuous crusade that began with the *Brown v Board of Education* decision and helped achieve landmark victories such as the *Civil Rights Act* and *Voting Rights Act* through non-violent methods of direct action.[14] However, the black power era that followed is generally seen as a negative influence on the trajectory and impact of the movement. Sensationalized media representations fueled an association by many white and conservative African Americans of black power with violent rhetoric, urban rioting, and uniformed African American men with afros brandishing assault rifles.[15] Several prominent scholars including Edward C. Banfield, John D'Emilio, Alan J. Matusow, Doug McAdam, and Clayborne Carson advance some aspects of the black power era as either responsible for the downfall of the civil rights movement or a destructive phase in African American political organizing.[16] This article argues against the declensionist narrative of black power and contributes to more recent scholarly attempts by Robert O. Self, Howard Gillette Jr., Anne M. Valk, and Matthew Countryman that have reinterpreted black power as a constructive political ideology.[17] This new wave of scholarship has emphasized the meaningful impacts of black power inspired grassroots activism that contributed to community building and development through the creation of foodbanks, after school tutoring, literacy programs, and history classes for both youth and adults.

In 1966, Kwame Toure popularized the phrase "black power" while marching in Mississippi in defiance of white racism and threats of violence.[18] Soon, many African American activists throughout the country would embrace the mantra of black power prompting national leaders and intellectuals to develop the ideological underpinnings of a mass movement. The black power experience in the United States affected the political direction of regional and national organizations such

[14] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (Mar. 2005): 1234.
[15] Robert O. Self, "The Black Panther Party and the Long Civil Rights Era," in *In Search of the Black Panther Party*, ed. Jama Lazerow and Yohura Williams (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 15; Valk, 112-113.
[16] Edward C. Banfield, *The Unheavenly City Revisited: A Revision of The Unheavenly City* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974); John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003): Alan J. Matusow, *The Unravelling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984); Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency: 1930-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982); Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).
[17] Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Howard Gillette Jr., *Camden After the Fall: Decline and Renewal in a Post-Industrial City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Anne M. Valk, *Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008); Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.
[18] Joseph, "Introduction," 2.

as the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), the Black People's Unity Movement (BPUM), the US organization, and the Black Panther Party. For example, SNCC evolved after Carmichael's election as Chair from a civil rights organization committed to non-violence to a black power approach that supported armed self-defence.[19]

Patriarchy and misogyny were endemic features within American political institutions, with black power organizations no exception. For example, after the arrest of all the male leaders in the Philadelphia branch of SNCC, the national organization sent former executive director James Forman with four other male long-time party members to take control of the office from the remaining female members.[20] Angela Davis explained her experience in the California based US organization founded by Maulana Karenga stating:

> I was criticized very heavily, especially by male members of Karenga's organization for doing "a man's job." Women should not play leadership roles, they insisted. A woman was supposed to "inspire" her man and educate his children. . . . The constant harangue by the US men was that I needed to redirect my energies and use them to give my man strength and inspiration so that he might more effectively contribute his talents to the struggle for Black liberation.[21]

Patriarchal sentiments were also shared by Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones), an African American political leader who gained national prominence for his writing and organizing efforts in Newark, New Jersey.[22] Yet, the work of Anne Valk in Washington D.C., Matthew Countryman in Philadelphia, and Christina Greene in Durham, North Carolina, have demonstrated that women were key leaders in prominent urban centers and also impacted black power initiatives at the community level.[23] These studies complicate the prevailing notion that all black power based African American activist organizations were patriarchal.

Key events and organizational strategies associated with African American activism had different meanings, purposes, and parameters at different times and in different regions and locations. Robert O. Self explained the difficulty many scholars face in interpreting the civil rights/black power era in an extremely diverse American nation, writing, "it is clear that regional and local political economies with their own cultural, political, and structural constraints presented unique and specific versions of segregation and discrimination." This article also heeds the call by Cha Jua and Lang to view "Civil Rights and Black Power as successive

[19] Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, ed., *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), 12.
[20] Countryman, 218.
[21] Angela Davis, *An Autobiography: With My Mind on Freedom* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 159-160.
[22] Jerry Gafio Watts, *Amiri Baraka: The Politics and Art of a Black Intellectual* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 338-339.
[23] Valk, *Radical Sisters*; Countryman, *Up South*; Christina Greene, *Our Separate Ways: Women and the Black Freedom Movement in Durham, North Carolina* (Durham: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

waves of a broader BLM [black liberation movement], differentiated by strategy and tactics, organizations, leadership, membership, ideology, discourses, symbols and practices."[24] In commenting about the importance and paucity of localized studies of African American civil rights activism, Clayborne Carson commented, "blacks in these communities developed their own goals and strategies which bore little relation to national campaigns for civil rights legislation."[25] This article will demonstrate how the black freedom struggle evolved and developed in a small-town setting that was influenced by specific regional and national trends including the campaigns for civil rights and the ideological turn to black power.

Kevin Kruse, James Forman Jr., and David Dent have documented the existence of conservative African American community cultures and a generational divide amongst older and younger African Americans during the black freedom struggle. Kruse outlined the fissures within Atlanta's African American community over the goals and objectives of the civil rights movement. An exchange between Martin Luther King Sr. and a student activist reveals this tension. "Boy, I'm tired of you!" shouted Martin Luther King Sr. Shaking an angry finger at the stunned student, the minister lectured, "this is the best agreement we can get out of this."[26] In a similar vein, Forman Jr. related the attitudes of a conservative African American judge who chastised a young African American offender stating, "did Martin Luther King successfully fight the likes of Bull Connor so that we could ultimately lose the struggle for civil rights to misguided or malicious members of our own race?"[27] Dent explains that Philadelphia developed an exclusionary African American elite that were hostile to the aspirations of what they deemed as lower-class African Americans. Dent explains this history writing,

> Flora Young was a child of Philadelphia's old black society, an upscale urban world that was well established when she was born in 1932. Springing from a community of freeborn blacks and ex-slaves who made up an estimated 10 percent of the black population between the mid-1800s and mid-1900s. . . . Excluded from white clubs, libraries, and hospitals, they created their own elite bases — much like African Americans in many other cities did. The way of life was steeped in Victorian values and the Puritan ethic.[28]

The conservative values of Lawnside's political and civic leaders would also shape their responses to youth activism and political organization in the community.

The Young Blacks developed in two distinct waves. The first wave which predated the adoption of the name of the organization was more inspired by the early period

[24] Self, *American Babylon*, 275, 332-333.
[25] Carson, *Civil Rights Reform and the Black Freedom Struggle*, 24.
[26] Kevin Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 192.
[27] James Forman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017), 195.
[28] David Dent, *In Search of Black America: Discovering the African-American Dream* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 121.

of the civil rights movement and has been described by Higgs as an offshoot of the mainstream NAACP Youth Movement. A group of fifteen politically minded youth were initially mentored by an adult named Louis Moore.[29] The second wave began because of the deep trauma that many African Americans experienced in the wake of the King assassination and was the catalyst that moved the group to adopt the name The Young Blacks of Lawnside, and shift to a more active form of political organizing.[30] Higgs captured the confusion and uncertainty of 1968 when America teetered on the brink of revolution and mass insurrection. He recalled how young people in Lawnside "would all sit there and try to figure a lot of things that were happening at the time. Cause things were happening spontaneously. Especially after the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King — everything was just helter skelter." The myriad challenges that Higgs outlined included the Vietnam War, racial unrest, and the impact of "drugs flood[ing] the black community."[31] Higgs was also influenced by Muhammad Ali's anti-war protest which demonstrates the importance of national figures to local activists and organizations. The Young Blacks of Lawnside came of age in 1968 as the Vietnam War accelerated, the King assassination rocked the nation, and many African American political leaders and grassroots organizers began to embrace the concept of black power.

Higgs explained that SNCC leader H. Rap Brown provided the inspiration for the group to take a more radical direction:

> At the time, things were moving pretty fast. You had guys like Rap Brown, with college degrees getting up on cars, that were frustrated, hollering at the top of their lungs, that they were tired of being abused, mentally and physically and was ready to stand-up and talk and do something about it. So this group that came behind the first group, had a little more spark and were ready to attack the social issues and see where they fit in with different organizations.[33]

[29] Gordon Higgs, Interview by Clinton Higgs Jr., 10 Aug. 2006, "Tell Lawnside's Oral History Project." Rutgers University, Paul Robeson Library, Special Collections.
[30] Higgs, 24 Nov. 2021.
[31] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.
[32] Higgs was introduced to the ideas of H. Rap Brown in August of 1967 when Brown delivered a speech in Camden that reflected the anger and frustration that many African Americans felt, and broadcasted to a receptive audience the message and tone of the black power movement. A crowd of approximately 4,500 people attended the speech including Charles "Poppy' Sharp, a man who became the leader of Camden's Black Peoples Unity Movement (BPUM). At the outset of his speech, Brown commanded his followers to remove members of the press identified by their equipment and whiteness who he referred to as "hunkie cameramen." The distrust of white controlled media would later be expressed by members of The Young Blacks. Brown described the United States as being in the throes of a domestic revolution and exclaimed to his raucous audience that "the only way to defend yourself is go out and get guns." The anti-establishment rhetoric continued as Brown emphatically declared, "we are at war. Anytime President Johnson sends troops to Detroit and tanks down the streets of Newark, you know we're at war." He also quoted Chairman Mao's belief that "power comes from the barrel of a gun." Brown also complained that the United States was guilty of genocide for malnutrition related deaths in impoverished African American communities and the loss of African American lives in Vietnam. He made a key statement that addressed the priorities of non-violent African American reformers such as Martin Luther King Jr. Brown remarked, "I can't talk about being equal. I have to talk about being free. And you can't be partly free." Brown's speech just a few miles from Lawnside was a rousing and revolutionary call to arms that Higgs and future members of The Young Blacks would ultimately ignore. Gillette, 75, Higgs, personal correspondence, and "Brown Rattles Sabres at Convention Hall Rally," *Courier Post*, 31 Aug. 1967, 15.
[33] Higgs, 10 Aug. 2006.

This 'spark' would inspire The Young Blacks to radicalize their methods but only through non-violent means of direct action.

The Young Blacks created an organizational structure that emphasized consensus and internal security. The group existed with five executive members that directed the organization's activities with open floor discussions where non-executive members were encouraged to share their views. Higgs described his role as chairman as more of a spokesperson in official dealings with corporations, government agencies, the media, and other African American organizations. The composition of the executive was fairly consistent with three of the five members holding their positions throughout the duration of the organization's existence. The Young Blacks were cognizant of the dangers that African American organizations faced from the American government who systemically sought to undermine and destroy African American political organizations through a mix of targeted assassinations, the sidelining of leaders and members through the criminal justice system, and the widespread use of agents provocateurs through the FBI's COINTEL program. Higgs explained that government agents who attempted to infiltrate The Young Blacks were successfully repulsed because the group could easily vet the youth of their community because everyone in the small town knew each other. The Young Blacks were also careful not to keep any files, take any group related photographs, or bring attention to the organization through any forms of uniforms or branding.[34]

The Young Blacks received assistance from some Lawnside community leaders and established mentors. Dr. William Young, Lawnside's community doctor and a long-time mentor to youth in Lawnside, worked with the organization by attending history classes, assisting with instruction, and engaging in dialogue. Higgs explained that "Dr. Young was always receptive to anything we did. He helped us out immensely. . . . He was always in our corner." A dentist in Lawnside, Dr. Evans, also attended history classes and worked in a similar capacity to Dr. Young. Reverend Earl Pierce offered space at Lawnside's Chapel Annunciation where the first meetings of The Young Blacks took place. Reverend Speights at Lawnside's Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. church also offered the facility for meetings and assisted The Young Blacks with the implementation of their community programs.[35] Noticeably absent in this list of supporters were any members of the Lawnside Board of Education or the municipal government.

The main goal of The Young Blacks was to support the educational achievements and aspirations of youth in Lawnside. Higgs explained that the only path forward in America was "through education. That was the common denominator. Without that, nothing would have ever survived."[36] A key example of the difference in conditions in Lawnside vis-à-vis other African American population centers was

[34] Higgs, 24 Nov. 2021
[35] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[36] Higgs, 12 Aug, 2016.

the effect of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in 1968. At least 130 American communities in the United States erupted in protests and violent urban rebellions in the aftermath of the assassination.[37] Meanwhile, Lawnside remained calm and its youth actually gained greater access to education as a consequence. Higgs stated that in the aftermath of King's assassination he received a phone call from Glassboro State College offering several scholarships to Lawnside youth with the only requirement being a high school diploma.[38]

The Young Blacks had a positive impact on community development in Lawnside. The organization held educational workshops designed to give young people a better understanding of African American history, culture, and political thought — subjects that were ignored in the mainstream educational system. Higgs explained that *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* was a particularly impactful text for the organization's members.[39] The Young Blacks also managed a very popular athletics program. If youth did not attend meetings, they could listen to the political messages of The Young Blacks on the basketball court.[40] Higgs recounted some of the general activities of the organization:

> So what we were doing was youth programs, we had dances and all kinds of events to raise monies. We had a summer league, which was well received, which could have been one of the better ones in the state, if not the country, who had many, many athletes in this summer league that went on and excelled greatly in the game called life. All avenues, from your Doctors, to your Reverends, to your professional athletes.[41]

The *Courier Post* reported in January 1972 that The Young Blacks Summer Basketball League held a banquet for the sixty-five players who participated in the league. The MVP award went to a young man who played for a team called "The Blackness."[42]

The Young Blacks also campaigned for jobs creation programs in Lawnside and negotiated with employers to reinvest in the community. Higgs expressed during a borough council discussion on community development that "if we're going to be an all-black community, why not support black industry? Why not let the people see their own people run the show. . . . The old time process of exploiting our people is

[37] While the uprisings of the 1960s are often referred to as riots, I have chosen to use the terms "uprising" and "rebellion" instead to describe the urban violence and upheavals that shook America in the 1960s and early 1970s. The term "riot" has pejorative connotations that delegitimize the structural causes and inequalities that engendered discontent in many African American communities. For a general overview of the historiographic debate over the interpretation of the 1960s urban uprisings and the use of the terms riot and rebellion see Heather Ann Thompson, "Urban Uprisings: Riots or Rebellions?" in *The Columbia Guide to America in the 1960s*, ed. David Farber and Beth Bailey (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
[38] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.
[39] Higgs, 24 Nov. 2021.
[40] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.
[41] Higgs, 10 Aug. 2006 and Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[42] "Black League Slates Banquet," *Courier Post*, 13 Jan. 1972, 61.

out."[43] Despite this black power inspired rhetoric, The Young Blacks pragmatically worked with white owned corporate interests seeking to invest in Lawnside, demonstrating that the organization did not subscribe to the anti-capitalist strain of black power ideology.[44] The Pathmark Supermarket chain opened a grocery store in Lawnside that hired nine members of The Young Blacks and donated the funds to run the organization's basketball program.[45] Higgs remarked on the strong relationship with Pathmark, "whatever we wanted as an organization or needed help with . . . they helped us with." Higgs also emphasized how their members wore suits and carried briefcases to meetings with corporations and disparaged the actions of other organizations who were characterized as "running around with jeans and dashikis talking about blowing the community up."[46]

The Young Blacks had a unique association with guns. Members of the organization used guns for hunting excursions within Lawnside and would not face any police recriminations from the all-African American Lawnside police force while openly carrying guns on the way to and from hunting excursions. Higgs emphasized that members of the organization were careful not to bring guns outside of Lawnside because the rules of engagement were completely different in jurisdictions managed by white police officers. Higgs related that white police officers would not enter Lawnside on active duty even if they were in hot pursuit of a suspect.[47]

The Young Blacks became an active and confrontational presence at Lawnside borough council meetings beginning in the summer of 1968.[48] *Courier Post* reporter Dan Lynch documented several Lawnside borough council meetings in the spring of 1969. Lynch reported at one meeting that The Young Blacks submitted a list of "demands." The suggestions put to council by The Young Blacks sought basic community improvements such as better street lighting, road paving, elimination of police dogs, and a new ambulance. The Young Blacks departed the meeting prematurely, announcing to council that they must leave so they "can be home before the police pick us up for curfew violations."[49] On their

[43] Dan Lynch, "Mayor Says Growth in Lawnside Depends on Green, not Black Power," *Courier Post*, 3 Apr. 1969, 13.

[44] The 1968 Black Power convention held in Philadelphia produced a manifesto that expressed a critique of capitalism and other economic grievances. A key passage in the manifesto stated, "the American capitalist system is an inherently evil system (amoral) which has historically brought about or supported the oppression and/or exploitation (physical and material) of non-white people throughout the world." The document continues by directing African Americans "to sever the false relations with the white Racist Americans and develop Black independent institutions which will reject the lies and myths that the white Racist have projected against the non-white world in general and the African and Asian world in particular." "Black Power National Conference," (unpublished manuscript, 29 Aug.-1 Sept. 1968), Conference Program. Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture.

[45] Higgs, 10 Aug. 2006.

[46] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.

[47] Higgs, 24 Nov. 2021.

[48] Zarate.

[49] Lynch reported that the charged atmosphere during The Young Blacks' exit was given some levity when Councilman Bryson Armstead also left the council chambers announcing that he too had to leave to avoid a curfew violation. The statement concerning police control in Lawnside may have been for dramatic effect as

way out, Lynch reported that Higgs declared, "we shall return and we're coming back stronger." One youth also yelled that the police were a "bunch of chumps." He was immediately upbraided by Higgs who retorted, "come on man. The police aren't used to radicals."[50]

Lynch was present at the next council meeting but this time members of The Young Blacks chose not to engage with the town council because of the white reporter's presence. Paul James, an executive member of The Young Blacks, stated that they did not speak because Lawnside should remain "a united black community" in the presence of an outsider. This tactic demonstrates a distrust of the white controlled media and also reveals that The Young Blacks chose to keep the differences they had with Lawnside government officials private; a mature course of action for any political organization let alone one directed by young people. One member of The Young Blacks exclaimed during Lynch's second visit that "the press is evil. Whitey comes in here and gets his news and he's happy."[51] Of course the phrase "evil press" provided the headline for Lynch's story.

The Young Blacks were less successful in engaging with Lawnside Board of Education officials who froze them out of meetings. Morris Smith, the president of the Lawnside Board of Education from 1963-1974 explained his approach to The Young Blacks' efforts.

> Because of what was going on around the country, young people in Lawnside, particularly the males thought they could come to the board meetings and challenge us as a board. And they had a group called The Young Blacks. And they would come to the board meetings and challenge us in terms of what they thought was going on or not going on. And I didn't put up with a lot of foolishness. I either shut it down or adjourned the meeting. So we wouldn't have a lot of uprising at the board meetings in Lawnside.[52]

Smith's use of the term "foolishness" indicates a paternalistic and conservative disregard for the attitudes and modes of expression exhibited by members of The Young Blacks.

Female members of The Young Blacks were able to serve as spokespersons for the organization and advanced into leadership positions. Recent scholarship has challenged the notion that women were secondary figures in African American organizations during the black freedom struggle. Higgs stated that "well at the time . . . females . . . was laying in the background with most organizations. But the Black Panther Party did have some females who were out front." In The Young Blacks, Higgs confirmed that "there were some highly ranked females in

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Higgs recounted in a 2017 interview that both he and the members of The Young Blacks had a good working relationship with the Lawnside police force.

[50] Dan Lynch, "Lawnside Militants Demand Better Town, *Courier Post*, 8 May 1969, 17.

[51] Dan Lynch, "'Evil Press' Dissuades Lawnside Group from Badgering," *Courier Post*, 5 Jun. 1969, 29.

[52] Morris Smith, interview with the author, 26 July 2016.

our organization." Marie Young, the daughter of Flora and Dr. William Young, was a member of The Young Blacks executive in the position of secretary and had one of the five offices in the group's Lawnside headquarters. Higgs also mentioned the contributions of Linda Foster whom he described as one of the smartest members in the organization. He was so impressed with Foster's intellect and communication skills that she often joined him for radio interviews conducted on Temple University's WRPI in 1971. Higgs summarized The Young Blacks position on women as follows:

> We seen women as equals because we had three or four women who were brilliant. And a couple of them have Doctor's degrees now. You know one is an entrepreneur in Atlanta, Georgia, a multi-millionaire. So we didn't look at the inferiority complex with women because when we would meet and have our meetings and have open floor discussions it seemed like the women was really on point with many of the situations that were going on in the country and they was basically a lot smarter than the men.[53]

This statement may in part represent Higgs's 2017 ideas and it may also be an effort to appeal to the perceived sensibilities of an academic outsider. However, Marie Young's position on The Young Blacks executive coupled with Linda Foster's role in speaking for the organization attests to the respect that The Young Blacks had for the capabilities of its female members. The role of women in The Young Blacks contrasts with Anne Valk's study of Howard University, where joint efforts involving male and female African American activists often had prescribed gender roles with female students serving as organizers and logistics operators and male students serving as spokespersons and security personnel.[54] A key counterpoint is that respect for the ideas of Young and Foster does not change the fact that the majority of the leadership in The Young Blacks was male. Nevertheless, the leadership demonstrated by female members of The Young Blacks further supports the work of historians such as Valk, Greene, and Countryman who challenge the notion that women played a limited role in the movement for African American equality.

Higgs did not sense any class divisions amongst Lawnside youth or within the community in general, but did explain a difference in outlook based on age. Most of Lawnside's politicians in the 1960s and early 1970s were elderly. Higgs recalled that during the height of youth activism in Lawnside, town councillors Smith and Lyons were in their eighties, and Mayor Hilliard T. Moore, and councillors Cotton and Regan were also of advanced age. One bone of contention that Higgs related was that older members of the council had an issue with youth referring to themselves as black.[55] Journalist David Dent interviewed James Benson, an

[53] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[54] Valk, 119.
[55] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.

elderly man who had lived in Lawnside his whole life. Benson explained his take on African American descriptors stating:

> the bottom line was, we were Negroes then. And Negroes had accomplished something down through the years. . . . What has the black accomplished? We have identified ourselves as a different species rather than being proud of who we are. We've separated ourselves. Why do I have to be separate? Let me be me.[56]

Here we see a complete divergence in attitude with a member of the older generation looking back fondly to a time when African Americans were often called negroes. Meanwhile, many African American youth in the 1960s took pride in adopting the term black and rejected the term negro as racist and anachronistic. The movement for black power embraced this definitional shift, and gave the word black political currency and revolutionary overtones. Higgs further elaborated on the tensions between youth and government leaders in Lawnside, expressing how "there was a lot of arguments, and there was a lot of conversations, . . . [they would say] 'wait till you get older – you'll see.'" Higgs reflected in a 2017 interview how,

> I often think if some of them people were around today I would like to go talk to 'em. Because they figured that we would fail and we was just beating a dead horse. And I would like to show 'em some of the people [mentored by The Young Blacks] that were really successful.[57]

Even now, in his mid-sixties, the differences still resonated between Higgs and the community power brokers of the 1960s who questioned the purpose and efficacy of The Young Blacks.

The Young Blacks attended meetings held by other African American organizations and leaders with both radical and mainstream ideas. Higgs stated that members of The Young Blacks often attended the meetings of New Jersey and Philadelphia based organizations. He also related that The Young Blacks attended meetings as far away as Newark and were a known organization on the east coast. Higgs further stated that he had a close relationship with Camden BPUM leader "Poppy" Sharp.[58] Higgs recalled: "I used to take Poppy Sharp to all the national meetings in New Jersey. . . . And I used to attend his meetings and I was a really good friend of Poppy Sharp until he died."[59] Higgs and Sharp travelled to Newark on several occasions where they engaged and connected with many African American activists from throughout America who came to Newark due to the organizing efforts of Amiri Baraka.[60] Higgs and Sharp also participated in a unity

[56] Dent, 63.
[57] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[58] For more on Sharp and Camden's Black People's Unity Movement see Gillette, *Camden After the Fall*.
[59] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[60] Higgs, 24 Nov. 2021.

meeting in Plainfield, New Jersey, hosted by a Plainfield based organization called the Young Lions and attended by members of the Black Panther Party.[61]

Higgs connected at meetings with Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army (BLA) member Assata Shakur (formerly Joanne Chesimard). The BLA was a clandestine African American organization that espoused violent methods for a variety of complex reasons.[62] Historian Joy James stated that "along with Harriet Tubman, [Assata] Shakur would become one of the few black female figures in the United States recognized as a leader in an organization that publicly advocated armed self-defense against racist violence." James also stated that Shakur's prominence and notoriety in the movement is such that "there are no men in the East Coast Panthers whose stature equals hers."[63] Shakur rocketed to national prominence after her involvement in a 2 May 1973 gun battle on the New Jersey turnpike involving state police, her subsequent escape from prison, and later exile in Cuba.[64] Higgs's contact with Shakur further demonstrates that a key member of The Young Blacks engaged with African American activists who defended violence as a just tactic to effect change.

The Young Blacks provided a moderate voice in meetings with more radical organizations and resisted pressure to intensify their approach. Higgs proudly recalled that The Young Blacks always maintained their identity and autonomy in any joint efforts or meetings with other African American organizations. He stated: "[when] we went to Philadelphia, we were The Young Blacks of Lawnside. We were not the Black Panthers, we was not BPUM, we wasn't the African Americans, we wasn't RAM. We were The Young Blacks. We was the anointed ones." Higgs's description of The Young Blacks as the "anointed ones" stems from Lawnside's proud history as a key location along the Underground Railroad. The strength and pride in the organization is also demonstrated by the fact that only one member of The Young Blacks joined the Black Panthers after a recruitment presentation held in Lawnside.[65] Higgs stated that The Young Blacks sought to influence the actions of other more radical African American organizations to take a more peaceful approach. Regarding these interactions, Higgs stated that "whatever we had to offer each organization, we tried to offer and give them some insight." The Young Blacks also refused to radicalize their organizational approach despite pressure to do so from other leaders and organizations. Higgs stated:

> A lot of times some of the other organizations would try to lean on us to try and convince us that we were dealing with it in the wrong way. But we told them,

[61] "Blacks Vow United Front in 'Struggle,'" *Courier-News* (Bridgewater, New Jersey), 9 Jul. 1969, 36.
[62] Akinyele Omawala Umoja, "Repression Breeds Resistance: The Black Liberation Army and the Radical Legacy of the Black Panther Party," *New Political Science* 21, no. 2, 1999: 132.
[63] Joy James, "Framing the Panther: Assata Shakur and Black Female Agency," in *Want to Start a Revolution? Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*, ed. Dayo F. Gore, Jeanne Theoharis, and Komozi Woodard (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 139, 141.
[64] "Assata Shakur: The Continuity of Struggle," *Souls* 1, no. 2, (1999): 93.
[65] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.

> no! We in it for the youth — youth programs to help them get their education. For them to continue with their schooling — this is what we were all about. All that radicalization, all that fighting — go see the Black Panthers.[66]

The Young Blacks' moderate philosophy also determined the sort of activism they would participate in outside of Lawnside.

The Young Blacks frequently assisted other African American organizations with movement related activities. Higgs explained that one of the primary purposes of The Young Blacks was "to help other Black organizations with their plight." He further stated, that, "We would march [in] some of the marches and supported them 100% morally." For example, they took part in a demonstration in New England with the Black Panther Party to protest and raise awareness about the incarceration of some female Panther Party members. In 1969, Irene Hill-Smith, who was both the New Jersey and Gloucester County president of the NAACP, enlisted the assistance of The Young Blacks as security in an Easter week boycott in nearby Woodbury, New Jersey. The Young Blacks were summoned to Woodbury because the police threatened Hill-Smith that they would withhold security for their public protest. Hill-Smith was in a precarious position because she sought to organize an African American demonstration in a majority white community that continued to maintain school segregation by gerrymandering districts. The Young Blacks filled this security vacuum by organizing approximately one hundred people to support and protect the Woodbury demonstration.[67] The protest march in Woodbury became contentious but non-violent when the town police arrested Hill-Smith and her husband.[68] The Young Blacks also collaborated with Sharp and the Camden BPUM by travelling to Clayton, New Jersey, to protest the town's decision to exclude a float by African American community members in the Homecoming Day parade. Higgs explained that "we sat there in Clayton and calmed things out there and let the people know that we are not going to tolerate this kind of thinking." Clayton, New Jersey was just one of several joint projects The Young Blacks participated in with Camden's BPUM.[69]

The Young Blacks avoided any movement related activity that called for acts of violence in part because of the unique position that Lawnside held as a self-governing African American community, and because of the philosophy of the group's leadership. H. Rap Brown and other radical African American leaders' calls for armed self-defence or even insurrection did not appeal to The Young Blacks. Higgs stated, "we were not of the revolutionary type or the ones to holler black power to like destroy, set fires to buildings."[70] For example, Philadelphia

[66] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.
[67] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.
[68] Lyford Moore, "Irene Smith Released from Prison: NAACP Leader Arrested During Protest," *Courier Post*, 31 Mar. 1969, 15.
[69] Higgs, 12 Aug. 2016.
[70] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.

officials alleged that RAM members planned to poison police with cyanide laced food and drink in the event of a riot.[71] In reference to plots of this nature, Higgs explained that "anytime we heard anything like this will go down, we back off, and we would continue [with non-violent movement activities] because we was in sacred land already." Higgs simply described The Young Blacks' philosophy vis-à-vis other more radical organizations as "more sensible."[72]

Higgs described Lawnside as a "blueprint for how African Americans are supposed to continue living." African American community leaders such as Sharp in Camden and Toure in Lowndes, Alabama, as well as other leaders manifested black power ideology into a plan for community control that could have been labelled the Lawnside plan. Higgs explained that Lawnside already had achieved many of the major objectives sought by other African American organizations. "They wanted to be on city council, they wanted to be Mayor, they wanted to be in the government, they wanted to control their own destiny and they wanted to be judged by people of their own peer. So we already had that going for us here."[73] Thus, Lawnside's position as a self-governing African American community profoundly shaped The Young Blacks rejection of violence and revolution.

In 1972, The Young Blacks' headquarters in Lawnside was destroyed in a suspected case of arson. Members of The Young Blacks have speculated that a rogue member of the Lawnside police force was responsible for the fire. The fire must be seen in the context of ongoing tensions that young people in Lawnside were experiencing with the neighbouring white communities of Barrington and Haddon Heights. The three towns all attended Haddon Heights High School where racially motivated violence at the school that had begun in 1965 had reached a boiling point in May of 1971 when a school wide racial melee caused the closure of the school and an investigation by a state task force.[74] The leadership of The Young Blacks avoided any involvement in African American protest efforts at Haddon Heights High School but the organization may still have been perceived as a tension inducing force that needed to be silenced to maintain good relations with Lawnside's neighbours.

The Young Blacks elected to disband their organization shortly after the destruction of their headquarters. Higgs explained the genuine fears that both he and members of his organization felt,

[71] "Says RAM Planned to Kill LBJ, Hoover," *Warren Times-Mirror and Observer* (Warren, PA), 29 Sep. 1967, 9. We must be mindful that allegations of this nature may have been fomented by COINTELPRO agents and not the legitimate members of the Revolutionary Action Movement. For an in depth analysis of American political and police repression of African American activism see Huey Newton's autobiographical work, *Revolutionary Suicide*.

[72] Higgs, 23 Aug. 2017.

[73] Ibid.

[74] For more about African American high school student activism in Lawnside see: Jason Romisher, "By Pen Sword and Struggle: African American High School Student Activism in Lawnside, New Jersey," *Past Imperfect* 21, (2018): 77-110 and Jason Romisher, "Youth Activism and the Black Freedom Struggle in Lawnside, New Jersey," master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2018.

> if we would have took the movement to another level we could have possibly got our people wiped out. Cause we got to the point where, they gonna genocide us — so that's how we used to talk. They gonna do us like they did the Indians. So we had to back off. A lot of the black leaders knew this. It's over.[75]

The choice to end their activism and community organizing must be seen in the general retreat of the black power movement and radicalized African American political organizing in the wake of extreme government repression. Higgs's reference to the genocidal conquest of Indigenous peoples also reveals the impact of The Young Blacks educational programs as the mainstream American education system did not address the impacts of violent settler colonialism. Several former members of The Young Blacks, including Higgs, who wished to continue working for positive change with the support of a national organization elected to join the Nation of Islam (NOI) in 1975 after the death of Elijah Muhammad resulted in a change in philosophy within in the NOI.[76]

The Young Blacks of Lawnside were a youth-directed grassroots political organization that existed from 1968 until 1972. They successfully assisted other African American communities and organizations, aided the educational advancement of Lawnside's youth, and campaigned for better community governance. While The Young Blacks attended black power events and had strong connections with more radicalized organizations and leaders, they rejected revolutionary and violent goals and methods. This moderate approach was due to Lawnside's political independence as a self-governing African American community and the inspiration its young people received from the examples set by successful community role models. The Young Blacks challenge the commonly held perception of African American organizations in the black power era as violent, revolutionary, anti-capitalist, and misogynist through their non-violent ethos, strong focus on education, space for female leadership and ideological contributions, and their overriding belief that the existing democratic capitalist system could provide the means for prosperity, hope, and racial advancement. Tensions in Lawnside between the older generation of conservative minded political leaders and the younger generation of progressive minded activists is further evidence that internal divisions could and did occur within African American communities during the era of civil rights/black power. Ultimately, the unusual brand of black politics fashioned by The Young Blacks of Lawnside during the height of the black power era demonstrates the need for more academic investigations at the local level to further our understanding of the rich complexity of black power political thought.

[75] Gordon Higgs, interview with the author, 14 June 2020.
[76] Higgs, Nov. 24, 2021.

# Insurance During Reconstruction: A Comparative Analysis of the North and South

Karl Miller
*Independent Scholar*

The insurance industry is a $1.2 trillion enterprise that provides a safety net under nearly every business and individual in the United States. Starting from a minor level of activity in the late 1700s, it grew massively in the middle of the nineteenth century to become one of the major financial institutions in America. During the Reconstruction period, however, the insurance industry in the North and the South operated under drastically different circumstances, with the former enjoying a time of prosperity while the latter suffered the lingering effects of a war fought almost entirely on its territory. This article examines and compares those differences.

Numerous historians have examined the economic aspects of Reconstruction but few of their studies focus on insurance. Works on insurance history, initially a largely neglected field, have become more common since the 1940s.[1] While these works discuss insurance during American history and include references to the Reconstruction period, they do not examine the differences the insurance industry experienced in the states of the former Confederacy versus the rest of the United States.

Insurance coverage in North America began during the colonial period primarily with cargo coverage for commercial shipping and fire insurance for homeowners, neither business making a huge impact in the American economy. This changed in the early 1800s for several reasons: the rapid increase of American population from 5,308,483 in 1800 to 23,191,876 in 1850; the rise of manufacturing – quadrupling between 1839 and 1859 – created more economic value that needed insuring; and lastly, the incorporation of private businesses by state governments, which led to the easier formation of insurance companies that could meet that need.[2]

Life insurance, which previously had been written on a very limited basis, began to explode in popularity, a rise that can be attributed to a number of factors. Led by figures such as Elizur Wright, the insurance commissioner of Massachusetts, mortality statistics gained a greater accuracy that allowed for improved rates and profitability. In 1840, the New York legislature passed a law – soon copied by all other states – allowing insurance proceeds to be given directly to the survivor's

[1] Some key works of insurance history include: J. Owen Stalson, *Marketing Life Insurance: Its History in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942); John Bainbridge, *Biography of an Idea: The Story of Mutual Fire and Casualty Insurance* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1952); Vivian A. Zelizer, *Morals and Markets: The Development of Life Insurance in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); Sharon Ann Murphy, *Investing in Life: Insurance in Antebellum America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).
[2] R. Gallman, "Economic Growth and Structural Change in the Long Nineteenth Century," in *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States*, ed. S. Engerman & R. Gallman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 53.

widow and children without any liens or attachments by creditors, greatly increasing the attractiveness of life insurance as a method to protect a family. The prior practice of an insurance company retaining the entire amount of premiums paid into a cancelled policy was replaced with the usage of a surrender value that returned a portion of past paid premiums. The use of mutual ownership in which policyholders were also shareholders of the company appealed to the democratic ideals of the American public. Lastly, the adoption of aggressive marketing methods by which the industry directly sought out customers increased sales substantially. Due to these factors, life insurance in force – defined as the total amount payable on policies – went from $600,000 in 1830 to nearly $5 million in 1840 to just under $100 million in 1850.[3]

By the eve of the Civil War, insurance matured as a key part of an overall American economy that stood at an estimated $11.8 billion in gross domestic product with a population of 31.4 million people.[4] Property insurance covered $2 billion worth of value while life insurance protected 60,000 people for a face value total of $180 million, and $7 million in premiums.[5]

Insurance activity was heavily weighted toward the more industrialized northern states, which headquartered 282 out of the 294 property insurance companies operating in the country in 1860.[6] Similarly, of the 36 life insurance companies operating in 1861, only two – North Carolina Mutual and Southern Mutual of Columbus – were domiciled in the South.[7] Note that numerous other companies in both the North and South had been in operation but were defunct by 1861, due to various reasons such as excessive dividends, poor risk choice, mismanagement, economic downturns, and other factors. Northern insurance companies generally charged higher premiums for policyholders living or even traveling in the South, believing that mortality rates from fever and other causes were higher there, especially for those unaccustomed to the temperature.[8] In 1859, for example, New York Life reported that while only about 25 percent of its policyholders lived in the South, they accounted for 50 percent of the death claims made that year.[9] Northern companies did agree – as did southern companies – to write life insurance on slaves, a practice which gained limited popularity but lasted until emancipation. Southern insurance companies took advantage of the rate inequity and often focused their efforts exclusively on their region, writing both lower-cost coverage on standard life policies and more slave policies than the northern companies wrote.

[3] Stalson, *Marketing Life Insurance*, 918.
[4] Peter Allen, Economic History of the US, http://www.napavalley.edu/people/pallen/Documents/Economics%20120/Econ120_sp12_3_Reunification_1.pdf.
[5] *1860 U.S. Census*, Miscellaneous Statistics, p. 294.
[6] Ibid., p 293-294.
[7] Wilmer Moore, "Southern Life Insurance Companies and Their Growth," *Manufacturers Record*, 9 Sept. 1920.
[8] Murphy, *Investing in Life*, 37.
[9] Ibid, 36.

After war broke out, Abraham Lincoln issued the *Proclamation Forbidding Intercourse with Rebel States*, holding that the seceding states were "in a state of insurrection against the United States, and that all commercial intercourse between the same . . . the citizens of other States and other parts of the United States is unlawful," legally establishing that northern companies could no longer transact commerce with southern businesses.[10] Additionally, mail between the two areas was discontinued, so premiums could no longer be sent to northern insurance company offices – nor would northern companies accept payment in Confederate currency. Consequently, many northern insurers voided existing policies in the south.

While standard life insurance policy language excluded death from military service without prior insurer approval, insurance executives, "though generally doubting the strict legality of such claims, are disposed to meet them on the ground of patriotism and honor."[11] To accomplish this, companies agreed to add war coverage for an additional premium that varied between two and five percent. Partly due to war risks being covered, life insurance overcame an initial slump at the start of the war and grew enormously, rising from $4.9 million in premiums in 1861 to $21.6 million in 1865.[12] This growth was almost entirely in the northern states as the southern economy struggled throughout the war, suffering extreme inflation before Confederate currency lost its value almost entirely.

At the end of the war, largely as a result of military production, the North had greatly increased the strength and size of its industrial sector. Indexed with 1850 production as a base value of 100, the industrial output of the United States – 90 percent of which was in the North – went from 156.47 in 1861 to 190.11 in 1865, further increasing to 242.97 in 1870.[13]

The insurance industry in the North experienced a similar boom time. Total premiums written went from $245 million in 1865 to $614 million in 1869, an astounding 43 percent annual increase.[14] Part of this was due to weapons manufacturing winding down, causing market capital to seek a new area for profit. Also, the death toll of the war itself had increased public consciousness of mortality and the need to provide for survivors. As a result, 107 new companies entered the insurance market between 1865 and 1870, ninety-two of them in the North.[15]

This rapid expansion, however, brought intense competition that led to unsustainable rates and the exhaustion of the domestic market. As a result, twenty-three companies failed and a further thirty-five withdrew from the business

[10] Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Volume 4, 1860-1861* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 487.
[11] *New York Commercial Advertiser*, 2 Jan. 1861.
[12] Stalson, *Marketing Life Insurance*, 877.
[13] Joseph Davis, "An Annual Index of U.S. Industrial Production, 1790-1915," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119, no. 4 (Nov. 2004): 1189.
[14] Stalson, *Marketing Life Insurance*, 813.
[15] Moore, "Southern Life Insurance Companies and Their Growth."

between 1868 and 1870.[16] The Panic of 1873 and its resulting depression caused a further seventy-five failures between 1871 and 1877.[17] Insurance in force went from a high of $614 million in 1869 to $179 million by the end of Reconstruction in 1877.[18] In search of additional business, American companies began writing internationally, starting in Cuba in 1867, England in 1868 followed by the rest of Europe, finally expanding further to China and Japan in 1877.[19] In addition, companies began writing industrial life insurance in which smaller value policies with lesser premiums were marketed to lower income individuals. Even with this, the insurance market did not recover its pre-crash premium level until 1886, well after Reconstruction's end in 1877.[20]

As a measure of the expansion of the insurance market after the war, the 1860 United States Census showed 522 people in the insurance industry, with only twenty-one living in the South, although this does not include any insurance employees that may have been included in the broad "agent" class of worker that spanned several different industries.[21] According to the 1870 Census, 10,909 people worked in the insurance industry, only 7 percent of them in former Confederate states.[22] Numerous Union military personnel joined this massive move into the insurance industry after their wartime service ended. The experience of several Union generals who did so is illustrative of the circumstances of the business in the North.

Union Major General John J. Peck, veteran of action at the Seven Days Battles, Malvern Hill, and Hill's Point, returned to his home in Syracuse, New York, and became president of the New York State Life Insurance Company, a moderate-sized insurer organized in 1866. Peck helped guide its growth to the point that by 1872, it wrote 3,867 policies with a face value of $5.9 million, for which it received $110,934.17 in premiums.[23] He remained with the company until his death in 1878.

In Minnesota, Henry H. Sibley, Union brevet major general, who saw action fighting against the Dakota natives, became a director of the Minnesota Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1867.[24] By 1875, he had become president of the small company. Elected a trustee of Northwestern Mutual Life in 1875, Sibley helped negotiate the acquisition of Minnesota Mutual by Northwestern Mutual, and signed the contract concluding this purchase on 2 July 1875.[25] At the time,

[16] John Gudmundsen, *The Great Provider: The Dramatic Story of Life Insurance in America* (South Norwalk: Industrial Publications Company, 1959), 53.
[17] Morton Keller, *The Life Insurance Enterprise 1885-1910: A Study in the Limits of Corporate Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 8.
[18] Stalson, *Marketing Life Insurance*, 912.
[19] Ibid., 435.
[20] Ibid, 813.
[21] *1860 United States Census: Occupations*, p. 666-667.
[22] *1870 United States Census*, p. 814-815.
[23] *Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, Ninety-Fifth Session*, Vol. 13, Albany, NY, 1873, p. 90-91.
[24] Nathaniel West, *The Ancestry, Life and Times of Hon. Henry Hastings Sibley* (St. Paul: Pioneer Press,1889), 343.
[25] Henry Franklin Tyrrell and George H. Noyes, *Semi-Centennial History of The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1859-1908* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Mutual Life, 1908) 174.

Minnesota Mutual wrote 1,096 policies with a face value of $1.3 million.[26] Sibley died later that year. Founded in 1857, Northwestern Mutual remains in existence today, with almost 6,000 employees and over $29 billion in revenue as of 2019.[27]

Lastly, Union Brevet Major General Joseph Eldridge Hamblin, who had been in the insurance business as a broker before the war, returned to the industry upon the cessation of fighting, becoming a partner in the brokerage firm of Rathbone, Greig & Hamblin in New York City. He then became superintendent of agencies for the Commonwealth Fire Insurance Company, a position he held until his death from peritonitis at the early age of forty-two in 1870.[28] The brokerage he founded survived until 1968 under the name of R. C. Rathbone and Son, being then purchased by Fred S. James & Company, then becoming part of Sedgwick James in 1985, before the business finally became a part of New York-based Marsh & McLennan, the world's largest insurance broker, in 1998.[29]

In the South during Reconstruction, the experience of the insurance industry was markedly different than that in the North. Not only did the former states of the Confederacy suffer the direct physical devastation of war, but the economic cost of the conflict was estimated to be $6.6 billion, $670 per capita for the residents of the South, or about four times the annual average wage.[30] Southern agriculture was in ruins, with per capita output dropping from $74 in 1857 to $60 in 1879.[31] Per capita income as a percentage of the national average was 72 percent in 1860 but, after dropping dramatically during the war, had only recovered to 51 percent by 1880.[32] On top of this situation was a pre-war debt of $90 million which grew to $112 million in 1865, compounded by additional borrowing by post-war state governments of another $100 million.[33]

Aside from economic devastation, the South dealt with a profoundly changed social order in which Union military forces remained in place as millions of freedmen entered society. After initial control by the Republican Party, the political aspects of Reconstruction played out until former Confederates regained control of Southern governments and the Union military departed. The elite who had controlled the antebellum South largely regained their places, while freedmen went into sharecropping and other low-income professions.

The insurance market showed the challenges of operating in this difficult environment. Between 1865 and 1870, fifteen new insurance companies started

[26] Ibid.
[27] Fortune, Northwestern Mutual, https://fortune.com/fortune500/2019/northwestern-mutual/.
[28] Deborah Hamblin, *Brevet Major General Joseph Eldridge Hamblin 1861-65* (Boston: privately printed, 1902), 49
[29] *Securities and Exchange Commission News Digest*, 11 Apr. 1969; "Consolidations Among Brokerages Builds Global Capabilities," Business Insurance, 7 Oct. 2007.
[30] Roger Ransom, "The Economics of the Civil War," https://rogerransom.com/uploads/Oxford_Civil_War_Essay.pdf, 11.
[31] Ibid. 19.
[32] S. Engerman and R. Gallman, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States, Volume II*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 53.
[33] Ibid., 533.

in the states of the former Confederacy but most were swept away by turbulence in the industry and the macroeconomic struggles following the Panic of 1873.[34] By 1880, of the 59 life insurance companies operating in the country, only seven – four of which were founded before 1870, and none which existed prior to the war – operated in the South, generating a total of $637,108 in premiums, about 1 percent of the overall $57 million in premiums generated by all life insurers in the country.[35] Of the 1,008 fire and marine insurers operating in the country in 1879, only sixty-seven were in former Confederate states.[36]

When viewed in terms of property insurance and population, in 1860, $246 million in property risks were written in the South for a population of 9.1 million, an average of $27.01 per person; in the remainder of the country, $1.8 billion in risks were written for a population of 22.3 million, an average of $81.97 per person.[37] By the end of Reconstruction in the South, $249 million in risks were written for a population of 12.8 million, an average of $19.44; in the rest of the country, $10 billion in risks were written for a population of 37.3 million, an average of $268.60.[38] This represented a per capita decrease of 28 percent in the South as opposed to an increase of 327.6 percent in the North.

In the South, the situation for freedmen with respect to insurance had its own challenges. There were few policies purchased by freedmen from traditional insurers, a situation that worsened when Prudential, citing higher claim rates with policies for freedmen, began charging them more than others in 1881, a practice that was soon followed by other insurers.[39] When traditional insurance did not provide coverage for them, sometimes voluntary benevolent groups such as Rising Star Societies stepped in to fill the gap.[40] These organizations, often centered around a church community, performed a similar function to insurance companies in that they organized financial responses to helping the sick and burying the dead. Some of these eventually became formal insurance companies.

Women also faced challenges in obtaining traditional insurance. While antebellum reforms had allowed women to receive the benefits of life insurance – without liens from creditors – when a spouse died, additional reforms took place in the various southern state legislatures that further broadened a woman's rights to receive insurance funds. In Arkansas, for example, the 1873 legislature passed a law allowing a woman to obtain a policy of insurance on her husband's life for her own benefit.[41] This type of reform allowed women to more fully utilize insurance

[34] Moore, "Southern Life Insurance Companies and Their Growth."
[35] *U.S. Census*, 1880, p. 1433.
[36] *The Insurance Year Book*, (New York: The Spectator Company, 1880), 156-179; 188-193.
[37] *U.S. Census 1860*, p. 293.
[38] *U.S. Census 1880*, p. 1493.
[39] John S. Haller, "Race, Mortality, and Life Insurance: Negro Vital Statistics in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Journal of History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 25, no. 3 (July 1970): 248.
[40] C. A. Spencer, "Black Benevolent Societies and the Development of Black Insurance Companies in Nineteenth Century Alabama." *Phylon* 46, no. 3 (1985): 251–261.
[41] Suzanne D. Lebsock, "Radical Reconstruction and the Property Rights of Southern Women," *Journal of Southern History* 43, no. 2 (1977): 214.

coverage to protect themselves and their children. Additionally, the introduction of lower-valued industrial life insurance allowed more women to obtain policies on their own, with fully half of such policies purchased by female customers.[42] However, many insurance companies still charged women higher rates for ordinary insurance based on the perceived risks of childbirth, a practice that would stay in place for most insurers until the end of the century.[43]

As with the North, examining the experience of several former military leaders helps further illustrate the condition of the insurance industry in the South during Reconstruction. Of 559 Union generals, only six – or about 1 percent – worked in insurance.[44] In the South, twelve out of roughly 400 Confederate generals, or around 3 percent, took jobs in the field.[45] While former generals such as Joseph E. Johnston, George Edward Pickett and James Longstreet worked in the industry, Jefferson Davis was perhaps the most famous former Confederate active in insurance after the war.

Following imprisonment immediately after the conflict, Davis returned to the South to find himself, at age sixty-one, in grim financial straits, "without a home to come to or the means to get a new one."[46] He had concerns about taking a job that did not befit his former political positions but finally began communicating with the Carolina Life Insurance Company in Memphis. After meeting with the company's board of directors, Davis wrote to his wife Varina that "being satisfied of the solidity of the institution," he accepted the position of president, "with a salary of twelve thousand dollars per annum and travelling expenses."[47] Rather than join him, Varina lived in England with their children for a time before returning to the United States. Davis's plan to change the compensation system of agents and broaden the company business eastward ran into the Panic of 1873 and the ensuing economic depression. While Davis was traveling in an effort to have Carolina Life merge with a larger company, the board of directors instead sold the business to Southern Life of Memphis. Upon returning to Tennessee, Davis evaluated the action of the board and "concluded that our obligations as Trustees for the widows and orphans of deceased Policy Holders, as well as for surviving policy holders and stock holders of the Co. had not been properly fulfilled," and resigned as president.[48] He subsequently tried to obtain employment with Royal Insurance Company in England, but was turned down due to "fear of detriment

[42] Mary L. Heen, "Nondiscrimination in Insurance: The Next Chapter," *Georgia Law Review* 49, no. 1 (Fall 2014): 11.
[43] Mary L. Heen, "From Coverture to Contract: Engendering Insurance on Lives." *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism* 23, no.2 (2011): 373.
[44] Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue: Lives of the Union Commanders* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1964).
[45] Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray: Lives of the Confederate Commanders* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1959).
[46] Hudson Strode, ed., *Jefferson Davis: Private Letters, 1823–1889* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966). Jefferson Davis to General Josiah Gorgas, 6 Jan. 1870.
[47] Ibid., Jefferson Davis to Varina Davis, 23 Nov. 1869.
[48] Ibid., Jefferson Davis to Varina Davis, 26 Aug. 1873.

from the animosity felt towards me by the Northern people."[49] This ended the former president's involvement in the insurance profession.

After the war, General John Bell Hood of the Army of Tennessee, after initially working in the cotton business, entered the insurance field in New Orleans in 1867 as president of the Louisiana and Texas Department of the Life Association of America. The business did well initially, but by 1877, the overall economic situation had deteriorated, and the St. Louis-based company was dissolved by the state of Missouri on 10 November 1879.[50] Company Vice President H. W. Hough, working with the government in administering the bankruptcy of the company, wrote to Hood that the committee distributing the company assets to satisfy creditors was looking to pay the remaining portion of Hood's contract with the company, but "thought he asked too much."[51] In addition, Hood, as an officer of the company, was involved in litigation by policyholders. Financially ruined, Hood and his wife died of yellow fever in 1879, leaving behind ten orphans who were subsequently adopted by seven different families.

Another former Confederate general, Henry Heth, also worked for the Life Association of America. An advertisement in the November 1871 issue of the *Insurance Times* listed Heth as the manager of the North Carolina department office, and showed the company writing an overall $45.6 million in risks in 1870.[52] Heth apparently did not do well in the position, allegedly ignoring communication from the company headquarters and failing to pay claims.[53]

Former Confederate officer, Major General Gustavus Woodson Smith, entered the insurance field in a governmental role. Educated as an engineer at West Point, Smith was appointed insurance commissioner for the state of Kentucky in 1870. Reacting to abuses in the industry which frequently left policyholders cheated of coverage, Smith worked to make sure that insurers had sufficient assets to support the risks they wrote, and that their accounting practices were proper and transparent. His mindset as a reformer showed in the first of several books he wrote on the field, *Notes on Life Insurance*. Writing in 1870, Smith held that

> life insurance is rapidly increased, and must produce either great good, or great evil. It is essential that its peculiarities be clearly understood by those directly concerned; and that all intelligent men in the country will readily understand that $2,000,000,000 in any one business, is a sum, which, once jeopardized, might injuriously affect all other values.[54]

[49] Ibid., Jefferson Davis to Varina Davis, 15 Mar. 1874.
[50] *Life Association of America v. Levy*, 33 La. Ann. 1210.
[51] Stephen M. Hood, *The Lost Papers of Confederate General John Bell Hood* (El Dorado Hills: Savas Beatie, 2015). H.W. Hough to John Bell Hood, December 4, 1877.
[52] *Insurance Times*, Nov. 1871, 796.
[53] Henry Heth, *The Memoirs of Henry Heth* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), lx.
[54] Gustavus Woodson Smith, *Notes on Life Insurance* (Frankfort: Kentucky Yeoman Office, 1870), 7.

Using extensive mathematical calculations, Smith explained the operation of life insurance companies before moving on to public policy, in which he argued that insurers "should be controlled by wise and stringent laws, rigidly enforced, because, from the nature of this business, the funds held in trust are peculiarly liable to misapplication."[55] A founding member of the National Council of Insurance Commissioners in 1871, Smith worked with other insurance commissioners to consistently call for solid governmental controls over the industry. After leaving the post in 1876, Smith moved to New York City for the remainder of his life, continuing to write on insurance to educate the public.

In conclusion, after the Civil War, insurance prospered in the booming North, but struggled in the devastated, changed South. Excessive market competition, the Panic of 1873 and its ensuing depression halted industry growth. Before the expansion ended, though, insurance had evolved substantially – if unevenly – toward its current role as the financial safety net underpinning the American economy.

[55] Ibid., 97.

# The Civil War Within: Resistance, Rangers, and Revolt in Florida during the Civil War

Victoria Bryant Stewart
*Northwest Florida State College*

Florida, the third state to secede from the Union, had the smallest population among the Confederate States.[1] With a total population of roughly 140,000, the military eligible population was roughly 16,000 as most served during the war.[2] Florida's contribution to the Confederacy represented 10 percent of their state's population and 1.5 percent of the Confederate Army.[3] Tracy Revels explained the initial excitement for enlistment in Florida quickly dwindled after the Confederate government abandoned Florida since this state was left vulnerable to federal forces.[4] Despite this neglect Floridians did not experience the same level of suffering as other Confederate states since starvation was minimal and Floridians did not endure any significant military campaigns.[5] Lewis Wynne and Robert Taylor explored similar themes, which highlighted internal division in Florida as Florida housed deserters and Unionists.[6] While these insights are important for understanding Florida's role in the conflict, much of Florida's role during the war remains absent in existing scholarship. Internal divisions posed enough of a threat to their own security. Resistance, Partisan Rangers, desertion, and other anti-conscription activities in Florida illustrate a civil war from within.

The early weeks of the American Civil War illustrate the uncertainty of Florida's role within the Confederacy, especially in relation to strategic defenses and security. Florida militiamen, like other militia forces in the other Confederate States, prepared for their role in the upcoming conflict. By 1862, a federal form of conscription was implemented to supplement the diminished size of the Confederate military and compensate for low levels of volunteers. Most of those eligible for military service were currently serving or had already served in the early phases of the war. Other men, between the conscription eligible ages of eighteen and thirty-five, were unsuited for service due to health issues. The Partisan Ranger Act, enacted just five days after the Confederate's federal conscription law, provided an alternative to federal conscription. Since conscription was controversial, men could instead

[1] Florida was the third smallest state by population in the United States at the time of secession.
[2] "Florida," Civil War Units and Regimental Information: ehistory: The Ohio State University, https://ehistory.osu.edu/exhibitions/Regimental/florida/union/index.
[3] Ibid. Lewis N. Wayne and Robert A. Taylor explore the impact of high death tolls among Floridians as this caused a further burden on women, slaves, and Seminoles in the state, Lewis N. Wayne and Robert A. Taylor, *Florida in the Civil War* (Cheltenham: Arcadia Publishing, 2003). For more information on the role of the Seminole during the war, see Robert A. Taylor, "Unforgotten Threat: Florida Seminoles in the Civil War," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 69, no. 3 (Jan. 1991): 300-314. In this service, Florida contributed "eleven infantry regiments, two cavalry regiments, several batteries of artillery, plus various smaller units of all branches; the Union raised two cavalry units, "Florida," Civil War Units and Regimental Information.
[4] Tracy J. Revels, *Florida's Civil War: Terrible Sacrifices* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2016).
[5] Revels, *Florida's Civil War*, 59.
[6] Wayne and Taylor, *Florida in the Civil War*, 101.

opt to serve as a ranger as their form of service. Irregular forces, involved in guerrilla activity and raiding activity, as Robert Mackey argues, "were intended to be an adjunct to the conventional field armies."[7] Despite this alternative, desertion increased since enlisted men became dissatisfied, and rangers posed additional problems for the Confederate military. In using Florida as a case study, conscription and coercion of service were unpopular among Floridians.[8] To further complicate conditions in Florida as the war continued, following calls from Confederate political and military leaders, Florida's farmers did not shift their agricultural production from cotton to corn and wheat. Resulting shortages of meat and other provisions only compounded the feelings of frustration in Florida. In examining these issues together, as the war continued, Florida suffered from complicated factions of disagreement and discontent as an internal civil war threatened their role in the Confederacy and compromised the state's own domestic stability.

Scholars address broad themes that include hesitation regarding secession, defense of the Florida home front, guerrilla fighting, the role of women, and political factions that plagued Florida.[9] From the military perspective, historians address Florida soldiers' perspective in their service in the Army of Northern Virginia, service in the Army of Tennessee, service within Florida in Jacksonville, and African American service for the Union.[10] Historians, additionally, address the changes within American society following the implementation of federal conscription, efforts to curtail disobedience to conscription, and an assessment

[7] Robert Mackey, *The Uncivil War: Irregular Warfare in the Upper South, 1861-1865* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 5. In extending Robert Mackey's work, Mark Neeley, Jr. addresses the changes in historiography regarding guerrillas to link deeper issues of nationalism, individualism, and a rejection of European notions of aristocracy. Mark Neeley, Jr., "Guerrilla Warfare, Slavery, and the Hopes of the Confederacy," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 6, no. 3 (Sept. 2016): 379. Brian McKnight and Barton Myers edited a collection of essays that addresses tactics of guerrillas, locating guerrillas, tensions in the Border States, and issues of leadership or legal standing. Brian D. McKnight and Barton A. Myers, eds., *The Guerrilla Hunters: Irregular Conflicts during the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2017).

[8] Tracy J. Revels explains the issues in Florida during the war to highlight the Confederate government's neglect in Florida to hold onto the state during the war. Despite this neglect, Floridians did not experience the same difficulty as other Confederate states. According to Revels, social and political divisions after secession caused these factions in Florida. Tracy J. Revels, *Florida's Civil War: Terrible Sacrifices* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2016).

[9] Seth A. Weitz and Jonathan C. Sheppard, eds., *A Forgotten Front: Florida during the Civil War Era* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2018). Tracy Revels focuses on how women contributed to the war while they struggled to maintain their homes, *Grander in Her Daughters: Florida's Women during the Civil War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004). Edward E. Baptist touches upon internal political divisions in Florida's panhandle in the antebellum period that reaffirmed the role of the planter elite and domination of white men in Florida's society, *Creating an Old South: Middle Florida's Plantation Frontier before the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[10] Zack C. Waters and James C. Edmonds, *A Small but Spartan Band: The Florida Brigade in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013); Jonathan C. Sheppard, *By the Noble Daring of Her Sons: The Florida Brigade of the Army of Tennessee* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2012); Daniel L. Schafer, *Thunder on the River: The Civil War in Northeast Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010); Irvin D. S. Winsboro, "Give Them Their Due: A Reassessment of African Americans and Union Military Service in Florida during the Civil War," *Journal of African American History* 92, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 327-346. These scholars address internal divisions within Florida between those that served, those that remained on the home front, and the political divisions in the state while exposing deeper implications for those that served outside Florida. Matthew Clavin addresses the role of fugitive slaves in Pensacola as an often-forgotten part of Florida's story in the war, "Interracialism and Revolution on the Southern Frontier: Pensacola in the Civil War," *Journal of Southern History* 80, no. 4 (November 2014): 791-826.

of support for conscription.[11] This literature further connects challenges to Confederate leadership with their struggle to maintain order.[12] This body of scholarship illustrates the complexity of conditions in the South, growing divisions within the Confederacy, and the role of Florida within the Confederacy.

As early as 5 January 1861, Senator David Yulee (D-Fla.) wrote to Joseph Finegan to express his concerns with "the occupation of the forts and arsenal" since "the North is rapidly consolidating against us upon the plan of force."[13] Days later, Florida formally seceded from the Union on 10 January 1861. Following secession, on 18 January 1861, Alabama Governor Andrew Moore wrote to Colonel William Chase regarding the safety and security of Fort Pickens and discussed military logistics prior to Abraham Lincoln's inauguration.[14] On 20 January 1861, Florida Governor Madison Perry received some words of caution. In the words of Senator Stephen Mallory (D-Fla.) and Senator Yulee, "no assault on Fort Pickens should be made; that the fort is not worth one drop of blood at this time, and desire us to invoke you to prevent bloodshed."[15] Following secession, Fort Pickens, Fort Barrancas, and the Pensacola Navy Yard were primary concerns. According to Robert Macomber, "as the war progressed and the Navy's blockade of the Confederacy's major ports increased in effectiveness, Florida's shorelines" proved essential for smaller ships to evade detection from increased patrols.[16] As the war continued, between April 1862 and March 1865, the number of U.S. Navy vessels increased as their presence expanded "in previously secure Confederate areas."[17] Wynne and Taylor addressed the U.S. Navy's efforts to impede the Confederate economy through blockade running and further efforts to inflict fear in the civilian

[11] This paragraph addressed broad themes in the literature over time. Much of this literature addresses resistance to federal conscription, efforts to instill compliance, and other scholars address changes to this system of manpower procurement. These sources listed are mere examples rather than an exhaustive list of the works in this area of study. See James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991); Albert Burton Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (Columbia: University Of South Carolina Press, 1996); Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Frank L Klement, *The Copperheads in the Middle West* (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1972); Ella Lonn and William Alan Blair, *Desertion during the Civil War* (Lincoln and London: University Of Nebraska Press, 1998); Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Eugene C Murdock, *One Million Men: The Civil War Draft in the North* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980); David Parker, *Revolutions and the Revolutionary Tradition in the West, 1560-1991* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016); David Williams, *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* (New York: The New Press, 2016).

[12] See Jon Wakelyn, Confederates against the Confederacy: Essays on Leadership and Loyalty (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002). More recently, Dora Costa and Matthew Kahn have further explored the demographics of those that voluntarily enlisted and those that deserted. Costa and Kahn surveyed soldiers' letters and deduced that a sense of fighting for "liberty against despotism" became a primary motivation for service, Dora Costa and Matthew Kahn, Heroes and Cowards: The Social Face of War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 84.

[13] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), Series I, I, 442. This title will be abbreviated to *The War of the Rebellion* in subsequent footnotes. Joseph Finegan was an American businessman and brigadier general for the Confederate Army.

[14] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, I, 446. Colonel Chase served in the Florida militia and negotiated an informal truce with the Buchanan administration that lasted until after the attack upon Fort Sumter.

[15] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, I, 445.

[16] Robert Macomber, "Action on the Florida Coast," *Naval History* 17, no 1 (Feb. 2003): 38.

[17] Macomber, "Action on the Florida Coast," 38-39.

population in northeast Florida.[18] As late as 28 January 1861, Senator Mallory indicated his intentions to "keep the peace" since he was "determined to stave off war."[19]

The initial motivation to endure battle was "the complex mixture of patriotism, ideology, concepts of duty, honor, manhood, and community or peer pressure that prompted them to enlist in the first place."[20] Calls for additional volunteers, amid shortages of troop strength, resulted in a minimal increase of the military's size. To address the shortage of troops, the Confederacy's Act to Provide for the Public Defense allowed President Jefferson Davis to use militiamen. As early as 5 January 1861, Florda's militiamen responded as tensions mounted. In this dispatch, Governor Perry wrote to Secretary of State Frederick Villepigue. He wrote, "you are further authorized to call out the Seventh Regiment Florida Militia for all aid in its power to render that you may deem necessary to retain occupation of said arsenal."[21] U.S. Army Ordinance Sergeant Henry Douglas indicated that a company of Florida volunteers "demanded a peaceable possession" of Fort Marion as they had received "instructions authorizing [them] to seize the property, and directing [them] to use what force might be necessary."[22] While these examples illustrate eager participation in the early phase of the war, this eagerness waned as the war continued. Following the rush and excitement to enlist, the Confederacy soon suffered a manpower shortage.

In using militia forces to supplement low troop totals, state governors initially exercised greater authority to register and muster men. When this law proved unreliable to address the military needs of the Confederacy, as further strain was placed upon the states to support the Confederate cause, adjustments were made to federalize and maintain a system of manpower procurement. State governors, including Florida's governor, expressed concerns about this federal oversight. Governors understood their role as state executives was soon reduced with the expansion of federal power. Florida's new governor, John Milton, sought legal assistance and clarification from their state's attorney general, John Galbraith. Governor Milton wanted to understand the conscription law, eligibility requirements, and exemptions. Milton, a hesitant supporter of conscription, understood the internal issues that plagued Florida. In Milton's view, Florida should have been exempt from conscription since Florida supplied enough troops. The depletion of militia forces compromised the state's local defense. According to Galbraith, members of the clergy, ferrymen, and millers were exempt. Additionally, "foreign residents, who have not become citizens of the Confederate States and who have not exercised any of the rights of citizenship are exempt by

[18] Wayne and Taylor, *Florida in the Civil War*, 23.
[19] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, I, 354.
[20] James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 13.
[21] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, I, 332.
[22] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, I, 333.

international law. Of course [sic] persons physically incapable of such service are exempt."[23] Discounting those already in service or those ineligible for duty, other Floridians resisted conscription or supported the Union. Since Milton supported and encouraged voluntary enlistment, he was sure that those that volunteered would be "good soldiers" since they decided to serve.[24]

While Milton was a supporter of the Confederacy, he expressed his concerns regarding federalism. In December 1861, months before the federal form of conscription, Milton wrote to President Davis regarding a cavalry company:

> These troops have been raised by authority of the War Department in disrespect to State authority and in disregard of State rights;, and, in addition to the fact of vital ruin they are bringing upon the country, against which it is my duty to and I do most the country, against which it is my duty to and I do most solemnly protest, the tendency of the assumption and exercise of such power by the Confederate Government is to sap the very foundation of the rights of the States and is to consolidation.[25]

The Florida legislature transferred Florida troops into federal service by 10 March 1862. While Milton did not obstruct or frustrate the muster of men in Florida, as federal conscription was implemented mere weeks after this action by the state legislature, his vocal concerns of federal government overreach reflected his constituents' concerns. As the war continued, Floridians resisted following their own concerns with political overreach. A federal form of conscription, implemented mere months after Milton's letter, exposed deep divides and concerns with the growing power of the federal states at the expense of the shrinking power of the local states.

In the words of Robert E. Lee, in a letter to Milton of April 1862, Milton had a "known attachment to the country and [had] disinterested devotion to the cause."[26] Milton's dispatches indicate his strong concerns for his state. In September 1862, Milton wrote to Secretary of War George Randolph to detail his efforts to enroll men above and below the conscription age range. With the enrollment of this latest group of men into service, Milton expressed concerns since "there are so few Confederate officers in the State and those who are here being constantly occupied in the discharge of duties appertaining to their respective positions."[27] From Milton's perspective, the creation of "a military department of portion of Georgia, Alabama, and Florida" would also ensure the protection of West Florida.

[23] Florida, Florida Memory: State Library and Archives of. n.d. Florida's Role in the Civil War, 1861-1862. https://www.floridamemory.com/exhibits/civilwar/1861-1862/1861-1862-6.php.
[24] George Buker, *Blockaders, Refugees, and Contrabands: Civil War on Florida's Gulf Coast, 1861-1865* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 80.
[25] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, VI, 342.
[26] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XIV, 483. Daisy Parker addressed Governor Milton's dedication to the success of the Confederacy through his exhaustive efforts to cooperate and involve Florida. See Daisy Parker, "John Milton, Governor of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (Apr. 1942): 26-41.
[27] War of the Rebellion, Series I, LII, II, 357.

His concerns of the vulnerability of West Florida were soon realized as the war continued. Milton's astute understanding of the conditions around Florida illustrate his intense sense of security to ensure stability.

According to William Ruthford (adjutant of the 3rd South Carolina regiment), "to those who are loyal and brave, it is somewhat mortifying that their services cannot be voluntarily offered to their country."[28] Ruthford's view of conscription, shared by many already in service, demonstrated their anger and frustration with those unwilling to serve. John Sacher, however, argued the opposition with conscription resulted following an unequal application of the policy within Southern society to require the service of only some white Southern able-bodied men.[29] Federal conscription introduced the expectation that men had an obligation to serve their national state during times of war and emergency, which challenged existing attitudes regarding service. The Confederate conscription legislation outlined its own necessity. To articulate the importance and utility of this law, Confederate lawmakers used explicit language. According to the language of the law, to explain the need for compulsory military service, conscription was necessary given "the exigencies of the country, and the absolute necessity of keeping in the service of our gallant Army, and of placing in the field a large additional force to meet the advancing columns of the enemy now invading our soil."[30] Earlier concepts of militia service and service to a man's local state were replaced with a federal obligation of service. This alteration upended connections to local communities and further expanded the role of the federal state to oversee and enforce conscription. This loss of a state's right to administer a policy of manpower procurement was not lost on those opposed to federal conscription.

Confederate volunteers deemed conscription "a betrayal of faith."[31] Desertions spiked following the passage of federal conscription. After the passage of this act, the Confederate Congress passed further legislation to encourage volunteerism through larger bounties, greater opportunity to select their companies for service, and the increased number of furlough days. While these may have been clever incentives, this act also lengthened the terms of service for those already in the military at the time of the law's passage by two years. This extension sought to ensure the Confederate military had a sustainable number of enlisted men for service. This law further linked citizenship in the Confederate States with a requirement for healthy white men to serve the Confederacy.

As a response to the passage of the Confederacy's first federal form of conscription, the Confederate Congress passed the Partisan Ranger Act. Enacted just five days after the Confederate's conscription law, the Partisan Ranger Act

[28] Conscription, The American Civil War, 31 Dec. 1999, http://www.etymonline.com/cw/conscript.htm.
[29] John M. Sacher, *Confederate Conscription and the Struggle for Southern Soldiers* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2021).
[30] An Act to Further Provide for the Public Defense. Confederate States of America. 28 April 1862.
[31] Clifford Dowdey, *History of the Confederacy, 1832-1865* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1992), 155.

provided an alternative to federal conscription. Months before the implementation of the Partisan Ranger Act, in August 1861, An Act to Provide for Local Defense and Special Service was enacted. This law, created to address vulnerable locations by placing men into direct service of the Confederacy, provided an expectation that those mustered into service would only be formally recognized as in service when specifically ordered by the president. The Partisan Ranger Act further addressed local defense for men to protect their immediate communities as their service for the Confederacy. For Mackey, despite these efforts for the irregular forces to supplement the conventional forces, "guerrillas were believed to be unorganized, undisciplined, irregulars who only occasionally recognized the military command structure of the Confederacy."[32] Scott Nelson and Carol Sheriff have identified the similarities and differences among Union and Confederate guerrillas. As they have explained, these guerrillas can be described as "family men," "older than regular soldiers," "led by local political figures," "bandits," and "blurred lines between politics, warfare, and crime."[33] Despite these similarities, they note considerable differences. Confederates, for example, were older and more likely to be landowners that stayed closer to their homes.[34]

According to the act, President Davis was "authorized to commission such officers as he may deem proper with authority" in order "to form bands for Partisan Rangers, in companies, battalions or regiments." These rangers, once accepted for service, would "be entitled to the same pay, rations, and quarters during the term of service, and subject to the same regulation as other soldiers." While in service as a ranger, they were ordered to collect "arms and munitions" from the Union troops. These supplies were to be given to quartermasters. In filling this service, rangers were to "be paid their full value in such manner as the Secretary of War" designated.[35] The Partisan Ranger Act, in creating a legal framework, "sought to broaden the scope of legally acceptable combat to accommodate the evolving reality of unconventional violence."[36] Control over these unconventional forces, in the view of their supporters, would foster support for the regular Confederate military.[37] In the view of those orchestrating Confederate military policy, "guerillas fought a dishonorable and inefficient yet doubtlessly often useful war."[38] While guerilla fighters and their overall role in the war remain fraught with complexity, John Pearson and the Oklawaha Rangers persist as popular folk heroes in Florida. Violence intensified within local communities as guerrillas continued their

[32] Mackey, *The Uncivil War*, 8.
[33] Scott Nelson and Carol Sheriff, *A People at War: Civilians and Soldiers in America's Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 100.
[34] Nelson and Sheriff, *A People at War*, 100.
[35] "Rebel Partisan Rangers," *Memphis Union Appeal* (Memphis, Tenn.), 17 July 1862.
[36] Winthrop Rutherfurd, "The Partisan Ranger Act: The Confederacy and the Laws of War," *Louisiana Law Review* 79, no. 3 (Spring 2019): 809.
[37] James Eliot Cross, *Conflict in the Shadows: The Nature and Politics of Guerrilla War* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963).
[38] Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 97.

skirmishes, and Pearson continued to be fondly remembered as strong, courageous, and adaptable by his supporters. Despite these positive attributes, Pearson's "aggressiveness and continued use of guerrilla tactics" had negative impacts since his critics grew tired and formed Union units near Tampa as a response.[39]

Confederate guerrillas, in need of supplies since they did not receive regular support from the Confederate state, raided Union supplies and robbed Unionists.[40] Despite these efforts to seek supplies from the local community, Mackey attributes their hostility and encroachment of the local population as one of the reasons that the Confederacy lost the war. This alienation of the local population caused a decline in support for the war since the lack of support for irregular forces failed to support the "people's war to get the public involved."[41] While not without faults, guerrilla fighters were alternatively viewed as having a "freewheeling, unfettered, grassroots style of fighting that suited Southern tendencies toward individualism and localism."[42] In using Pearson and the Oklawaha Rangers as an example, too much violence, intrusion, and encroachment of the local populace jeopardized support and legitimacy for rangers.

Captain Theodore Brevard, Jr., already in active service in the Second Florida Infantry before the conscription law, returned to Tallahassee to organize and raise a unit of rangers. Brevard was not re-elected captain in the spring of 1862 once the conscription law allowed soldiers in service to select their leadership. Brevard, as evidenced in the letters he wrote to his mother, quickly realized that raising men for a ranger band proved difficult in Florida. Having known enlisted men, these men (while eager and willing to join Brevard's ranger band) were not eligible to leave Virginia to serve. In accordance with the law, men were only able to serve in partisan ranger bands for the states in which they resided; therefore, they were unable to leave Virginia to join a ranger band in Florida. As Brevard wrote,

> I think I will succeed in raising my Batallion [sic], though there may be delay and difficulty attending it. There has been great activity of enlistment in this State and the men are really hard to find. I believe however that all will go well in the end. I have met with a great many already in service who desired joining me and they were very much surprised and disappointed when I told them that the Adjutant General had prohibited transfers from the line into Partizan [sic] Corps.[43]

[39] Zack C. Waters, "Florida's Confederate Guerrillas: John W. Pearson and the Oklawaha Rangers," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (October 1991): 149. Canter Brown Jr., in describing Tampa, illustrates this city's role in the war amid Union raids, soaring food prices, and their response to guerrilla activity. *Tampa in Civil War and Reconstruction* (Tampa: University of Tampa Press, 2000).
[40] Nelson and Sheriff, *A People at War*, 100.
[41] Mackey, *The Uncivil War*, 22.
[42] Daniel Sutherland, "Guerrilla Warfare, Democracy, and the Fate of the Confederacy," *Journal of Southern History* 69, no. 2 (May 2002): 260.
[43] Florida, Florida Memory: State Library and Archives of. n.d. Florida's Role in the Civil War, 1861-1862. https://www.floridamemory.com/exhibits/civilwar/1861-1862/1861-1862-6.php.

Despite his concerns, Brevard mustered enough men for four companies into his ranger band.[44]

Governor Milton wrote to President Davis in September 1862 to express his concerns with internal divisions in Florida. According to Milton,

> you are apprised that in Florida a very large minority were opposed to secession, and in many parts of the State combinations existed to adhere to and maintain the United States Government, and even now in some portions of the State there are men who would eagerly seize any opportunity that promised success to the United States.[45]

As Milton noted, Florida's contributions to the Confederate military continued to decline, however, he was hopeful that Florida troops helped restrict the number of Unionists in the state. Following the passage of conscription, implemented just months earlier than the date of this letter, enforcement posed significant problems in this state. For Milton, "in some instances the enforcement of the conscript act has had a most unhappy effect." Since each state was assigned a designated number of men to enroll based on their population, Milton expressed concerns that Florida would have enough men to muster into service. As Milton indicated, "I have no idea there will be 300 able-been brought into service. I have no idea there will be 300 able-bodied men obtained by the act." The remaining men in Florida, as Milton expressed, were either physically incapable for service or should remain at home to care for women and children. To dispel resistance and disobedience in Florida, Milton suggested the encouragement of voluntary enlistment to supplement low troop totals or for men to remain on the home front if unable to perform "efficient service."[46]

Milton's letter concluded with his concerns with overt and violent altercations to apprehend men during conscription calls. This discouragement of men to volunteer, and the forceful apprehension of men for military service, bothered Milton. In Milton's view, "under existing circumstances a resort to force may lead to most injurious consequences." Milton wanted to diffuse the tensions in Florida to accept men as volunteers rather than through coercive and violent means. He used Washington County as an example of success since twenty men marched the fifty miles to volunteer for service. It was successful since these men took voluntary action to serve. He was sure those that volunteered would become "reliable soldiers and promptly move wherever ordered."[47] A man's own sense of duty through voluntary enlistment, in Milton's view, ensured their obedience and adherence to their service.

[44] By May 1864, Brevard and his rangers served Florida until being ordered to join the Eleventh Florida Infantry. The following year, March 1865, Brevard was appointed by President Davis to be the commander of the Florida Brigade. He was the last Confederate brigadier general appointed before the war concluded.
[45] *War of the Rebellion*, Series IV, II, 92.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid., 93.

Months before the creation of the Bureau of Conscription, in September 1862, the Confederate Congress adjusted conscription requirements to expand the eligibility pool. In this adjusted law, men between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five were required to be registered. With this adjustment, Bureau agents had more eligible men to classify and enroll for service. Months after the alteration of the conscription law, Bureau agents were assigned to increase the size of the Confederate military with the increased eligibility pool. The Bureau was created to solve the immediate crisis of manpower shortages; however, the helpfulness of these agents dwindled as the war continued.

The powers of the federal state continued to expand through the creation of the Bureau of Conscription, which further fueled resentment of those already opposed to conscription. Critics viewed the Bureau as another vehicle to further remove state power from the process of recruitment and enlistment. In December 1862, the Bureau of Conscription then assumed the powers of recruitment and organization of units. Historian Emory Thomas described the Conscription Bureau as "kidnapers" or "press gangs" since their enforcement of conscription resulted in the forceful impressment of men into the Confederate military.[48] President Davis wanted a "plain and simple method," but this elaborate and forceful agency further transformed conscription into a complicated, federally controlled and enforced policy.[49]

As noted in a report to Secretary of War James Seddon, Bureau agent John Preston acknowledged the resistance they faced while performing their duties for the Bureau. According to Preston, delays in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Tennessee were not a result of identifying and locating eligible men but rather obtaining those men "out of the hands of recruiting officers under generals commanding, of Governors, judges, and demagoguing politicians."[50] Bureau agents were also given the authority to determine the eligibility of a man on a case-by-case basis. Since these agents determined eligibility and exemptions, they were guilty of favoritism and granting too many exemptions. Exemptions were to be given to certain men to ensure Southern society still functioned. Eligible men, for example, would be spared if they worked in an essential industry. Confederate government officials believed the protection and preservation of essential industries would shift the Confederate economy from agrarian to industrial, but this transformation fell far short of reaching this intended economic goal.

Confederate military leadership had concerns regarding the Bureau's effectiveness to solve the manpower shortages. Aggressive members of the Bureau found men and placed them into the military.[51] According to Robert Tanner,

[48] Emory Thomas, *The Confederate Nation: 1861-1865* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1979), 154.
[49] *Journal of the Confederate Congress*, 58th Congress, II Sess, Volume 5, 157.
[50] *War of the Rebellion*, Series IV, III, 225.
[51] Robert Tanner, *Retreat to Victory? Confederate Strategy Reconsidered* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 13.

"the head of the Conscription Bureau admitted that it had gathered most men who could be found."[52] The Southern populace detested the leaders within the Bureau.[53] Dennis Peterson called the Bureau of Conscription "one of the most detested bureaus in the whole Confederacy" while he described the leadership as "unpopular."[54] Despite their objective to increase the size of the Confederate military, historians have estimated that the size of the Confederate military by the end of the war was roughly one third of the size of the Union Army.[55] After three years, the Bureau largely failed to raise a sizable military force for the Confederate military. Much of their issue locating eligible men resulted from the high rates of desertion and disruption against conscription policies as the war continued. The Bureau was responsible to supplement for deserters by enrolling replacements. Despite the powers of the Bureau regarding selection and enrollment, worsening conditions of distrust, dissatisfaction, and disengagement posed problems that the Bureau could not revolve. In Florida, for example, Commissary General Lucius Northrop wrote to the secretary of war to request an inquiry regarding a Bureau agent "to take immediate steps to remedy the evils if found."[56] Instances of abuse such as this led to the dissolution of the Bureau in early 1865.

Pockets of resistance in Florida materialized. Milton expressed his concerns regarding West Florida. By the spring of 1863, 90,000 had deserted from the Confederate military and this number increased to 136,000 by the summer months.[57] In the early months of 1863, Adjutant and Inspector General Samuel Cooper addressed the rangers. According to Cooper, Secretary Randolph revoked the ability "to raise companies of partisan rangers" as per instruction under General Order Number 18. Assistant Adjutant General Benjamin Ewell reported upon the men raised and mustered into service improperly, which led Ewell to highlight that the "power granted" to "raise partisan rangers be [revoked]." Despite his misgivings, Ewell argued that the men raised should "be secured" for the Confederate military.[58] By June 1863, Cooper reflected upon the problems with the rangers through General Order Number 82. According to this order, "the irregularities reported to this Department as having been committed by such corps renders it proper that these corps shall be placed under stricter regulations than those heretofore adopted." This order authorized officers to "bring them under the same regulations" to ensure "efficiency and the interest of the service."[59] Further abuses were reported in the later months of 1863. Major and Acting Assistant Adjutant-General George Holt indicated that the rangers should be more closely

[52] Tanner, *Retreat to Victory?*, 13.
[53] Dennis Peterson, *Confederate Cabinet Departments and Secretaries* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company, 2016), 116.
[54] Ibid., 116-117.
[55] Thomas, *The Confederate Nation*, 261.
[56] *War of the Rebellion*, Series IV, III, 46.
[57] Buker, *Blockaders, Refugees, and Contrabands*, 80.
[58] *War of the Rebellion*, Series I, XXIV, Part III, 697.
[59] Ibid., Series IV, II, 585.

supervised. Holt noted, as addressed to Brigadier General James Chalmers, "that no more irregular furloughs are given, so that a better state of discipline can be established in this corps."[60] Abuses, according to Holt, were a result of the commanding officers of the rangers. These abuses of excessive furloughs should be eliminated since furloughs should be subject to stricter scrutiny. Confederate Commanding General Robert E. Lee and Lieutenant General James Longstreet ultimately called for the repeal of the Partisan Act in the early months of 1864. The bill to disband the rangers was approved in February of 1864.

By February of 1864, Governor Milton expressed concerns regarding unrest to Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon. According to Milton, "impressments" in West Florida caused a spike in desertions due to the "heartless treatment of the rights of citizens." Over fifty men deserted to join the Union in West Florida. Milton described these men as "the best drilled," "most reliable," and "brave." He understood the internal divisions within Florida and increased discontent regarding conscription. While Milton admitted the need for conscription, he suggested that Florida's livestock should remain untouched to discourage further instances of resistance and desertion. "The citizens of Florida," according to Milton, "are indignant at the necessary abuse of their rights; and I have reason to know that the lawless and wicked conduct of Government agents in this State."[61] Milton's concerns coincide with efforts by the Confederate Congress to modify conscription policies to reduce and eliminate resistance and disruption.

Between March and May of 1864, Major General Patton Anderson (commanding the District of Florida) wrote a report detailing the conditions within Florida. According to Anderson,

> during this time, too, there was considerable alarm felt by many of the citizens of Middle Florida on account of recent depredations committed or threatened by bands of deserters, disloyal persons, and bandits, who had been gathering and forming semi-organizations along the coast and in the southern and inaccessible portions of Taylor and La Fayette Counties, and who had become emboldened to acts of plunder and spoliation by reason of the withdrawal of troops from that region for the purpose of meeting the invasion by the enemy in the eastern portion of the State.[62]

To deal with lawless behavior, Anderson detailed his efforts to restore order. General Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard further addressed desertion and issued pardons to deserters from South Florida. Governor Milton supported pardons in Taylor and La Fayette counties. Anderson, however, noted that these pardons

[60] Ibid., Series I, XXX, Part IV, 609.
[61] Ibid., Series IV, III, 46.
[62] Ibid., Series I, Volume XXXV, Part I, 368-369.

were only believed to be accepted by a few deserters. Though the exact number of deserters was unknown, Anderson believed this "number was not large."[63]

To further complicate this situation, Anderson noted that "most of that few are believed to have either gone back to the enemy or are remaining at home, where it is difficult to lay hands on them."[64] Anderson addressed the pressing state of affairs in South Florida as it was "still infested with bands of deserters, skulkers, and Yankees, whose numbers and depredations were daily increasing."[65] This exposed the difficulties in maintaining control and order. While incentivized to return to service after receiving a pardon for desertion, divisions and factions within Florida posed continued challenges for men to satisfy their military obligations to Florida and the Confederate States at large.

Near the end of April of 1864, the Sixty-Fourth Regiment Georgia Volunteers were sent to South Florida with the order "to arrest deserters, skulkers, punish and drive out plunderers and Yankees, and to afford every assistance in his power to the agents of the Government whose duty it was to collect beef-cattle for the army, and to the farmers in the legitimate pursuit of their business." This mission was adjusted when the Sixty-Fourth Georgia was called for another mission elsewhere. With the absence of these troops, lawlessness erupted in the form of "raids upon the coast, destroying salt-works, stealing cattle, and burning dwellings."[66] Reports also indicated that Union soldiers, and their supporters in Florida, "carried off 20 or 30 bales of cotton and burned (as reported by citizens) about 300 more, of which 14 belonged to the Government."[67] As shown in this example, desertion was compounded with lawlessness and support of the Union.

This further exposed ongoing problems plaguing Florida as the war continued. As early as September 1862, a report was completed by the Secretary of War George Randolph for President Davis that informed Governor Milton of the abuses among salt workers. According to this report, those "under the pretense of making salt," others that were "treacherous enough to hold intercourse with the enemy," and "lazy loungers" avoided conscription. While this report described some men as "honorable exceptions" and "patriotic men," the report detailed further abuses.[68] Men were exempt from service within certain industries, the men in this instance avoided conscription illegally.

Abuses within this sector of society exposed men having

> dodg[ed] from place to place to avoid being made conscripts, and any that they would rather die than to be disgraced by being made conscripts, and

[63] Ibid., Series I, Volume XXXV, Part I, 369.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 371.
[66] Ibid., 372.
[67] Ibid. Nick Wynne and Joe Crankshaw focus on the importance of the salt works, cattle, and shoreline that allowed for smuggling from Europe and the Caribbean. *Florida Civil War Blockades: Battling for the Coast* (Cheltenham, UK: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).
[68] War of the Rebellion, Series IV, II, 94.

> doubtless would as willingly be hung as traitors as die in battle vindicating the rights of freemen. No man should be exempt from military service for his private benefit.[69]

This report illustrated how exemptions were not afforded to discharged men with heath complications following their previous terms of service. To illustrate the abuses in the federal conscription law, one man evaded service and "remained at home an advocate and braggart of State's rights and liberty."[70] Abuses within the salt works were reported in the conclusion. As noted,

> the braggart, healthy, able-bodied, and wealthy, and in time past known as a rampant secessionist, has neither volunteered nor sent a substitute, but has hitherto avoided the enrolling officer by resorting to the coast under the pretense of making salt. Shall the skulking coward be favored by a legal exemption, while wounded and discharged soldiers shall be forced as conscripts into camps of instruction?[71]

At the outset of the war, abuses exposed problems with conscription exemptions, means of evasion, and lawless behaviors. Hiding in the salt works, desertions, Unionist activity, and violence needed immediate attention. The varying degree and efforts of disruption and disturbance in Florida exposed the internal factions and divisions among the state's populace.

Equally concerning, Florida men faced serious concerns with leaving their families and communities in their absences. John Reiger exposed powerful and persuasive letters that convinced husbands and friends to abandon this "lost cause."[72] By August of 1864, Davis understood the importance of women regarding enlistment and service of their families. He made a plea for women to encourage the men in their lives to serve, to encourage "sending [sic] all to the front."[73] Seen as an obligation, service was linked and associated with citizenship, civic duty, and loyalty. Newspapers were used to convince men to remain in service, but most ignored printed consequences and proposed rewards for turning in deserters. Out of the 2,219 deserters that fled service, only 220 were returned into service. In one instance, in South Florida, irregulars were sent to locate deserters. Of the eighty sent on this mission, fifty-seven deserted to join Union troops themselves.[74]

In September of 1864, Governor Milton was informed by Adjutant and Inspector General Hugh Archer that thirty-nine companies of Florida's men were raised and mustered for service, which included 2,780 men. Of this total, 1,450 were cavalry

[69] Ibid., 95.
[70] Ibid., Series IV, II, 94.
[71] Ibid.
[72] John Reiger, "Deprivation, Disaffection, and Desertion in Confederate Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (Jan. 1970): 291.
[73] Patrick Doyle, Replacement Rebels: Confederate Substitution and the Issue of Citizenship," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 8, no. 1 (Mar. 2018): 22.
[74] Reiger, "Deprivation, Disaffection, and Desertion in Confederate Florida," 296.

and 1,330 were infantry forces.[75] Despite this effort to recruit and enroll more men in Florida, desertion continued. In a report approved by Secretary of War James Seddon near the end of the war in 1865, the Bureau of Conscription spent $100,000 in Florida for

> the arrest and return of deserters and absentes [sic] and all the services assigned to the Bureau of Conscription, including pay of officers, supporting forces, mileage, postage, stationary, telegrams, office rents, fuel, and extraordinary and contingent expenses.[76]

Despite successful efforts to raise additional troops, desertion remained a consistent problem in Florida. This report exposed the financial strain of desertion. While desertion posed a logistical problem to secure a sizable force for the Confederate, there was a financial toll to seek, locate, and return men into service. As Milton expressed earlier in the war, this forceful and heavy hand only further encouraged lawlessness and disobedience for fear of government and political overreach.

As a case study, Florida's internal divisions ushered in an internal civil war during the American Civil War. Fearful of the growing expanse of federal powers and increased commitments to the cause, Floridians resisted conscription and participated in other acts of disobedience and disruption. While secession was not widely supported in the state, further actions in the war years caused many to assist the Union and reject Confederate policies. As an example, Partisan Rangers and the increased violence they caused in Florida's home front created further pockets of Unionist activity. Disagreement and dissatisfaction increased as the war continued. Governor Milton, ever aware of the growing dissent in the state, cautioned against the heavy hand of the federal government to compel and force compliance and obedience. Conditions in Florida deteriorated, and conditions were ripe for desertion, disobedience, and other acts of lawlessness. Conscription, an unpopular policy within the Confederacy, caused fear, anger, and anxiety among Floridians. Mandatory military service to the federal state, a new concept introduced during the American Civil War, changed understandings of civic responsibility and civic duty. Partisan Rangers, an alternative to conscription, created additional problems since rangers often lacked discipline, order, and adherence to the law.

Much of Florida's role in the American Civil War remains absent in the current literature. This conflict represented larger issues of civil violence, conscription, and guerilla tactics used in this transnational war that set the guerillas from the Confederate States of America in direct conflict with Union troops. Mandatory military service for the federal state, violence by rangers, and increased weariness of the effectiveness and growing power of government and military leadership further plagued Florida. Bureau agents, for example, posed additional problems

[75] *War of the Rebellion*, Series IV, III, 669.
[76] Ibid., 779.

and there were accusations of abuse and overstretch. Alterations of federal laws, efforts to create equity to reduce dissent, did little to curb or even curtail disobedience. Cautious all throughout the war, Governor Milton watched Florida slowly devolve into disunity. In comparison to other states in the Confederacy, Florida was spared from the same level of hardship. Florida was the only state capitol east of the Mississippi River to escape Union occupation, but its internal divisions and disturbances posed enough of a threat to create an internal civil war from within.[77]

[77] Wynne and Taylor, *Florida in the Civil War*, 59.

# How to Teach about the 2020 Presidential Election

Constantinos E. Scaros
*Colorado Technical University, St. Petersburg College, and*
*Grand Canyon University Graduate School of Education*

A daunting and perpetual challenge for multitudes of educators – particularly history professors – is how to teach about controversial topics without injecting subjectivity into the lesson. That educators ought to remain pristinely objective when introducing ideas to students – and to present the information enthusiastically but always evenhandedly, thus giving students the best opportunity to draw conclusions based on an unbiased exposure, as complete as possible, to the marketplace of ideas – is one of the canons of education. Yet, modernly, that standard is more the rare ideal than the routine expectation.

The task becomes all the more difficult when teaching about a subject as emotional, controversial, and polarizing as the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Intense divisiveness is nothing new in American presidential politics. Those old enough to remember may point to the Clinton-Dole (1996), Carter-Ford (1976), or even Eisenhower-Stevenson (1952 and 1956) presidential races and yearn for the comparatively civil tone compared to today's figurative bloodbaths.[1] Far from being a new phenomenon, though, political animosity ebbs and flows throughout history. Lest we forget, two of the nastiest campaigns were among the nation's earliest, in 1796 and 1800, both times between rival candidates John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.[2]

The 2016 election was one such sharp turning point. It was a particularly highly-charged race. The two main general election contenders were Democrat Hillary Clinton – a former U.S. senator, secretary of state, and first lady – and billionaire businessman and television celebrity Donald Trump, who was the Republican nominee.[3] Trump won the election handily by capturing considerably more electoral votes, which is how presidential elections are measured, but Clinton clearly won the popular vote, in the process refueling the debate about whether or not the Electoral College ought to be eliminated.[4] Adding to the controversy were

Author's note: I wrote this paper four years ago as a guide for instructors on how to teach about the 2020 presidential election. Now, four years later, we have the 2024 election coming up. Nonetheless, other than some slight changes (as of this writing, the major party candidates may be the same two as in 2020), the advice remains the same.

[1] The presidential candidates referenced in this sentence were, in order of reference, Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Dwight Eisenhower, and Adlai Stevenson.
[2] C. James Taylor, "John Adams: Campaigns and Elections," University of Virginia Miller Center, 2019, http://millercenter.org/president/adams/campaigns-and-elections.
[3] David Leip's Presidential Atlas, http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=2016&off=0&elect=0&f=0.
[4] Andrew Rudalevige, "The Electoral College has Serious Problems. So Do Any Alternatives," *Washington Post*, 15 Nov. 2016, http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/11/15/should-the-u-s-keep-or-get-rid-of-the-electoral-college/.

numerous reports that Russia meddled in the elections, which few doubted. More in doubt was, and continues to be, the notions that Russia affected the election's outcome, and that Trump himself or key members of the administration colluded with Russian officials to attempt to influence the election results. At the time of this writing, Trump has been found not guilty after a multiyear investigation, which he insists was a "witch hunt," but Democrat members of Congress have not stopped investigating the matter further and some among them continue to consider the option of impeachment.[5]

Turning to 2020, Trump faced no serious opposition for the Republican nomination and again chose Mike Pence as his running mate. Meanwhile, more than 20 presidential hopefuls from the Democratic side entered the race, all united in their quest to unseat Trump, but divided ideologically among the left and center factions of the party.

Here are six essential points to make to your students when teaching about the election, and an evenhanded manner in which to make them.

**1. We, the People, are the Bosses**

Begin by explaining to students that there are various types of governments in the world. In some countries, the government is in charge; the people wait for direction from the government about what they can and cannot do. In other countries, though, such as the United States, we, the people, are in charge. Government employees – not only in staff positions, but also mayors, governors, Congress, and thepresident – work for us. It is as if they are our maids, our butlers, our housekeepers. We hire them, we can fire them, and we ultimately tell them what to do. We give them money (in the form of taxes), and we tell them how to spend it. If we are good, hands-on bosses, then we are really in charge. Sometimes, however, some of us feel as if the government is in charge, and often that is because we are not really paying attention to what is going on around us. For instance, our taxes are taken out of our paycheck, yet we don't go to our congressmember's office and ask: "exactly how did you spend my money?"

**2. Is the Government a "Good Shopper" or a "Bad Shopper?"**

Expanding on the notion that we the people are the bosses and we pay our elected officials money (taxes) to buy things for us – like roads, bridges, schools, and armies – we have differing views on how much faith we have in them to spend our money wisely. Those who think the government is a good shopper, or a smart shopper, tend to be more comfortable with giving the government more money (higher taxes) and a larger role in solving the nation's problems. It is like turning your money over to a personal shopper and saying: "here, you pay

[5] Sarah Lynch, "Key Quotes from Special Counsel Mueller's Report," Reuters, April 18, 2019, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-russia-quotes-factbox/key-quotes-from-u-s-special-counsel-muellers-report-idUSKCN1RU20H.

all of my bills, do all of the grocery and clothes shopping, fill the car with gas, save and invest some of it, and give me some spending money." The flip side of that is those who think the government is a bad shopper, too much of a spender. They would rather see the government have a smaller role in running our nation, because they believe government spends too much or too recklessly, and in some instances is even corrupt. They prefer that we the people pay less taxes and keep more of our own money, and let the private sector run most things. Traditionally, Democrats/liberals-progressives (the left) tend to believe the government is a good shopper, and Republicans/conservatives (the right) are more likely to consider the government a bad shopper.[6] But there are exceptions to the rule, as pointed out in Point 3.

**3. Political Parties are not Always Ideologically Pure, and Change their Message Over Time.**

There have been five major political parties in our country's history: the Federalists, the Democratic-Republicans, the Democrats, the Whigs, and the Republicans.[7] Today, only the Democrats and Republicans remain. The Federalists believed in a strong national (federal) government, whereas the Democratic-Republicans (D-Rs) wanted more power to belong to the states (anti-federalism).

After D-R Jefferson defeated Federalist Adams for the presidency in 1800, the Federalists began to fade and the D-Rs became the one and only dominant major party.[8] Then, the Democrats, around the presidential candidacy of Andrew Jackson, had a message of populism. They said that in the federalism vs. anti-federalism debate, ordinary folks were underrepresented in either case, in favor of the elite. The dominant D-R party eventually split into the Democrats and the Whigs, the latter favoring a stronger Congress so that the presidency – which under Jackson had become very powerful; they called him "King Andrew" – would have smaller role.[9] As the Nineteenth Century (1800s) progressed, slavery became an increasingly divided issue, as Democrats sided with Southern slaveholders and Whigs – but increasingly Republicans, who replaced them as the major party alternative to the Democrats – aligned with Northern abolitionists. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln became the first Republican president and caused several Southern states to secede from the Union, prompting Lincoln to emancipate the slaves and force those states back.[10] In the decades that followed, Democrats continued to support segregationist policies, whereas Republicans were the party of Reconstruction. But other ideological

[6] Dell Markey, "Republicans vs. Democrats Views on Government Size," Leaf Group Education, retrieved on September 8, 2019, https://classroom.synonym.com/republicans-vs-democrats-views-government-size-7737.html.
[7] Leip, Presidential Atlas.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Sean Wilentz, *Andrew Jackson* (New York: Times Books, 2005), 55.
[10] Leip Presidential Atlas.

differences separated the parties, with Democrats retaining their Jacksonian populist bent and Republicans emerging as pro-business/industry advocates.

It was not until the early-to-middle part of the twentieth century that the Democrats and Republicans had firmly settled into their good shopper/bad shopper roles, respectively. Moreover, the Democrats emerged as the party of social justice and social change, and Republicans bore the mantle of traditional family values. Further changes developed over the past few decades, with Republicans becoming less fiscally frugal and less isolationist in world affairs, and Democrats veering further left. Donald Trump's election in 2016 further changed the political landscape, as some of his policies, such as on trade and eminent domain, made him sound more like a Democrat than a Republican.[11]

**4. Trump vs. Clinton, 2016**

The 2016 election was not only a choice between Democrat and Republican, but also between establishment and anti-establishment. As has been the case since 1860, the two major party candidates, Democrat Clinton and Republican Trump, gained almost all of the popular votes and all 538 electoral votes. Ideologically, Clinton and Trump were not particularly far apart: Clinton, a centrist Democrat considerably to the right of her main primary challenger, Sen. Bernie Sanders; Trump, a mostly lifelong Democrat turned Republican only in recent years. The striking differences were that Clinton was quintessentially establishmentarian, having served as first lady (1993-2001), U.S. senator from New York (2001-2009), and secretary of state (2009-2013). She previously ran for president in 2012, considered a heavy favorite to win it all, but lost the Democratic primary to a then-little-known U.S. senator from Illinois, Barack Obama. Trump, in stark contrast, had never held a political seat in his life. In fact, he is the first president ever elected without either a political or a military background. From the onset of his campaign, he was outspoken in a manner that his supporters found refreshing and his detractors repulsive; they agreed – their sole sliver of common ground – in that he was certainly a different kind of candidate. In fact, Trump was so anti-establishment that not only were the Democratic Party and the left-leaning media not behind him, as would be predictable behavior toward a Republican, but neither were many in the Republican Party and the conservative media. Nonetheless, Trump bulldozed his way to the party nomination, defeating sixteen other GOP contenders – including five senators and nine governors. His signature issues were immigration – namely, ending illegal entry and stay – and unfair trade practices, an issue in which his views were, and are, nearly identical to the aforementioned Sanders, who is a self-proclaimed democratic socialist. Clinton ran on experience,

[11] Jeffry Bartash, "By This Measure, Trump Sounds More Liberal than Bernie Sanders," *Marketwatch*, 24 Feb. 2016, http://www.marketwatch.com/story/trump-is-the-most-liberal-republican-on-economics-since-nixon-2015-12-14.

stability, the opportunity to shatter the glass ceiling and elect a woman president, and the successes of the Obama and Clinton (Bill) administrations.

Most pundits predicted Clinton would win and were visibly stunned when the opposite occurred. Trump voters were delirious with joy, while many on the other side held views ranging from disbelief to anger, some blaming Clinton for taking swing state (Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin) voters for granted, others holding Russia responsible for meddling in the election in order to help Trump.[12]

Others yet attributed Trump's victory to a post-partisan, apolitical revolt against the establishment, basing their conclusions on the meteoric rise not only of Trump and Sanders in 2016, but also Obama in 2008. They pointed out that Sanders almost won the Democratic nomination, which would have pitted a fist-time politician against a democratic socialist.

**5. 2020: A Referendum on Trump**

For the first time in at least a generation, the 2020 election was mostly about one individual: Donald Trump. His backers continued to praise his presidency, citing record-high economic successes, record-low unemployment, tougher stances on trade, illegal entry and stay, political correctness, and media bias, whereas his critics condemned him as a crude racist, sexist, unhinged xenophobe, whose inexperience, instability, and hubris demeaned the office and imperiled the nation.

None of the two-dozen-plus Democratic candidates minced any words when it came to assailing Trump; the differences they had were among themselves, in terms of the future direction of the Democratic Party. To some extent, age was an issue – with Sanders, fellow senator (Mass.) Elizabeth Warren, and Joe Biden, who served as vice president during Obama's two terms and ultimately won both the party nomination and the general election, were all well over 70, versus at least ten who well under 60 and two, Congresswoman (Hawaii) Tulsi Gabbard and South Bend, Ind. mayor Pete Buttigieg, in their thirties. To a far greater extent, the differences were ideological. Sanders, Warren, Senators Cory Booker (N.J.) and Kamala Harris (Calif.), and a host of others moved to the left of Obama, at times criticizing Biden for backing some of Obama's policies. Biden, Congressmen John Delaney (Md.), and Tim Ryan (Ohio), and Sen. Michael Bennet (Colo.), were somewhat to the right of the field and closer to the American political center.

**6. Advice to Students: Be Your Own Newspaper**

Here is a helpful message for students:

Dear Students: political campaigns are so often emotionally charged, and those in the media who cover them, for whatever reason, may not always deliver the most accurate information. Most often, the inaccuracies are not based on outright lies, but rather on a failure to place information in proper context. Quite often,

[12] Victor Davis Hanson, "Why Trump Won," 11 Nov. 2016, Hoover Institution, retrieved on September 6, 2019, http://www.hoover.org/research/why-trump-won.

for example, journalists will cover a two-hour speech by a presidential candidate and focus almost entirely on a five-second gaffe. In other instances, the press will perpetuate a stereotype of a particular candidate because familiarity is often better received by readers and viewers than a challenge to think outside the box.

Therefore, be your own newspaper. Make sure to get information on an issue – whatever that issue may be – from sources that provide differing points of view. A left-leaning or right-leaning newspaper, magazine, or television show may be less likely to point out the flaws of a candidate it supports. Please make sure you get enough exposure to the other side as well. Also, whenever possible, use primary sources; watch speeches in their entirety. That way, you decide what is most important instead of a journalist deciding for you. Finally, remember to remain openminded, and follow these two ideas: 1. The truth can best be tested in the marketplace of ideas; and 2. I think I am right, but I could be wrong.