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"Prison Bound": South Central LA Graffiti Writer Narratives of Carcerality and the
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By

Alejandro Garcia

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of

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University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Rebecca M. McLennan, Co-Chair
Professor Waldo E. Martin, Jr., Co-Chair
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Abstract

"Prison Bound": South Central LA Graffiti Writer Narratives of Carcerality and the Making of a Youth Carceral Culture, 1941—2000

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From World War II to the early 1990s, Black and Brown people maintained peaceful intergroup relations on the streets of Los Angeles, California. The historical record shows that conflicts between these groups remained minimal and isolated, and that race only played a peripheral role. After the mid-1990s, this changed. Black-Brown interracial tensions and violence on the streets became more frequent. I argue that both California's formal neoliberal carceral state and its informal neoliberal carceral culture decisively shaped this change.

The thesis here is that when California developed its formal neoliberal carceral state between the 1970s and 2000s, its informal neoliberal carceral culture was also set in motion. By the 1990s, LA's street power dynamics and race relations were informed by relational carceral interactions that intersect with the formal carceral state, the informal carceral culture of prisoners, and the free-world of the streets, or what I call *carcerality*. The primary research bases are archival research, newspapers, policy records, papers of government officials, including papers from the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR), music lyrics and music videos, graffiti writings, gang member narratives, and oral histories of graffiti writers that I conducted. I argue that South Central LA's interracial graffiti crews of the 1980s and early 1990s echo in part a long history of fundamentally peaceful Black-Brown relations. In addition, I argue that the rupture between them in the mid-1990s reflects in large measure the impact of formerly Brown and Black prison gang members released concurrently onto LA's streets and into LA's communities.

As mass institutions forge mass culture, then institutions of mass incarceration help create sufficient carceral cohesion to form mass informal carceral cultures. The scholarship on the carceral state and mass incarceration mostly focuses on official top-down processes of incarceration. We still know very little about how informal carceral

cultures can appropriate the formal functions of the carceral state. Conversely, the scholarship on informal carceral cultures treats prisoners' interactions as having little, at best limited impact, on the outside world. However, a historical examination of carceral interactions that intersect a massive carceral state, its informal carceral culture, and the free-world of the streets provides us opportunities to deepen our understanding of the width and breadth of carceral intersubjectivities.

The scholarship on LA's Black-Brown relations emphasizes the interracial tensions and violence of the 1990s. But, that scholarship fails to account for a longer history of Black-Brown peaceful coexistence prior to the 1990s and how it ruptures under massive formal and informal carceral forces in the 1990s. The story of South Central's interracial graffiti crews helps us understand this. Prior to the 1990s, California prisons were the major site of Black-Brown interracial tensions and violence. When California massively expanded its carceral infrastructure during the 1970s throughout the early 2000s, this changed dramatically. With the release of prisoners from California's prisons in the 1990s, Black and Brown gang members and the related cultural dynamics spilled out into Black-Brown communities and helped fracture Brown-Black relations. As I demonstrate here, graffiti crews were not gangs, but they were also not exempt from the reach of prison gangs, especially once formerly incarcerated Brown and Black gang members left prisons and rejoined the 'free' world. Ultimately, in concert with street gangs, prison gangs sought to discipline or punish interracial graffiti crews, seeking to incorporate them inside the larger informal neoliberal carceral culture of California. To reiterate, as a result, the peaceful relations between LA's Black and Brown peoples endured a tremendous assault.

Dedication to

Mi estimada madre, Maria C. Campos

Si se Pudo!,

and

the memory of

Hector Esquivel, Jefe,

the memory of

Jose Mercado Zoronerocks,

and to

the carceral subjects that

Cant Hold Back

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Institutions, Mass Culture, and Neoliberal Carcerality

A few months after the 1992 South Central Los Angeles "Uprising" that happened in response to the acquittal of the three Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) police officers that brutalized a young African American man named Rodney G. King, graffiti writer Digest One enters his first year of high school in the city of Norwalk, California.[1] Events of this uprising had not escaped the nation, especially not young people living in Norwalk, given the city lies approximately sixteen miles southeast of South Central LA. Also, news media outlets had been following the case for over a year ever since the public broadcasting of the George Holliday videotape, which captured the March 3, 1991 morning, in the words of an independent commission, that

> Rodney G. King, a 25-year-old African American, was beaten by three
> uniformed police officer of the Los Angeles Police Department while a
> sergeant and a large group of LAPD, California Highway Patrol, and Los
> Angeles Unified School District Officers stood by.[2]

Furthermore, youngsters like Digest One had already become very familiar with LA's increasingly carceral policing forces. Young Black and Brown people were not at all surprised at the sight of various police units and departments – including school police – in concert with LAPD's use of excessive force on Rodney King. Mass incarceration was on the rise, and young people already interacted with the carceral blows of the

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[1] Newspapers mostly dubbed the uprising 'The L.A. Riots.' However, because of the ongoing police brutality leading up to April 1992, Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja documentation leads them to describe the event as an "uprising." My research in this dissertation agrees with Yusuf Jah's and Shah'Keyah's description. Thus, hereafter, I mostly use "uprising" to characterize the event. For "uprising," see Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja, *Uprising: Crips and Bloods Tell the Story of America's Youth in the Crossfire* ([First Published by New York: Scribner 1995.] New York: Touchstone Edition, 1997); for the quotation attributed to Rodney G. King, see Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles, Calif.), and Warren Christopher. 1991. *Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department*, p. 3; On Digest One (including all oral histories I conducted), I use pseudonyms to protect the safety and identity of human research subjects. Also, Digest One eventually changes his name to Reon One. For oral history of Reon One, see Alejandro Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups: A Short Street History of South Central L.A. Race Relations, 1980s-1990s* (Oral History Project, Protocol ID: 2012-01-3953 (Waldo E. Martin)) (hereafter, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*). A note on the word "One" after a writers' name: the use of "One' refers to the writer referring to themselves as the "first," just as in roman numerals references given to name of kings and queens (e.g., King Henry I, II, III, or IV, etc.…). Although some writers identified as a Two (or the second, as in "II"), most writers preferred the first (I), or "One."

[2] See *Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department*, p. 3.

state. Along with the rise of massive formal carceral policies and policing, however, a phenomenal carceral novelty would catch young Black and Brow people by surprise in the 1990s. This novelty turned out to be a massive informal neoliberal carceral culture that would be responsible for shaping social and racial arrangements on the streets of LA.

During this time, most Black and Brown youngsters in LA sought to circumvent the immediate social gatherings or groups that carceral forces already targeted, while at the same time participate in all the fun aspects of their contemporary youth culture. Youngsters sought social capital in various street organizations such as gangs, party crews, clubs, or graffiti crews.[3] Youngsters might have had a foot in gang life, but they also interacted and intersected with various *cohorts* – including those defined by race – from many groups. Each subcultural group, nonetheless, still managed to maintain its own specific identity and practice as a gang, a party crew, a club, or a graffiti crew.[4] The historical record shows, however, that between the 1980s and mid-1990s most young people belonged to cohorts doing graffiti as it went hand-in-glove with the rise of West Coast hip-hop, which was the trendiest movement of the time. "Belonging" was not lost on Digest One, for it already informed his identity and practice. "I didn't want to go to high school a fuckin' loner," Digest recalls, "...[affiliation] was a big deal."[5] Although he shuns gang affiliations during this part of his life-stage, Digest One was part of the young people already responsible for shaping the visual culture of the west coast hip-hop imaginary—the LA *graffiti writers*.[6]

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[3] In terms of "street organizations," the literature has mostly focused on gangs, but street organizations span other intermingling street groups and clubs that share time and space on the streets. For a synthesis of street organizations see Juan Francisco Esteva Martinez, "Urban Street Activist: Gang and Community Efforts to Bring Peace and Justice to Los Angeles Neighborhoods" in *Gangs and Society: Alternative Perspectives*, Ed Louis Kontos, David Brotherton, and Luis Barrios (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003): pg. 95-115.
[4] Gang studies usually encapsulate young people within variables and categories of gang make-up; however, we should also appreciate young people as historical actors who audition life chances and opportunities available to them and the cohorts they engage with during particular life-stages. A note on "cohorts," Deborah D. Jackson and Elizabeth E. Chapelski utilize the notion to help us conceptualize the socio-political levels, differences, and subtleties of varying subgroups within the generational life-stages of Native American tribes. In the same manner of life-stages, I employ "cohorts" here to characterize the shared historical differences, subtleties, and cohesiveness of subgroups and the life-stages of individual street organizations. For "cohorts," see Deborah D. Jackson and Elizabeth E. Chapelski, "Not Traditional, Not Assimilated: Elderly American Indians and the Notion of Cohort," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* 2000, (Kluwer Academic Publishers. Printed in the Netherlands) pp. 229-259.
[5] Reon One, in *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.
[6] "Graffiti movement" was a common theme that emerged out of the oral histories I conducted in Alejandro Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups: A Short Street History of South Central L.A. Race Relations, 1980s-1990s* (Oral History Project, Protocol ID:

Studying LA graffiti writers gives us not only an opportunity to learn about their contribution to hip-hop culture but also examine what surrounded and shaped the graffiti writers themselves during the 1980s and 1990s. As I recorded South Central graffiti writers' oral histories, their narratives provided me a window into the lives of young Black and Brown people living situations related to incarceration on the streets of LA during the 1980s and 1990s. On the one hand, graffiti writers were at the heart of hip-hop youth culture; on the other hand, they came head-on on in the streets with a massive carceral state that also included a massive informal carceral culture of prisoners. If mass institutions forge mass culture, do formal institutions of mass incarceration also accommodate enough carceral cohesion within the informal culture of prisoners to influence the streets? Do formal carceral forces and informal carceral cultures of prisoners change social and even racial arrangements of street cultures? The thesis herein is that when California developed its formal neoliberal carceral state between the 1970s and 2000s, by the 1990s that development had concurrently set in motion the state's informal neoliberal carceral culture. In turn, relational carceral intersubjectivities – or *carcerality* – that interacted and intersected with the formal carceral state, the informal carceral culture of prisoners, and the free-world of the streets significantly shaped LA's street power dynamics and race relations.

Although we know much about mass incarceration's top-down impact on society, and although we are also aware of how prisoners are conditioned and socialized to abide by the rules and regulations in their dominant informal subcultures of incarceration, we must also understand how both of these carceral forces have come to historically interact and intersect in relational ways with larger cultures of the streets. The state may lay down its formal carceral structures, but informal carceral culture formations have also been found to happen alongside prisoners' abilities to appropriate the state's formal carceral functions. Carceral intersubjectivities, then, should not be limited to those held in captivity alone but should also range across all carceral subjects that massive carceral webs and pipeline connect on the streets. Based on archival research, newspapers, policy and police records, papers of government officials, including papers from the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR), music lyrics and music videos, and also graffiti vandalism, along with gang member narratives, as well as oral histories of graffiti writers that I conducted, I argue that South Central LA's interracial graffiti crews of the 1980s and early 1990s echo in part a long history of coexisting Black-Brown relations. Furthermore, I argue that their interracial rupture thereafter reflects the footprints of larger relational carceral interactions and intersections that carceral subjects have with the free-world of the

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2012-01-3953 (Waldo E. Martin)). About half of oral history narrators called this graffiti writer movement but the historical record strongly indicates this was a movement especially as it relates to the emergence of hip-hop, and the five elements of hip-hop (graffiti is one of them).

streets, California's formal carceral state, and California's informal neoliberal carceral culture.

The historical record along with graffiti writer narratives tell a lot about hip hop but also about how young people found pathways to engage and disengage carceral structures on the streets of South Central LA during the rise of hip-hop and of mass incarceration. As others have documented, hip-hop comprises five elements: emceeing, dj-ing, dancing, knowledge, and graffiti writing.[7] These five elements – or hip-hop – first emerged out of the streets of The Bronx, New York, during the late 1970s and early 1980, but by 1980, LA's young Black and Brown people had already adopted these elements, giving them their west coast features and enunciations. LA's five elements of hip-hop reflected the consciousness of the time and space that young Black and Brown people inhabited on the West Coast. In particular, graffiti writers captured those visual existentialist assertions with paint, art, and signatures. LA's graffiti writing was as significant as what surrounded and shaped the graffiti writers themselves.

LA's graffiti style and depictions were but one of many west coast hip-hop features. Another example was the Mexican American youth car culture – or the *lowrider* – which became a significant artifact and emblem of the west coast hip-hop imagery. The Mexican American *lowrider* automobile did not need to debut, for it had been part of LA's Chicano/Mexican American youth culture since the 1950s.[8] Furthermore, lowriders were also depicted on every music album cover of the twelve bootleg "East Side Story" music volumes released from the mid-1970s through the

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[7] For the five elements of hip-hop culture see A. Frick and C. Ahearn, Eds., *Yes, Yes, Y'All: The Experience Music Project's Oral History of Hip-Hop's First Decade* (De Capo Press, 2002): 43–44; Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation* (St. Martin's Press, 2005): 90; Johan Kugelberg, *Born in the Bronx* (Oxford University Press, 2007): 17; Greg Thomas, "To make the revolution come quicker": For Sex, Hip-Hop & Black Radical Tradition (a riff in three movements)," *Words.Beats.Life: The Global Journal of Hip Hop Culture: The Sex Issue*, Vol. 4, no. 2 (2010): 26.

[8] While early west coast hip-hop depicts the Chicano *lowrider* in its lyrics and images, only recent historical accounts and documentaries have treated the lowrider as a significant aspect of west coast hip-hop. The origins of the Chicano lowrider, however, date back to the 1950s. For a recent documentary depicting the Chicano lowrider in early west coast hip-hop, see Estevan Oriol, *LA Originals* (Netflix Documentary, 2020); for a history of the Chicano *lowrider* see Matt Garcia, "Memories of El Monte: Intercultural Dance Halls in Post-World II Greater Los Angeles" in Joe Austin and Michael Nevin Willard, *Generations of Youth: Youth Culture and History in Twentieth-Century America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1998), 157–172: 161; for an established South Central lowrider car club dating back to 1962 specific to my research site see Dukes Car Club and Ruelas Brothers in Denise Michelle Sandoval, "The Dukes 'It's a Family Affair" *Coachbuilt* (June 1999): http://www.coachbuilt.com/des/r/ruelas/ruelas.htm (seen March 27, 2022).

1980s.[9] In *Lowrider*, a Mexican American automobile magazine that came out of San Jose, California, in 1977, lowriders were also showcased on almost every page of every issue of every year.[10] In the dawn of west coast hip-hop in 1980, the car became part of the west coast hip-hop identity.

African Americans in LA embraced the lowrider and added their own cultural specificities to the ride. When African American hip-hop emcee and rapper Eazy-E enunciated the lyrics "Cruising down the street in my six-fo'..." in his 1987 hit song "Boyz-n-da-Hood," he only echoed what was already in motion on the streets of LA, if not the entire west coast.[11] The larger hip-hop culture may not have been familiar with a six-fo', but west coast's hip-hoppers could easily envision a 1964 Chevrolet Impala lowrider automobile thumping hip-hop music on the streets. This marriage – lowriders and hip-hop – was unique to LA and the west coast. Lowriders thumping hip-hop music invited and transformed LA's streets into hip-hop ambiances.

LA's graffiti writing was no different. Graffiti writing also invited the public to visually consume hip-hop imagery off the city's public walls, buses, highways, and other cityscapes on which graffiti writers scribed their paint, art, and signatures. LA's graffiti visually interacted with the public as much as the public reacted to it. Graffiti writing was historical. In other words, west coast hip-hop was informed by how young Black and Brown people interactions with each other and their world.

Young people also made a name for themselves by participating in hip-hop; as such, hip-hop gatherings also informed young people's social capital. At social gatherings, young people auditioned or exercised emceeing, dj-ing, dancing, knowledge, and graffiti writing. Often, young people engaged in more than one element. You may find the same emcee rap lyrics at one point, and after that same person might be found making hip-hop dancing moves on the floor or later catch that

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[9] East LA Guy. 2011. "You Found that Eastside Sound" in East LA Guy Productions: (Accessed March 30, 2022) http://wwwyoufoundthateastsidesoundcom.blogspot.com/2011/05/east-side-story-volumes-1-12.html; CaliBexar. Melissa Dueñas "DJ Lil' Smiley," curator. *East Side Story Project Art Show*. 2016. Boyle Heights: Self Help Graphics. *Vimeo*. October 28, 2016. (Accessed March 29, 2022): https://vimeo.com/189285844; Roberto Camacho, "'The Untold Story': Melissa 'DJ Lil' Smiley' Dueñas Uncovers the Little Known History Behind 'The East Side Story' Albums With an Ambitious Documentary Series. Interview (*Stepp Off! Magazine*: March 11, 2019). (Accessed March 29, 2020) https://stepoffmagazine.com/2019/03/11/the-untold-story-melissa-dj-lil-smiley-duenas-uncovers-the-little-known-history-behind-the-east-side-story-albums-with-an-ambitious-documentary-series/; for later remasters series reference "East Side Story : Vol. 1." San Jose, California: Trenton Music, 1987.

[10] "35 Years in the Life: Lowrider Magazine 1977-2012 Celebrating 35 years in the Life of Lowriding." Low rider 34, no. 1 (2012) 50-.

[11] Eazy-E, "Boyz-n-da-Hood," in "N.W.A and the Posse (United States: Ruthless Records, 1987).

same person writing graffiti on surfaces. Most youngsters usually stuck to doing whatever elements in which they excelled. Nonetheless, those skilled in graffiti grammar became LA's hip-hop graffiti writers. Together, they made up LA's *graffiti writer movement*, as cohorts of individuals or as graffiti crews. As expressed in the NSA acronym of a 1980s graffiti crew, writers kept hip-hop in constant "Non Stop Action."[12]

Young Black-Brown interracial groups out of South Central first accelerated LA's graffiti writer movement during the 1980s and early 1990s. As hip-hop crystalized city-wide, graffiti writers and crews also expanded and diversified. Young people first forged these mass city-wide relations and networks within the re-launching of the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) racial integration school busing program that failed in the 1970s. During the 1970s, anti-racial integrationists pushed against LAUSD's ethnoracial student exchange busing program, but by the 1980s, LAUSD modified its efforts to only make it possible for young people from inner cities such as South Central to take fifteen-to-forty minute school-bus rides to attend school at better resourced public schools in the more affluent communities of LA. The movers and doers of hip-hop's elements also took these bus rides, graffiti writers included. These new channels of contact and communication allowed young people from the inner city to forge hip-hop and graffiti writer relations with young people from affluent areas. With time, these relations would only further solidify through other public and private means of transportation and engagements.

This is the world that Digest One walked into in the Fall of 1992. Hip-hoppers and graffiti writers had already forged relations with each other beyond their local neighborhoods. Hip-hop and graffiti writing was city-wide. A hip-hop graffiti youngster could reside in South Central neighborhoods and have affiliations with cohorts or graffiti crews as far north as North Hollywood, the San Fernando Valley, or Pasadena, or far east as East LA, the San Gabriel Valley, or far west as West LA, Venice Beach, and Santa Monica to far south and southeast as Watts, Compton, Huntington Park, Norwalk, and Long Beach. As Digest One recalls, "youngsters" from in "…and outside of Norwalk…were doing this [graffiti] shit."[13] The most noticeable sign of the times was the writing on the wall, which was all over the larger Los Angeles area. To the untrained eyes that gazed upon graffiti writers' indecipherable scribes of paint, art, and signatures, it may have appeared as though gangs were rising. Nonetheless, and as expressed in the CWV acronym of another 1980s graffiti crew, LA

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[12] NSA was a graffiti crew's acronym for "Non Stop Action." NSA was one of the early to mid-1980s graffiti crews in South Central LA. Throughout this dissertation, I will typically utilize graffiti crews and their acronyms to showcase them as historical groups as well as to demonstrate how graffiti crew acronyms provide existential articulations of the world they navigated. For graffiti crews and acronyms see *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.
[13] Reon One, in *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.

witnessed the rise of "City Wide Vandals."[14] This was the case by 1990, as graffiti writers from various LA areas made it their goal to write their craft locally and across the entire City of Angeles.

In this graffiti writer environment, youngsters such as Digest One found social capital and the possibility for forming alternative identities and groups outside street gangs. In the many 'islands of street gangs,' youngsters might have found it difficult to develop alternative forms of grouping fully.[15] Within 'in-between' urban spaces beyond the purview of street gangs — or what I see as *street archipelagos* — young people involved in hip-hop and graffiti found ways to exercise alternative street identities and group formations.[16] The LAUSD's busing system and other public and private means of transportation were examples of mass archipelagos that helped youngsters make contact with one another outside the many islands of street gangs. Within these in-between zones, youngsters such as Digest formed and joined groups beyond the possibility of neighborhood gang life. As Digest One recounts, "I did not want to get involved with that [gang life]."[17] Digest's memory of his earlier days as a graffiti writer not only testifies to the alternative group possibilities but also echoes common sentiments most young people held during the 1980s up to 1992. 'Belonging' indicated being part of hip-hop hangouts and groups. Given that young people messed around with all five elements of hip-hop, more likely than not, belonging implicated being part of a graffiti crew.

Graffiti cohorts and crews met at various street archipelagos. Wherever they went, graffiti writers marked up their hip-hop graffiti art and signatures. Graffiti crew hangouts and graffiti writing ranged from places and spaces, from school buses and public buses, to movie theaters and fast-food restaurants, to personal hip-hop house and beach parties, to highways and rail train yards, to abandoned lots and allies. In such archipelagos, youngsters met to exchange, create, and cultivate graffiti writing and hip-hop.

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[14] CWV was the acronym for "City Wide Vandals," a mid-1980s-early-1990s graffiti crew in South Central LA. As mentioned earlier, I utilize graffiti crews and their acronyms to reflect the history and also to gain access to how young people thought about themselves in relation to each other and their world.

[15] Scholars have thought of gangs and their territories as structurally and socially specific organizations that offer youngsters few choices for alternative grouping or identity inside neighborhoods; hence, islands. For islands and street gangs see Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Streets: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1991).

[16] According to Sanchez-Jankowski, street gangs, and their specific territories are analogous to "islands," then thus street archipelagos are the in-between zones beyond the purview of street gangs.

[17] Reon One, in *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.

Gang members themselves also could not resist the graffiti writer and hip-hop trend. Gang members would have one foot representing their local neighborhood gang while the other in graffiti writing and hip-hop. As Estevan Oriol shows in his *LA Originals*, before Mister Cartoon became the renowned hip-hop tattoo artist he is today, he moved within both the graffiti writer and gang worlds during the 1980s and early1990s.[18] Furthermore, Mister Cartoon even asserts that the street-style of art for which he is sought after is a product of merging hip-hop graffiti art with the collage art style that street gangs and prisoners made. Young people's leisure time and school time during the 1980s and 1990s was primarily spent in hip-hop, and gang members spent a significant time on the side of graffiti writing.

Graffiti writing was extremely popular among-young people in 1992, and Digest's participation in it exemplified larger patterns of this graffiti youth culture. During his first semester in high school, for example, Digest encouraged fellow peers to join his graffiti crew or cohort. Branding or rebranding oneself with a graffiti name (or crew) had to be done in accordance with graffiti writers' street codes. Before a writer could take up any username, a writer first needed to be informed as to whether someone else had already obtained the username they contemplated holding. Once confident that no other writer(s) was "up" with the username they considered, they could take on the new username as their own writer name.[19] Thereafter, it would be up to that graffiti writer to maintain their name "up" in circulation.

While in high school, Digest 'gives' his own name, "Digest One," to his friend so to encourage his friend to join the graffiti movement. Digest's friend accepts the name. The former Digest rebrands (rename) himself with a new username. Once certain that no other writer was "up" with the new username he considered, former Digest takes on the writer name, Reon One.[20]

By winter 1992, Reon One travels to Mexico to visit his extended family for the Christmas holidays. In the spirit of "getting up," Reon One continued his writer craft on

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[18] Mister Cartoon claims his art and graffiti style was born when he merged the Mexican American gang and penitentiary collage style with the hip-hop's graffiti style. For claims of Mister Cartoon see Estevan Oriol, *LA Originals* (Netflix Documentary, 2020).

[19] "Up" or "Getting up" were common vernacular narrators used to describe how graffiti was used to declare one's own existence or a graffiti crew's existence. It was very uncommon that two people would have the same graffiti writer name throughout the city of LA. By "getting up", graffiti writers simultaneously promoted and validated each other. This was understood clearly from the oral history project I conducted in Alejandro Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups: A Short Street History of South Central L.A. Race Relations, 1980s-1990s* (Oral History Project, Protocol ID: 2012-01-3953 (Waldo E. Martin)). For related ideas see Jennifer H. Edbauer, "(Meta)Physical Graffiti: 'Getting Up' As Effective Writing Model." *JAC*, Vol. 25. No. 1 (2005): pp. 131-159; Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality* (New York: Garland, 1993).

[20] See Reon One, in *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.

a small ranch in Michoacán, Mexico.[21] It was not unusual for young people to transport or export their graffiti writer identity and praxis wherever they traveled. "Getting up" locally, city-wide, nationally, and even internationally (if the opportunity presented itself) was a graffiti writer's rule and challenge. As Elio Espana notes in *Banksy and the Rise of Outlaw Art*, a young Englishmen, Robert Del Naja (who Espana suggests is Banksy), exported to Bristol, England, the American graffiti writing he learned from young Black and Brown New Yorkers during the 1980s.[22] Self-marketing names, crews, and hip-hop events through the graffiti medium was the practice. For Reon, Michoacán was no exception. Towns and villages of Michoacán saw Reon's mark go up.

   Reon One returns to Norwalk sometime before the start of the spring 1993 school year, but things were different in LA from when he left for Mexico. The street climate was different because Black-Brown relations were hostile and violent. Prior, Black-Brown conflict was rare and gang violence was usually only intraracial. Now, interracial tensions and conflicts on the streets seemed frequent, especially within gang life. This new beef was complex because although Black and Brown gang groups may have defined themselves along ethnoracial lines, interracial group membership had been possible. Mexican American people, for example, had membership in African American street gangs; and Mexican American street gangs, too, had African Americans within their ranks. Graffiti crews were also very interracial from their start in the 1980s up to 1993. Unlike street gangs, graffiti writers were not defined along ethnoracial lines but by graffiti art and stylish signatures (subject of Chapter Five). This new beef, however, was interracial to the degree that it posed challenges to the prevailing racial and social street arrangements. This new interracial beef on the streets stemmed from carceral race relations that started interacting with street power relations throughout LA.

   In Norwalk, the Black population was not as concentrated as in South Central LA, but the Black-Brown interracial tensions were starting to saturate throughout LA. Prison-like Black-Brown hostile relations surged on the streets of LA and implicated everyone, especially graffiti crews. Sensing the street hostility against graffiti crews, Reon One recalls, "I stopped chillin'" with graffiti writers.[23] This time, Reon shuns graffiti writers. Like many graffiti writers, Reon was now being approached by street gangs about his affiliation. Put another way, he increasingly came face-to-face with the harsh reality of rising interracial tensions in his own world owing to interracial carceral tensions now spilling out into the streets of LA. It would not be long before Reon One would be recruited to join his neighborhood ethnoracial street gang.

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[21] See Reon One, in *From Interracial Graffiti Crews*.
[22] Elio Espana, *Banksy and the Rise of Outlaw Art* (Vision Films Inc., 2020).
[23] Ibid.

By the summer of 1993, Reon One joins his neighborhood gang in Norwalk and again changes his street name. Reon One takes on the street name "Dreamer." Following the new informal prison-street culture codes, Dreamer starts to develop a new sense of hostility and prejudice against "taggers," graffiti writers and crews, but also against Black people.[24] Whether Dreamer knew it or not, his gang-time with the local street gang was also becoming his exposure and training for what Heather Jane McCarty calls the "gang-time" culture of California prison life.[25] The only nuance, here, was that this gang-time was not just taking place in prison life but was interacting with him on the streets of his local neighborhood. Dreamer would undoubtedly know this much later when he found himself prison-bound to the California Department of Corrections with a 15-year-long sentence, that included a housing stop at the Pelican Bay State Prison's infamous Security Housing Unit (SHU).

That spring of 1993, when Reon One (Dreamer) returned to Norwalk from Mexico, he came home to an ethnoracial political climate seeking to rebuild peaceful relations after the LA uprising.[26] Reon (Dreamer), however, did not participate in any 'official' post-uprising rebuilding plans or with any Black-Brown interracial community rebuilding efforts.[27] Instead, Dreamer was part of another narrative: an emerging carceral story of change that involved a Black-Brown interracial culture of violence on the streets of LA linked to California's local and state institutions of incarceration. From the perspective of South Central LA, and under the banner of "peace," ethnoracial street organizations also attempted to build peaceful relations. These peace treaties, however, were being spearheaded by those who Heather McCarty calls California's prison 'gang-lords.'[28] Peace treaties initially had interracial solidarity yearnings, but they quickly consolidated into intraracial "truces." On the one hand, this made sense because during this time Black-Brown interracial gang violence was rare.

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Heather Jane McCarty depicts California prison "gang-time" as a culture where prisoners not only serve their own prison sentences as individuals but also as direct or indirect participants in the informal ethnoracial prison-gang culture of incarceration. For "gang-time" see Heather Jane McCarty, "From Con-Boss to Gang Lord: The Transformation of Social Relations in California Prisons, 1943–1983" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2004), 387.

[26] For a sense of overall views on interracial hostilities Post-L.A. Uprising reconstruction, see Robert Gooding-Williams, *Reading Rodney King/reading urban uprising* (New York: Routledge 1993); Mark Baldassare, *The Los Angeles Riots: Lessons for the Urban Future. Urban policy Challenges.* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); Kwang Chung Kim, *Koreans in the hood: conflict with African Americans* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Hak Choi Sung, *Trouble City: Korean-Black Conflicting post-insurrection Los Angeles.* (London: Routledge, 2006).

[27] See Afary Kamran, *Performance and Activism: Grassroots Discourse After The Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006).

[28] McCarty, "From Con-Boss to Gang Lord" (2004).

Therefore, there was really no need for Black-Brown interracial peace. On the other hand, the outcomes of these intraracial peace treaties were turning out to consolidate prison-like Black-Brown interracial tensions and even violence on the streets at alarming rates.

What made this possible in the early 1990s was how mass carceral power dynamics of the formal carceral state and of the informal carceral culture of prisoners interacted and intersected with the free world of the streets. Up to this point, the only place where Black and Brown people were conditioned and socialized in a culture of Black-Brown interracial violence was in California prisons. Conversely, the historical record shows, since World War II, LA's young Black and Brown people had always maintained coexisting race relations on the streets. While random acts of Black-Brown interracial conflicts were seen, the historical record shows that they usually remained sporadic and isolated, and that race only played a peripheral role. From 1993 forward, however, social and racial arrangements and conflicts on the streets of LA would be informed by the relational carceral interactions the informal carceral culture of prisoners had with the formal carceral state and the free world of the streets; and race would be at the center of these conflicts.

This set in motion the conditions of change in South Central LA's social and racial street arrangements. Kelly Lytle Hernandez and others argue, "…we are now living in an era when the state's carceral capacity — that is, the state's capacity to police and cage — is broadly substantive and consequential."[29] Given the state's capacity to cage, that capacity meant that the culture of prisoners influenced everything that the formal carceral state contaminated. In these relational ways, by the mid-1990s, the streets cultures of LA were also succumbing to the informal carceral culture of prisoners.California's massive incarceration of Black and Brown people intensified carceral ties between prison life and street life. As Chapter Six demonstrates, after the 1992 uprising, the streets of LA witnessed ethnoracial gangs not only initiating prison-like intraracial 'Peace Treaties' within ethnoracial street organizations, but like in California prisons, they also sharpened Black-Brown interracial conflicts and violence on the street.[30] The graffiti writer movement was not exempt from these street conflicts.

Interracial graffiti crews were not seen as gangs or gangs' territorial foes. In the aftermath of the uprising, however, ethnoracial street gangs, in concert with prison gangs, sought to incorporate graffiti crews into their carceral realm. If graffiti crews

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[29] Kelly Lytle Hernandez, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, and Heather Ann Thompson, "Introduction: Constructing the Carceral State," *Journal of American History*, June 2015; 102 (1): 18-24. doi: 10.1093/jahist/jav259: 20.

[30] Scholars have studied these treaties, and although they do not directly acknowledge how treaties took place only within gangs' own ethnoracial homogenous group, they show that peace treaties were only intraracial. See, for example, Karen Umemoto, *The Truce: Lessons from an L.A. Gang War,* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006).

opposed, street gangs in concert with prison gangs threatened to "open season" on graffiti crews. Those in street life remember this moment as the "green light" against writers, taggers, and graffiti crews.[31] Graffiti writers, and young Black and Brown people in general, had to navigate this extra-legal "green light" prison-street policy in ways that epitomize the rules of change in LA. Young people's choices were not just based on preferences. In addition, carcerality informed the decisions they made on the streets. Carcerality involved how their livelihood was implicated within a range of relational carceral power dynamics that interacted and intersected with the formal carceral state, the informal neoliberal carceral culture of prisoners, and their free world on the streets.

On top of this, LA's carceral history is also significant because it is where California's massive carceral state first sunk its teeth into its population during the 1980s and 1990s. Consequently, rapid and identifiable change appeared earliest and most fully in LA. Although not the topic of this dissertation, my evidentiary observations do not deny that similar carceral dynamics also manifested throughout southern and northern California and that they are specific to their own local history. However, when California's caging capacity more than doubled in size, its major carceral population came from LA.

Carceral City LA

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations' (CDCR) *California Prisoners and Parolees* records show that for every year between 1987-1998 the majority of its overall carceral population, including its newly admitted and its cycled prisoner population, came from Los Angeles, California. This is significant because the CDCR record also shows that "The largest population increase occurred between 1987 and 1997 when the institution increased by 131.8 percent."[32] According to CDCR records, "Los Angeles alone …" accounts for most of 1) the overall prisoner

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[31] Reon One, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*, "green light" is a prison and street code that leaders of gangs use to announce when a group or individuals should be targeted with violence for being uncooperative with gang leaders' requests. When a "green light" is put out on individuals or groups, they usually entail various coercive mechanisms by which gangs or gang leaders' control, punish, extort, and even murder to achieve their ends. Most gangs knew that there was a 'Green Light', or 'open season' on graffiti writers in Southern California.

[32] California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Offender Information Service Branch Data Analysis Unit, "Historical Trends, 1987 - 2007" (Sacramento: State of California, 2007): (Accessed Nov 7, 2016) http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Reports_Research/Offender_Information_Services_Branch/index.html: p. vi.

population; 2) the newly admitted to prison; 3) the released on parole; and 4) the parole violators returned to prison.[33]

      The percentage of Brown (Hispanic/Mexican) population increased from 28.17% to about 34%, the percentage of the Black population slightly decreased from 34.9% to about 32%, and the percentage of the white population also slightly decreased from 32.5% to about 30%.[34] Real numbers for all groups, however, actually more than doubled because in the span of only ten years (1987-1997) California also opened twenty-two new prisons in addition to its existing fourteen.[35] In January of 1987 California totaled only thirteen prisons, but by 1997 the number of prisons reached thirty-three. California's total combined carceral population (imprisoned, newly admitted, parolee, and recidivist) spiked from 120,510 in 1987 to 297,383 by 1998; and LA's population made up its highest demographic in all its carceral trends.[36]

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[33] For a survey of years that specifically emphasize the quotation "Los Angeles alone …" as the major population outlier see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1987." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1987-archive.pdf: p. 16; for 1990 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1990." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1990-archive.pdf: p. 2:7; for 1991 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1991." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1991-archive.pdf: p. 7:4; for 1992 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1992." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1992-archive.pdf: p. 5:8; between the 1993-1997, the format of the "California Prisoners and Parolees" statistics changed but Los Angeles continued to account for the highest in the same carceral aspects. For immediate reference to this continuity in the imprisoned population see Table 10 (1997) "Los Angeles 55,128 (35.5%)" and Table 10 (1998) "Los Angeles 56, 440 (35.4%)" in "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1997-1998." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1997-1998-archive.pdf: pp. 42-43.
[34] Ibid, 2.
[35] Ibid; for chronology of prisons see California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, "California State Prisons Chronology." (Accessed February 2, 2019). https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Prisons/docs/CA-State-Prisons-chronology.pdf.
[36] For an overall prisoner population characterization between 1987-1998 see California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations (CDCR) Office of Research: Archived Research, *California Prisoners and Parolees*. (Accessed February 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/archived-research/. The real numbers cited here up to 1998 because real numbers for 1997 are absent in "California Prisoners and Parolees 1997-1998" records. Other data sets, nonetheless, confirm that 1998 more than less was consistent with the prisoner population of 1997. For accurate numbers and years in reference see Department of Corrections Administrative Services Division Offender Information Service Branch Estimates and Statistical Analysis Section Data Analysis Unit, "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1987: Summary Statistics on Felon Prisoners and Parolees, Civil Narcotic Addict Inpatients and Outpatients and Other Populations" (Sacramento, California, 1988) (hereafter, "California Prisoners and Parolees [*year*]"). (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-

As I argue in the pages to follow, as Black and Brown people from LA rapidly got cycled into and out of prisons during the 1990s, institutions of mass incarceration also accommodated enough carceral cohesion for the informal culture of prisoners to interact with the streets in relational ways. The informal culture of prisoners and the street culture of young people forged cohesion with each other under the commonly shared experiences that interacted with the massive carceral state. The lines blurred between the informal carceral culture of prisoners and the culture of the streets.

The history of South Central LA is strikingly connected to California's carceral history. The ward's significance in LA's history of crime, punishment, and mass incarceration is well-documented. There are also strong works showing how the FBI's COINTELPRO program, industrialization and deindustrialization, economic displacement, the "War on Poverty" and "War on Drugs," the decline of the Welfare State, the Prison Industrial Complex, the New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration, and the Carceral State have had major and lasting impacts on South Central, and LA more generally. [37] Just as impactful in caging Black and Brown people, however, has been how mass penal institutions conditioned and socialized a massive informal culture of prisoners beyond prison walls, jails, cages, and paroles.

Youth Cultures and Cultures of Young People

Youth cultures are both products and agents of history. They are both the product of how society views and acts upon young people, on the one hand, and on the other hand, of how young people socialize themselves and inhabit these historical

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content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1987-archive.pdf: p. 3; and "California Prisoners and Parolees 1997-1998). (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1997-1998-archive.pdf: p. 3.

[37] Among many works see Eric Schlosser, "The Prison Industrial Complex," A three-part series in the *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1998). http://www.theatlantic.com/issue/98dec/prison.html; Christian Parenti, *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis* (London and New York: Verso, 1999); Marc Mauer, *Race to Incarcerate: The Sentencing Project* (New York: The New Press, 1999, 2006); Ruthie Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010); Berger, Dan (2010) *"We Are The Revolutionaries": Visibility, Protest, and Racial Formation in 1970s Prison Radicalism.* Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Donna Jean Murch, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill: University Press, 2010); Kelly Lytle Hernandez, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, and Heather Ann Thompson, "Introduction: Constructing the Carceral State," *Journal of American History*, June 2015; 102 (1): 18-24. doi: 10.1093/jahist/jav259.

categories of "youth."[38] Youth groups such as graffiti writers and crews all happen under the mass workings or failures, inclusions or exclusions of the mass machines and mass socializing institutions of modern US history. From formal organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs and debutante societies to risking common life chances on street corners and abandoned lots, they all provide young people the opportunity to be socialized with each other. Young people meet, become acquainted, 'hang out,' and build cohesion or solidarity with each other under commonly shared experiences.

The rise of cities, mass schooling, radio, television, and the internet have all shaped youth culture. Institutions of mass discipline, mass punishment, and mass carcerality are also outcomes and producers of culture. "Mass incarceration," as Hernandez and others underscore, "has had a major impact on everything from how urban and suburban spaces have evolved to how electoral maps are drawn to how national borders are defined and maintained to how state and federal resources are distributed to how social movements are made and unmade to how gender roles are bolstered and undermined to how cultural norms and identities are forged and reinforced to how sexuality is profiled and policed."[39] The formal and informal regimentation involved in mass carceral institutions, hence, also socializes (or glues) people with each other in unique ways to produce massive informal carceral cultures.

Under these historical socializing influences and from the vantage point of how society asks us to view youth, young people create, invent, and reinvent themselves. Young people's groups, organizations, movements, trends, styles, and modalities become forged in modern American history—or form culture. Young people's survival might depend on entering, contesting, or navigating their formal incorporation into modern American projects. When modernity's one-size-fits-all models such as laws, policies, or reforms are not fully inclusive, young people generally reinvent themselves accordingly. They create, reject, or resist their modern socializing machines, institutions, and powers.[40] After all, groups or organizations such as the *Zoot Suiters*,

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[38] Joe Austin and Michael Nevin Willard eds., *Generations of Youth: Youth Culture and History in Twentieth-Century America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1998): pg. 1.

[39] Kelly Lytle Hernandez, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, and Heather Ann Thompson, "Introduction: Constructing the Carceral State," *Journal of American History*, June 2015; 102 (1): 18-24. doi: 10.1093/jahist/jav259: p. 19.

[40] The United States has been in the project of managing mass populations of young people through mass institutions of modernity. For works that influence my historical thinking on "incorporation" and institutions of American modernity see Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang 1967); Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); William *Leach, Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), and Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (Jackson Lears; 2009).

the *Pachucos and Pachucas, Greasers*, the *Street Hustlers,* the *Spook Hunters,* the *Devil Hunters,* the *Lowrider* Clubs or artifacts, *Punk-rockers*, the *Cholos* and *Cholas* (or *Ese's),* the *Bloods* and *Crips* are all American made.[41] We can only make sense of young people and the space they inhabit in society by taking them seriously in their own terms. Thus, whether mainstream inclusions or exclusions occur, or whether young people accept or reject the mainstream, young people are incorporated in society in these same relational ways.

"Getting Up" in the Carceral City LA

Looking at young people living against this larger backdrop of institutional, social, cultural, and carceral power dynamics allows us to grasp more comprehensively California carceral story of the 1980s and 1990s.[42] During this time, youngsters dabbled in graffiti and joined graffiti crews while also seeking to dodge or disentangle themselves from formal and informal relationships symptomatic of expanding carceral webs. South Central LA's young Black and Brown people "got up," or used "getting up" as a mechanism to circumnavigate formal and informal carceral situations.[43] "Getting up" did (perhaps still does) mean graffiti writing, vandalizing with an artistic style form, and also moralizing the names and/or graffiti crews' initials throughout the city as often as possible.

Getting up also involved ways that youngsters innovated channels of communication, whereby they also claimed, reclaimed, and validated their own existences and their own notions of dignity. Graffiti writers called themselves "Kings" and "Queens," but these identities were more indicative of how young people reclaimed their own worth and less about subscribing to hierarchical roles.[44] In the graffiti writer world, anyone could become a King and Queen if they chose to "get up" that way. This

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[41] Although there are many groups and street organizations in modern American history, the examples I provide here are examples of groups and street organizations I engage in this dissertation.

[42] "Graffiti movement" was a common theme the emerged out of the oral histories I conducted in Alejandro Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups: A Short Street History of South Central L.A. Race Relations, 1980s-1990s* (Oral History Project, Protocol ID: 2012-01-3953 (Waldo E. Martin)).

[43] "Getting up" was common vernacular narrators used to describe how graffiti was used to communicate while simultaneously promoting and validating oneself or graffiti crew's existence. The concept developed primarily from the oral history project I conducted in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*; for other related ideas see Jennifer H. Edbauer, "(Meta)Physical Graffiti: 'Getting Up' As Effective Writing Model." *JAC*, Vol. 25. No. 1 (2005): pp. 131-159; Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality* (New York: Garland, 1993).

[44] A mostly capitalized "King(s)" and "Queens" not because of my own choosing, but rather because this was also usual common vernacular and common grammatical aesthetic in the graffiti writer world.

made a lot more sense when I interviewed older South Central LA graffiti writers. I asked them to tell me what influenced them to make graffiti, including hip-hop—or, as I understand it now, I indirectly asked what influenced to fight the streets; or 'beat street.' South Central's early writers referenced New York's interracial graffiti crews and hip-hop culture found in Stan Lathan's 1984 film *Beat Street*.[45]

The film *Beat Street* provides a sense of origins and major elements of hip-hop culture, including the role of graffiti writers. The film delves into the creativity young people utilized to survive in a deindustrialized world of poverty, gangs, and policing—common themes that also kept reappearing in the graffiti writers' oral histories I conducted. Even the film's theme song, "Beat Street Breakdown" by Grandmaster Melle Mel, offers a lens through which to think about the history and the conditions of hip-hoppers, taggers, graffiti writers, and young people overall living in a state of distress.*Beat Street is a lesson too/Because…ah! you can't let the streets beat you. Uh!*

Tell me who's going to dream the impossible dream/ of the beautiful cities in the islands' genes?
When your works of art brought into being/ all that the ghetto stopped you from seeing.
Because each and every time you touched the spray paint can/ Michelangelo's soul controls your hands
…So just throw your hands in the air/ and wave them like you just don't care, and if you believe that you're the future, scream it out and say OH YEAH![46]

This song and the film *Beat Street* encouraged young people to beat the deindustrialized and policing forces of the streets, and not to let the structural forces of the streets beat them. South Central's young Black and Brown people forged similar hip-hopper alternative groups.

In that same spirit, I also borrowed from Grandmaster Melle Mel's framing of young people's resistance and resilience. One way to conceptualize these youngsters can be in the gang and graffiti career-oriented model, which has tried to offer some explanations. Unfortunately, these explanation only gazed at street youth through categories of gangs, or as young people seeking to make careers out of "deviance."[47] This literature also situates young people and youth groups as ensnared subjects with little to no social space and option but to join gangs.[48] And although my work shows

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[45] Stan Lathan, *Beat Street* (Orion, 1984).
[46] Grandmaster Melle Mel, "Beat Street Breakdown" Soundtrack in film *Beat Street* (1984), Directed by Stan Lathan.
[47] Richard Lachmann, "Graffiti as Career and Ideology" *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94. No 2 (1988): pp. 229-250; Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality* (New York: Garland, 1993).
[48] Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Streets: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1991).

how youngsters confront this larger landscape of gangs and carcerality, the testimony of graffiti writers complicates and departs from these traditional gang and street narratives. If, according to Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, gangs are structurally and socially specific organizations that offer youngsters few choices for alternative cultivation of identity inside neighborhoods; then the oral histories of graffiti writers reveal that where young people find no social place and space inside islands of gangs, they will navigate the archipelagos and create, carve, write, vandalize, and inscribe alternative networks of cultural resilience.

Although the topic of this dissertation was always my primary interest, I arrived at it almost by accident. I originally set out to investigate how mass incarceration played a role in everyday life outside of prison walls, especially since incarceration seemed to be a significant aspect of American institutions—that is, as Marc Mauer puts it, the "race to incarcerate" people.[49] At the same time I was beginning my research on prisons and prison culture, I also commenced research for what I thought would be a separate paper on another long-standing interest—that is, street relations among street artist, race, art, and South Central LA's graffiti writer movement of the 1980s and 1990s. In this separate interest, I had expected to find, through extensive oral histories I conducted among graffiti writers, not only how graffiti crews represented interracial aspects of L.A.'s hip-hop visual culture, enjoyment or "fun," but also understand their interracial coexistence and demise. In the early oral histories recording process, however, more than half of my narrators discussed a great deal how they joined graffiti groups to avoid or circumnavigate two pervasive forms of violence on the streets: state violence, in the form of policing and incarceration, and street violence, in the form of gangs but also eventually with gang-ties with prison culture. During that time, I thought I was on a different research topic about graffiti alone, and so I did not immediately realize that South Central LA's interracial graffiti movement would be salient to a larger carceral story.

When narrators told stories about state violence, street violence and gang-ties with prison culture along with their stories about the graffiti movement, I first thought my open-ended interview questions were the problem. I wanted to hear more about graffiti than gangs, police, or jails, so I revised my questions and headed out to the field again. The revisions, nonetheless, yielded similar results. At that moment I became more attentive to what writers told me about carcerality. The more I looked into the past the more I realized that it made sense that they narrated things in relation with incarceration; after all, they did grow up during the era of the rise of mass carceral policies and mass prison building.

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[49] Marc Mauer, *Race to Incarcerate: The Sentencing Project* (New York: The New Press, 1999, 2006).

The content that graffiti writers' narratives had in common, indeed, did speak to a generalizable carceral story that I was originally interested in, and one that I was also already investigating. What turned out, then, was that I went out searching for street art and graffiti artists of the 1980s and 1990s, but instead I found people attempting pathways to dodge and circumnavigate expanding carceral webs set to capture them. Like many other forms of grouping, the graffiti writer movement was one of those pathways.

Graffiti writers and their crews were not gangs (although some may have had a foot or a toe in gangs), but their narratives offered me a unique perspective on the stuff related to street life, mass incarceration, young people, and youth culture. Graffiti writers illustrated their story in relation to carceral institutions, and how carceral ties were linked to race relations and social change on the streets of LA during the 1980s and 1990s. The graffiti writer movement, then, in addition to its role in hip-hop, making art, writing and even vandalism, was also youngsters' response to significant carceral aspects linked to mass incarceration.

Initially, South Central's graffiti writer movement and their interracial aspect presented anomalies to me in terms of how we think and have also historically casted LA's Black-Brown relations. Popular and scholarly discourses on LA's Black-Brown interracial relations predominantly treat Black-Brown tension and violence as common if not static. Those works, however, including their data, mainly speak to Black-Brown relations after 1992 (or after the LA uprising). Recent works, for example, by Cid Martinez and Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, are but few that continue the discursive trend.[50] Although such works are reasonable in reaching the conclusions that they do, for the most part I must reiterate that their work focuses mostly on Black-Brown relations after 1992. Consequently, what we think we know about LA's Black-Brown relations may also tempt or influence us to imagine Black-Brown tension and violence as static phenomena. My own historical thinking, to some degree, was entangled in this reference to time.

At first, Black-Brown coexistence seemed to me more like an anomaly or foreign. I first attempted to make sense of this anomaly by treating Black-Brown coexistence as an "exceptional" rule to interracial violence. I first understood interracial graffiti crews as some 'hopeful' decade of non-violent Black-Brown relations, and that it only regressed back to violence after 1992. For this project, nonetheless, I still had to search back chronologically to find the origins of the notion of non-violent Black-Brown relations. I thought that the late 1970s or even the 1980s –

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[50] See Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike: Ethnic Violence in High Schools* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016); Cid Gregory Martinez, *The Neighborhood Has Its Own Rules: Latinos and African Americans in South Los Angeles* (New York: New York University Press, 2016).

the years of the birth of hip-hop and the graffiti art form – were the years of this interracial 'exception,' but chronology taught me otherwise.

To my surprise, my quest to find a sense of origins to this exceptional Black-Brown interracial interaction took me to the World War II period (to some degree, even the early twentieth century). Black-Brown interracial relations of coexistence ranged a long history in LA, at least from the *Zoot Suit* era of the 1940s, to the birth of *rock and roll* culture of the 1950s and 1960s, to the collective organizing between the Black Power and Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, even to the Bloods and Crips and Cholos culture of the 1970s and 1980s, to the graffiti writer movement of the 1980s and early 1990. It turns out, then, that how we think about Black-Brown relations should be understood the other way around: Black-Brown coexistence is not an anomaly but were common trends in youth culture. This historical trajectory dates to at least WWII (if not even earlier). Black-Brown violence, on the other hand, was rare.

The years I thought were 'exceptional' were meaningful to me, nonetheless, because they turned out to be the shift where continuity undergoes change. After 1992, LA's long history of Black-Brown coexistence fractures, especially among young people. Black-Brown violence eventually emerges and starts becoming the rule. Early graffiti writer narrators were historically conscious of this: they discussed Black-Brown race relations of coexistence that then ruptured during the early 1990s. In contrast, graffiti narrators who became graffiti writers after change occurred had a little sense of Black-Brown coexistence. Youngsters that became graffiti writers after that thought of Black-Brown interracial tensions and violence and their carceral relations as the norm (thus, reinforcing the story I tell in this dissertation). Scholars have given much attention to the later part of this Black-Brown story of violence after 1992, but we still know very little about the significant carceral aspects that lead up to that change.

Chapter Discussion

This dissertation explores California's and LA's carceral history between the years of 1943 and 2000. In this work, I examine the historical significance of relational carceral dynamics that interact and intersect with California's formal carceral state, California's informal neoliberal carceral culture, and the free world of the streets. This dissertation accounts for a long history of coexisting Black-Brown relations that rupture in the early-1990s as a consequence of the state's rapidly expanding capacity to cage and of prisoners' ability to influence the carceral culture of whatever the formal carceral state contaminates.

I chose to begin with the WWII period because during this time California's populations changed drastically as a result of the federal government wartime mobilization effort. Wartime mobilization resources made California a place of

opportunity and fortune, or what one historian calls the "Second Gold Rush."[51] Wartime mobilization efforts influenced and encouraged not only migrations of diverse peoples to California, but the culture also encouraged many interracial mixings and intermingling*s*, and even clashing between peoples of all these diverse ethnoracial backgrounds.[52] Young Black and Brown people were not exempt from these interracial mixings and interminglings. In fact, young Black and Brown peoples more than often set these interracial trends in California.

 Between the World War II and the early-1990s, young Black and Brown people in the streets of LA and throughout California had coexisting and at times even intimate interracial relations. Although moments of Black-Brown interracial conflicts occurred, these incidents were only ever sporadic and never escalated to become historically significant. During this period, interracial violence was, with the exception of prison life, uncommon between young Black and Brown people. Interracial violence consisted almost exclusively of white groups and white supremacists committing violence on nonwhite peoples.

 The major exception to the generally peaceful rule of Brown-Black coexistence was in the state's prison system. From the 1950s onward, Black-Brown relations in California prisons were consistently characterized by interracial tensions and violence. In the last decade of the twentieth-century, Black-Brown interracial conflict and violence on the streets of LA came to mirror the socialized behavior of the informal ethnoracial culture of incarceration on a mass scale. Black-Brown violence and conflict spread from the prison to the streets, and it did so as incarceration rates for both Black and Brown Californians spiraled to historic levels.

 The story of the cohorts of youngsters that grouped together as interracial graffiti crews in South Central LA illustrates both continuity to Black-Brown interracial relations on streets before 1992, but also how those relations eventually rupture after 1992. Their interracial rupture epitomizes the larger story of change: a mass socializing outcome of mass incarceration. The ways in which young Black and Brown people made choices on the streets, especially as it relates to race relations, reveal how the rise of mass incarceration shaped the culture of young people in LA from a hip-hop culture to a simultaneous carceral youth culture.

 South Central L.A. and nearby areas, such as Watts and Compton, were the hub of the graffiti writer movement during the 1980s and 1990s. Given that the majority of residents of these areas were not only Black and Brown people but also lived racially integrated through public spaces and institutions such as parks, sports, clubs, public

[51] See Marilynn S. Johnson, *The Second Gold Rush: Oakland and the East Bay in World War II* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996).
[52] See Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Has Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

schools, neighborhood housing, and the streets (including juvenile halls and prisons), these areas (and networks) yield opportunities to examine up close how race relations and social change were shaped by the carceral culture apparatus that stretched beyond prison walls.

Using both secondary sources, Chapter One surveys the history and historiography of this long Black-Brown interracial trend that dates to World War II. This synthesis of history and historiography demonstrates we know that since WWII Black and Brown young people in the streets of Los Angeles and throughout California have had moderate coexisting interracial relations. Chapter One makes the point that tensions between these two groups only remained sporadic and that they never escalated across time and space. The chapter demonstrates that in instances where socialized racial violence was the norm it was not between young Black and Brown people but rather white ethnoracial groups inciting violence against non-white peoples. After 1992 (the subject of Chapter Five), Black-Brown interracial violence becomes common and crosses space and time. Prior to 1992, Black-Brown interracial violence was largely absent in Los Angeles and, more generally, California.

As noted above, state prisons were the great exception to the rule of relative peaceful Black-Brown coexistence between 1941–1992. Chapter Two looks at this history of the violent informal prison culture of California prison life from 1941–1970s. Between the 1950s and 1970s, the informal violent prison culture became centered around the politics of how prisoners understand and maintain ethnoracial group equality. In this ethnoracial political culture of incarceration, prisoners depend on the threat or act of ethnoracial group violence to negotiate diplomatic relations, or to restore group honor and dignity if not equality in a distressful world of carceral privileges. For example, if someone causes injury to a prisoner of another ethnoracial group, that injury becomes injury to the entire ethnoracial group of the injured. In other words, individual insults, injuries, or restorations are socialized within the "gang-time" culture of California prison life.[53]

The decade of the 1960s saw a short-lived pause in this violent ethnoracial political culture of incarceration. By the mid 1960s, prisoners forged an intra and interracial prisoner solidarity movement. Influenced by the Civil Rights struggles and the Black Power movement but specifically by Black Panther Field Marshall George Jackson, the 1960s saw a rise and a fall of, what Eric Cummins characterizes as, a California radical prison movement.[54] Although prisoners had little success, they did manage to change the Indeterminate Sentences Law, which was a regressive policy that kept prisoners incarcerated for life until the Board of Paroles determined prisoner

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[53] McCarty (2004), p. 387.
[54] See Eric Cummins, *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

rehabilitation thus prisoner release dates. California state suppression combined with unresolved prisoner ethnoracial tensions caused the prisoners' movement to decline. After the 1970s, the violent aspect of the ethnoracial political culture of incarceration resumed. Black-Brown interracial tension and violence are part and parcel of this carceral history.

The main thrust of Chapter Two demonstrates how the violent ethnoracial political culture of incarceration spread from prison to prison and concludes by showing how it makes an early debut beyond prison walls in the 1970s. The informal prison culture merged with Governor Earl Warren's centralization effort in creating a California Department of Corrections in the early 1940s. These concurrent developments encouraged the spread of interracial violence, which expanded with every prison California built. The larger argument Chapter Two makes is that we can anticipate the informal prison culture to spread and worsen with the rise of mass prison construction, which do take place in the 1980s and 1990s.

Chapter Three provides an account of the ongoing socialized types of racial relations young Black and Brown people had with one another but also the broader society that proclaimed to be in favor of a racial democracy. The chapter also assesses how common or rare was Black-Brown violence during the 1970s. The data shows that Black-Brown violence was rare, and only intraracial violence was common during the decade of the 1970s. In searching for evidence of violent encounters, however, the chapter demonstrates that white Americans, and American institutions such as schools and policing repeatedly carried out interracial violence against young Black and Brown people.

Contrary to the dominant view that sees the people of Orange County as the mobilizers of the New Right, data and primary sources in Chapter Four reveals that LA's white anti-busing and anti-interracial populations led major bipartisan developments to give the New Right teeth. LA's whites socialized anti-integration and anti-interracial anxieties against LAUSD school-busing desegregation plans. These developments eventually informed policy initiatives, such as rolling back the Welfare State, defunding public schooling, increased policing, and eventually mass incarceration. Furthermore, the old white "affluent society" along with American institutions constructed young Black and Brown students as society's "hoodlums" all the while it was white adults and young white people that committed most of the interracial violence in and around public schools. The larger argument that Chapter Four makes is that the racialization of Black and Brown youth culture generated public support for mass carceral policies that would shape up in the 1980s, including the

making of the Los Angeles Police Department militarized CRASH units—or, Community Resource Against Street Hoodlums.[55]

Chapter Four, nonetheless, shows how the LAUSD busing system, with all its limitations, unintentionally sets up a busing-network where young people of diverse ethnoracial backgrounds eventually do come to interact with one another. This network eventually becomes, as Chapter Five shows, one of the many arteries of transportation that connects inner-city young people from South Central with young people in the suburbs. Many of these young people became the graffiti writers of the 1980s and beyond.

Chapter Five mainly focuses on how young Black and Brown people navigate these archipelagos of public transportation as their networks, and how their interracial and integrated upbringing prompted them to seek alternative networks outside their existing neighborhoods. Their integrated upbringing also illustrates continuity to the longer history of Black-Brown coexistence and street relations. The chapter engages the current trends in the scholarship on gangs, which argues that young Black and Brown are ensnared subjects with little to no social space and very few options but to join gangs. Although the chapter shows how young people on the streets confront, engage, and disengage carceral structural bombardments and street power relations, the chapter mainly argues that the testimony of graffiti writers evoked young people's yearnings for alternative forms of youth groupings outside traditional gangs while at the same time dodging the rising carceral tide.

Chapter Five shows how the oral histories of graffiti writers reveal that when young people find no social place and space inside a neighborhood, they will navigate, create, carve, write, and inscribe alternative networks of survival within, in-between, or along the archipelagos of the many distressed neighborhood islands of the City of Angels. The chapter shows the historical and social developments of LA's interracial "King" and "Queen" graffiti crews, their heyday, and it ends with an early glimpse into the March 3, 1991 George Holliday video recording that captures LAPD's police brutality on Rodney King. The chapter shows how the actions of graffiti writers complicates ideas of young people's youth groups, resistance, and their resilience.

Chapter Six opens with the 1992 LA uprising already underway and examines actual uprising participants, but more weight is placed on the aftermath of 'rebuilding efforts' of the 'riot.' Chapter Six begins by showing that store owners even sprayed graffiti on their own businesses' walls as an attempt to have what I call the "angels of fire and loot" pass over their business establishments. Their actions echo the ways in

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[55] By 1979, the Los Angeles Police Department under Chief Daryl Gates militarized policing and operations units such as CRASH (Community Resource Against Street Hoodlums) and SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics). For a take on CRASH see Donna Murch, "Crack in Los Angeles: Crisis, Militarization, and Black Response to the Late Twentieth-Century War on Drugs," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): p. 169.

which young people signaled their own distress through graffiti. The chapter considers the uprisings' Black-Brown interracial solidarity, whereby I reinforce again the point of Black-Brown coexistence.

The second half of Chapter Six goes into how Black-Brown interracial relationships start to break down. During the rebuilding efforts, many gangs made efforts to have intraracial peace with one another. The ethnoracial dynamics of peace, however, are only within ethnoracially homogenous groups. In peace treaties, gangs advocated for intraracial peace but also identified a new enemy, and it was not the police. The new enemy identified was outside a gang's own ethnoracially homogenous group. Spearheaded by prison gangs and street gangs networked within the ethnoracial political culture of incarceration, here Black and Brown people started to become each other's nemesis.

Given that graffiti writer crews were interracial, they eventually get caught in the crossfire, or got the "green light." At first, graffiti crews confronted the tensions with gangs, but they soon realized that the power of gangs was twofold due to their links with the informal prison culture. About half of the graffiti crews went dormant for a while, others that interacted with street gangs broke their interracialism and cliqued into ethnoracial street gangs. Others emerged as new gangs. Graffiti crews emerge once again, but no longer as a movement and, to some extent, they too became ethnoracially homogenous groups.

Chapter Six also shows how the media played an important role in exacerbating interracial tensions and contributing to the growing negative public discourse around graffiti writers and gang 'bangers.' Media outlets, especially conservative award-winning Fox 11 News anchorman Chris Blatchford, racially constructed the image of all graffiti writers as "Tag Bangers."[56] Only a year after the uprising, the media already

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[56] For short survey on Chris Blatchford's award winning, role with gangs, "Tag Bangers" and the Mexican Mafia see United Press International, "'48 Hours,' 'thirtysomething,' KCBA Among Peabo Winners" *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 15, 1989, LAT Home Collections. (Accessed Feb, 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/1989-04-15/news/mn-1685_1_george-foster-peabody-awards-peabody-judges-suzi-s-story; Miles Corwin, "Inside the Mexican Mafia" *Los Angeles Times*, Dec 10, 2008, Book Review. LAT Home Collections. (Accessed Feb 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/2008/dec/15/entertainment/et-book15;
Fifty Third Southern California Journalism Awards, *Los Angeles Press Club* (June 26, 201, Los Angeles: Pressclub, 2011). (Accessed Fe, 11, 2018) http://lapressclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2011-SOCAL.pdf: p. 28; Blatchford, Fox 11 News on leading role in L.A. City Attorney's Office ("Revolving Door Justice"), the L.A. County Rapid Transit Authority ("Tagger Wars"), L.A. Archdiocese Obscenity & Pornography Commission (L.A., the Mafia, and "Pornography") and the California Correctional Peace Officers Association ("Prison Gangs") see (Accessed April 19, 2013) http://www.myfoxla.com/story/18574191/chris-blatchford#ixzz2QrttMm8L. Note: On September 14, 2016, Blatchford eventually sues FOX News for age discrimination. Thereafter, Fox 11 News disabled all of Blatchford related content from their page. Critics of Blatchford's

interpreted, and society consumed tag bangers as not just a public nuisance but even more so as dangerous gangs. As one journalist critical of Blatchford's "Fox Undercover" special notes in April of 1993,

> The pitch here is that graffiti tagging crews, who used to want nothing more destructive than to de-beautify your local liquor store and render freeway signs unreadable, are in large numbers setting aside their spray cans and picking up arms.[57]

Blatchford's journalism negatively shaped society's view of young Black and Brown people but also gangs' views on graffiti writers. On the one hand, society's view of young Black and Brown people informed mass carceral policies. On the other hand, prison gangs in concert with street gangs saw graffiti crews as another way to further their own interests within the informal flow of the carceral pipelines.

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exploitative career of gangs and young people, however, quoted Fox 11 News' biographical sketch of Blatchford's biography before it was disabled. For Fox 11 News' of Blatchford's biography see AVAGOFFV, blog response June 5, 2012, at 8:35pm, "Deliver Us From The Vagos" in The Aging Rebel. (Accesses Feb 12, 2019) http://www.agingrebel.com/5847; for Blatchford's plaintiff petition against Fox 11 News see *Christopher Blatchford, vs Fox US Production 11, Inc., e*t. al. in Scribd. (Accessed Feb 12, 2019) https://www.scribd.com/document/324706073/Chris-Blatchford-Complaint#from_embed.
[57] Chris Williams, "TV Reviews: Whither L.A.?? 2 Specials Offer Opposing Views: KABC's 'A Tale of Three Cities is guardedly hopeful while KTTV's 'Tag Bangers' is alarmist and sensationalistic," *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 10, 1993, Entertainment. (Accessed Feb 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/1993-04-10/entertainment/ca-21111_1_specials.

Chapter One

"Where's the Beef?": History and Historiography of Interracial Relations of Young
Black and Brown People in Los Angeles, 1940s—1970s

       Contrary to views that see Black-Brown interracial tension and violence as a
static social norm in Los Angeles, Black and Brown people historically have had many
forms of interracial intermingling*s*, coexistence, and even romances. For many decades,
young Black and Brown people (including whites and people of Asian descent) hung
out with each other at schools, local parks, meetings, dance halls, street corners, and
marketplaces. Ever since the United States' massive industrial World War II effort in
California, all the way up to the birth of hip-hop culture of the late 1970s and early
1980s, young Black and Brown people have generally coexisted in peaceful ways in
LA.

       History and historiography tell us something about adversarial interracial
relations in American history. Indeed, we mostly find that whites have incited violence
against non-whites and "others" at social, political, and institutional levels for racial
reasons. While locating socialized interracial violence in American history and
historiography, this chapter does not deviate from this-view. As Noel Ignatiev shows
us, working-class Irish Catholics may have experienced similar white interracial
violence in places like Chicago, Boston, and New York. Still, the Irish's assimilable
degrees of whiteness, along with their embrace of anti-black politics, eventually granted
Irish access inside the dominant White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP) culture of
whiteness.[58] The same is true for non-Anglo whites in California. Many scholars show
that Dustbowl Okies, "Hobos," Italians, Polish, and Irish in California and Los Angeles,
more specifically, underwent similar trajectories into the WASP pool of whiteness.[59]

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[58] The Irish had a history of interracial intermingling and coexistence with people of non-
European descent, but like most people of European descent, the Irish concretized their
whiteness by embracing an anti-black politics. In addition, while the Irish occupied ethnic
enclaves as a result of discrimination, WASPs still married Irish persons without significant
backlash. For a history of the Irish and their anti-black trajectory into American whiteness since
before the Civil War see Noel Ignatiev and Mazal Holocaust Collection, *How the Irish Became
White* (New York: Routledge, 1995): pp. 99-169.

[59] In Los Angeles, assimilable whites followed the nation's interracial pathway to whiteness but
with a West Coast-style suburbanization. Irish and other assimilable whites shifted from
interracially coexisting with people of color to becoming anti-black and segregationist during
the postwar years. For a history of whiteness in Los Angeles see Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits:
African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University
of California Press, 2003); Kelly Lytle Hernandez "Hobos in Heaven: Race, Incarceration, and
the Rise of Los Angeles, 1880–1910," *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 3 (August 2014): 425,
441; ---, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles,*

Black-Brown interracial violence was not typical; conversely, the literature shows that white interracial violence on non-whites was not just expected but almost the rule that expressed a particular type of American whiteness. Whites utilized various forms of interracial violence against non-whites to prevent racial integration or 'racial mixing' and to uphold white supremacy.

This historical background might tempt us to standardize the history of white interracial violence to the story of Black-Brown interracial relations in LA. We may even be tempted to extrapolate the well-documented Black-Brown interracial violence of the post-1992 period backward in time and assume that Black-Brown relations have always been fraught. While there are moments of Black–Brown interracial tensions during every era of American history, these situations remained sporadic and isolated. The scholarship, however, shows that racial violence among Black and Brown people was primarily intraracial before 1993. Put simply, beef did not happen for racial reasons. White interracial violence against young Black and Brown people, on the other hand, has generally been the rule in American history.

This chapter, along with the following ones, joins the recent but few historiographical works that depart from seeing the history of Black-Brown interracial relations in LA as adversarial.[60] This chapter pieces together the history and historiography of LA's young Black and Brown people to showcase that Black-Brown relations have historically been peaceful rather than violent. The chapter argues that, except for most white people, young people from diverse ethnoracial walks of life (young whites included) have intermingled from before and after the 1940s *Zoot Suit* era to the *rock and roll* and dancehall scenes of 1950s and 1960s, the political organizing of youth during the mid-1960s and 1970s, the modern street culture of gangs, and also the emerging hip hop culture of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Besides prison life (subject of Chapter Two), Black-Brown conflict in LA was mostly absent before WWII and throughout the 1980s.

1771–1968 (Chapel Hill: The University of Northern Carolina Press, 2017); Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900–1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[60] Among the few works that depart from seeing Black-Brown interracial relations in Los Angeles as historically antagonistic see Mark Wild, *Street Meetings: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles (Berkeley and Los Angeles*: University of California Press, 2005); Gaye Theresa Johnson, *Spaces of Conflict, Sounds of Solidarity Music, Race, and Spatial Entitlement in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Herbert R. Sosa, *Fragmented Diversity: School Desegregation, Student Activism, and Busing in Los Angeles, 1963 – 1982* (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2013): also found at
https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/97911/hsosa_1.pdf?sequence=2.

Twentieth-Century Cities and Young White People

For most of modern California history, including that of Los Angeles in particular, young people from many ethnoracial walks of life have generally intermingled with one another in some shape or form. As many early assimilationist programs reveal, progressives worried more about a world where the dominant white American culture needed to be shaped, settled, and maintained. In other words, progressives did not worry about Black–Brown interracial mixings as much as they did with whites' 'racial mixing' with non-whites.

During the early Progressive Era, cities such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, like most industrialized US cities, became centralizing units where young people developed cohesion and were socialized with each other. Young people from all walks of life migrated from their homes to work to help with household incomes. The mass migration of young people played a central role in the upsurge of progressive ideals and consumer culture. Reformers had to figure out how to managed these large populations of people.

However, Northern and East Coast youth culture narratives mostly dominate the national story about how we think of cities and young people during the Progressive Era. We are mostly aware of how the presence of racialized white immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe and native-born whites characterized population growth in cities during the early 1900s and how progressives struggled to manage these populations.

Since the rise of American liberalism and the Gilded Age, 1877-1910, white American leaders had already engaged in the business of what Alan Trachtenberg characterizes as 'incorporating' socio-political and economic control over everything within the nation's reach.[61] Renditioning off of Trachtenberg's notion of the "incorporation of America," incorporation also implicated ethnoracial inclusions and exclusions, as well as disciplines and punishments.

At first, young people were to be disciplined into a massive labor force. However, the mass influx of young white people in cities raised many red flags, especially because the presence of young working-class women had also transformed a largely homosocial world into an increasingly heterosocial reality.[62] The visibility of male-female flirtatious and sexual interactions did not sit well with parents and middle-class reformers. By the Progressive Era, progressive leaders set in motion efficient, consistent, and manageable adult-supervised activities that disciplined mainly young white people inside, what Heather Cox Richardson sees as the broader and longer

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[61] Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).
[62] Kathy Peiss (1986).

project of American Reconstruction.[63] Yet progressives were not always successful. Ironically, their re-conceptualization and incorporation of young people gave way to mass socializing and hetero-social institutions for young white people.

From schooling to professional childcare to activities such as Boy Scouts and co-ed events that turned out to be prom nights, managing young people implied incorporating this new hetero-socio sphere under the disciplines or punishments of American institutions. These mass socializing sites of assimilation incorporated young white people into the mainstream 'order.' The multi-ethnoracial world of the West Coast, on the other hand, tells another story about order, incorporation, discipline, and punishment.

Young Black and Brown People and the Twentieth Century West Coast

The story of young people in Los Angeles complicates but also complements the national story of young people, cities, reformers, incorporation, and the Carceral State. Unlike East Coast cities, West Coast cities such as Los Angeles witnessed scores of multi-ethnoracial migrants moving to California during the early twentieth century. In contrast to northern and East Coast cities, African Americans and ethnic Mexicans, along with people of Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, and Jewish and Polish descent, including poor Dust Bowlers and other whites populated west coast cities.[64] In

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[63] For adult-supervised activities see Kathy Peiss (1986); Heather Cox Richardson builds off the work of Alan Trachtenberg's but provides us with a longer and national history of Reconstruction and incorporation. For this work see Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America After the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). For other works that influence my thinking around 'order' and 'incorporation,' and discipline see Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 1877–1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967); William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Anti-Modernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000); ---, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877–1920* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).

[64] Herbert R. Sosa (2013), 12; Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); also influencing me on Los Angeles' diverse populations, especially Mexicans and African Americans, and migration, see Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929–1939* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1972); Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1983); George J. Sanchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón, Eds., *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities* (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1968* (Chapel Hill: The University of Northern Carolina Press, 2017).

particular, Blacks from the American South and ethnic Mexicans from both sides of the borderlands formed the largest minority groups in LA. By 1920, Los Angeles would have the country's largest population of African Americans in the West, and the largest ethnic Mexican population outside of Mexico. As Mark Wild reminds us,

> Mexicans and African Americans were the most visible populations of non-Anglos drawn to Los Angeles directly by the railroad industry, and the neighborhoods they created formed the backbone of central Los Angeles.[65]

Like their white counterparts, Black and Brown people came to LA for better wages and living arrangements. Also, many ethnic Mexicans were already in California since the 1848 Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty, when Mexico lost half of its territory to the United States. Just as migrants from Eastern and Southern Europe imbibed progressives' ideals in Northern and Eastern cities, the mass multi-ethnoracial population on the West Coast did not escape progressives' developments in thinking about efficient population management, whiteness, and adolescence. Through disciplines or punishment, early twentieth-century LA also sought to incorporate young Black and Brown people into the emerging white American fabric. The means and methods were different than those on the East Coast, however, and they also produced different results.

Many Black and Brown migrants moved to California during the early Progressive Era. For Blacks, their early Great Migration centered escaping the "old" Jim Crow South that entailed a sharecropping economy, Ku Klux Klan terrorism, and southern-style carceral convict-exploitative systems.[66] Black Pullman porters in the railway industry encouraged many Black folks to migrate west, especially to Los Angeles.[67] The City of Angels offered Black people affordable living conditions and even the possibility to own property. Porters made this information newsworthy in the South as they did throughout the nation.

Ethnic Mexicans already resided in Los Angeles before the US-Mexico boundary crossed over them in 1848. Between 1910 and 1920, Mexico's Porfirio Diaz's collapsing economy and the Mexican Revolution sent more waves of Mexican

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[65] Wild (2005), 20.

[66] Mark Wild, *Street Meetings* (2005); for a review of the systemic issue with "old" Jim Crow see David M. Oshinsky, *"Worse Than Slavery": Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: The Free Press, 1996); Alex Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor: The Political Economy of Convict Labor in the New South* (London and New York: Verso, 1996). Also, I refer to this system as the "old" Jim Crow to distinguish it from how Michelle Alexander conceptualized mass-incarceration in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century as "The New Jim Crow." See Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

[67] Larry Tye, *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class* (New York: Henry Holt, 2004); Ethan Michaeli, *The Defender: How the Legendary Black Newspaper Changed America: From the Age of the Pullman Porters to the Age of Obama* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

migrants to the United States' Southwest, and most went to Los Angeles.[68] In addition, big businesses in the Southwest encouraged Mexican migration because they desired them as their cheap labor force for California's growing agricultural industries.[69] Immigration exclusionary acts that targeted Chinese and Japanese immigrants and the Immigration Act of 1924, which shrunk European migration from Eastern and Southern countries, were not applied to Mexican nationals.[70]

By the 1920s, mass ethnic Mexican migration filled the necessary labor in American agriculture and railroad industries, especially those linked to LA.[71] If there was a progressive era for ethnic Mexicans, Americanization efforts intended to incorporate ethnic Mexicans into a well-disciplined, manageable, and predictable source of cheap labor.[72] People of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino descent and some whites were also disciplined within this labor regime. As Matt Garcia notes, industries such as the citrus agriculture business introduced scientific segregation management strategies where segregated street "residential camps" prevented "potential laborer [interracial] solidarity" from forming to demand labor equity.[73]

Just as other ethnoracial communities did, ethnic Mexicans practiced ethnic enclave survival. Matt Garcia tells us that ethnic Mexicans organized their own "Escuela Mexicana" and provided their students with culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy.[74] According to Matt Garcia, Mexicans even formed their own Mexican baseball teams and Mexican Leagues.[75] Most groups retained their ethnic traditions, but young ethnic Mexican people also challenged their own parents' traditional cultural values and norms. George Sanchez also reminds us,

> Ethnicity, therefore, was not a fixed set of customs surviving from life in
> Mexico but rather a collective identity that emerged from daily experience in
> the United States. As such, ethnicity arose not only from interactions with

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[68] Matt Garcia (2001), 60; See also Ricardo Romo (1983); Arturo F. Rosales, *Pobre Raza!: Violence, Justice, and Mobilization among México Lindo Immigrants, 1900–1936* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999).

[69] Lawrence A. Cardoso, *Mexican Emigration to the United States, 1897–1931: Socio-economic Patterns* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980); Matt Garcia (2001).

[70] Matt Garcia (2001); Kelly Lytle Hernandez (2017).

[71] Matt Garcia (2001), 22.

[72] Matt Garcia (2001); Kelly Lytle Hernandez (2017); Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005); Moon-Ho Jung, *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2006).

[73] Matt Garcia (2001), 51.

[74] Matt Garcia (2001), 72, 83; For more on early twentieth-century ethnic enclaves and survival, including Mexican enclaves see Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[75] Matt Garcia (2001), 73, 81.

fellow Mexicans and Mexican Americans but also through dialogue and debate
with the larger [multi] cultural world encountered in Los Angeles.[76]

Shaped by their multi-ethnoracial diverse LA environment, young people dressed in what they understood to be their latest "American" fashions but added their own accentuated ethnoracial styles. By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the hyphenated "Mexican American" identity first debuted among young people. By the mid to late 1930s, the "Mexican American" identity, as Matt Garcia echoes, started to become most noticeable with the "YMCA-sponsored youth group Mexican American Movement (MAM)..." [77] Ethnoracial enclave-survival practices were not in a vacuum. However, they emerged against the backdrop of structural racism and the national mobilization of white-hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, including larger xenophobic anxieties that blamed non-white people for LA's Great Depression.

At local levels, white people usually exhibited their xenophobic racial anxieties against what they perceived were interracial interactions, romances, or 'racial mixing.' White women often dated ethnic Mexicans and also ethnic Filipino young men just as white men dated non-white women. However, most young and older white people vehemently detested these interracial interactions, especially when non-white men dated white women.[78] To hinder interracial romances between white women and non-white men, white anti-integrationist social norms hardened into common and constant socialized interracial tensions.

Ku Klux Klan rallies and marches throughout LA from 1915 through the early 1920s merely reflected on the ground the nation's social, political, and economic racial anxieties. Partially responsible for this white supremacist surge were mass media and mass communication institutions. D.W. Griffith's 1915 *The Birth of a Nation* was not only America's first major motion picture but also America's first blockbuster. It also socialized white Americans to see racial mixing as a threat to whiteness while also suggesting to viewers the KKK were heroes and defenders of whiteness. As Desmond Ang reminds us, Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* was "disseminated via an extended roadshow lasting nearly five years…[and]...areas that screened the movie were significantly more likely to participate in the Klan's rebirth than areas that did not."[79]

Also very significant, in my view, was how white society produced their first national superhero out of *The Birth of a Nation*. America's first superhero was not its 1926 *Phantom*, nor was it the 1938 *Superman* or the 1939 *Batman*; rather, it was the

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[76] George J. Sanchez (1993), 11.

[77] Matt Garcia (2001), 227. For on "Mexican American" hyphenated American identities see also George J. Sanchez (1993).

[78] Matt Garcia (2001).

[79] Desmond Ang, "The Birth of a Nation: Media and Racial Hate." HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP20-038, November 2020: p. 4 (Accessed May 7, 2021): https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/birth-nation-media-and-racial-hate.

1915 Klansman. In the aftermath of the film's five-year roadshow, many white Americans already dressed in Klansman costumes and paraded not just in LA or the South but throughout the entire nation. From the perspective of the dominant WASP culture, America's multi-ethnoracial diversity was not something to be celebrated, rather something to be prevented.

Long-standing laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the unofficial Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 already informed white social norms regarding policy discriminating against non-white peoples of Asian descent. Nativist policies such as the Alien Land Act of 1913, the Immigration Act of 1917 and 1924, and the U.S. Mexican Repatriation policies of 1929-1939 further reverberated the larger WASP racial social-political culture and thought about racial whiteness and interraciality. In many ways, nativist immigrant policies not only intended to disrupt non-white and immigrant upward mobility, but they also disabled interracial interactions that whites would have with non-whites.

White supremacist groups such as the KKK overshadowed LA's interracial tolerances, associations, affections, and even cross-racial alliances.[80] While white male privilege made it socially acceptable for white men to date or marry ethnic Mexican women, white men generally detested when ethnic Filipino men, ethnic Mexican men, or Black men interacted with white women. When interracial intermingling violated white segregationist social norms, white interracial violence usually broke out in LA. As ethnic Mexicans and African American populations continued to expand into areas such as Watts, interracial contact was unavoidable.

Interracial tensions ensued but not between Black and Brown people. Instead, white Klan members and other white supremacist gangs sought to halt the informal integrationist culture and interracial intermingling between all ethnoracial groups, especially with whites. Black and Brown people experienced interracial tensions, not as foes, but as allies against white supremacist groups. As Mark Wild writes about Black-Brown solidarity,

> The Ku Klux Klan staged several rallies in Watts during the 1920s, and in 1923 or 1924 an alliance of African Americans and Mexican residents petitioned the County Board of Supervisors to remove the police chief 'due to his ceaseless harassment' of their communities.[81]

Black and Brown people were also not alone in their struggle against white supremacist groups. Few white that did not condone Klan violence were also seen in support of

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[80] Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); Rory McVeigh, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-wing Movements and National Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).
[81] Wild (2005), 20.

Black–Brown alliances. Still, state mostly backed white Angelinos violence on non-whites.

With the backing of local, state, and federal governments, however, white Angelinos successfully unleashed interracial violence on LA's non-white people during the depression years, especially on Black and Brown people. White Euro-Americans perceived non-white ethnoracial groups as a national threat to the white Anglo-American fabric. LA's multi-ethnoracial world was not exempted. Black people were proverbially "last hired and first fired." Informal segregationist policies excluded African Americans from accessing employee protections under unions and housing. Homelessness ran rampant across all ethnoracial groups, especially among Black people. If there was work and housing available for African Americans and Mexican Americans during the depression years, as Ethan Blue shows, it was in California prison life not as employees but as prisoners.[82]

Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans witnessed jails, prisons, and cages. Between 500,000 to a million Mexicans and Mexican Americans were forced to leave the US.[83] Few ethnic Mexicans left involuntarily, but most were raided, rounded up, caged, and deported to Mexico. The US referred to its ethnic cleansing policy as 'Mexican Repatriation.' It lasted throughout the entire decade of the 1930s. The United States Congress had backed Mexican-eliminatory policies with the Immigration Act of 1929, which for the first time made unlawful entry to the US an official "crime," whereas prior policy was only containment.[84] The US Bureau of Prisons caged ethnic Mexicans through a network of prisons and county jails throughout the Southwest borderlands, including creating two federal immigration prisons, La Tuna in El Paso, Texas, and Terminal Island in Los Angeles, California, in 1934. As Kelly Lytle Hernandez tells us about the imprisoned ethnic Mexican people in the American Southwest during the 1930s, "Mexicans never comprised less than 84.6 percent of all imprisoned immigrants."[85] White social forces, along with local, state, and federal officials, networked hand-in-glove with US's Mexican-eliminatory policies and

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[82] Ethan Blue, *Doing Time in the Depression: Everyday Life in Texas and California Prisons* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2012), 42.

[83] Exact numbers of 'repatriated' Mexican and Mexican Americans vary because some left involuntarily, while others were forced out of the U.S. Historians suggest that rough estimates range anywhere from 500,000 to 1,000,000. For Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929–1939* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1972); Sanchez (1993); Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1968* (Chapel Hill: The University of Northern Carolina Press, 2017).

[84] Lytle Hernandez (2017), 138–139, 146.

[85] Lytle Hernandez (2017), 140–144.

managed to remove over "one-third" of Mexicans (both US citizens and Mexican nationals) from Los Angeles, with the majority of them being US citizens.[86]

The children of African Americans and ethnic Mexicans were also part and parcel of LA's interracial "tolerances," its associations, affections, and alliances during the early twentieth century. Still, they, too, were subject to laws and policies of white Americans' racial anxieties and hatred. White progressives also incorporated the hetero-social "hanging-out" activities of young Black and Brown people, but they were not as accommodating as they had been to young racialized white people. If not seen as failures, then early progressives succeeded in the quasi-racial exclusion, *de facto* segregation, racialization, and incarceration of young Black and Brown people.

Integrated Interracial Los Angeles

Black and Brown children were socialized with each other within LA's larger multi-ethnoracial world of the early 1900s. From sharing (interracially) neighborhoods and schools to participating in Boys and Girls clubs, to mobilizing together in the Communist Party of Los Angeles (CPLA) during the 1930s, to the repatriation of Mexicans to sharing housing and juvenile dining halls centers of incarceration, most folks from all walks of continued to make efforts to coexist.[87] Certainly, interracial tensions between Black and Brown folks occurred, but as Mark Wild notes, " . . . evaluations of local ethnic and race relations. . . share a common theme . . . conflict was rare."[88] Unlike how white people were socialized about themselves and non-whites, Black-Brown tensions were not common.

Since 1924, LA's mass racially integrated multi-ethnoracial growth was already underway. Mark Wild reminds us that a "census of twenty-two primary schools in mixed ethnic districts revealed a student population that was 52.3 percent 'white' (including European immigrants), 35.0 percent ethnic Mexican, 6.9 percent African American, 5.3 ethnic Asian, and 0.6 percent 'other.'"[89] Interracial integration and intermingling were so prevalent that by 1929 not one ethnoracial group comprised more than 60 percent of the student body at campuses across LA. Again, Mark Wild writes,

> Central Los Angeles constituted for them the sole setting in which they learned
> about the world . . . Central city children confronted possibilities for cultural

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[86] Sanchez (1993), 12; exact number vary but for a general synthesis see also Kelly Lytle Hernandez (2017); Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1983); Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures, 1929–1939* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1972).

[87] For Black and Brown people and the Communist Party of Los Angeles, see Wild (2005), 180-183.

[88] Wild (2005), 35.

[89] Wild (2005), 107.

interactions every time they left their homes. The streets and other public spaces
of their neighborhoods presented ample opportunities for children to engage in
what reformers derisively referred to as "unsupervised play."[90]

Schools, playgrounds, and street life facilitated these multi-ethnoracial interactions and
early socializations. Reformers, however, worked to include "assimilable" young
people but excluded non-whites, and exclusion gave way to young people's alternative
domain, street life.

On the streets, young people from all ethnoracial walks of life shaped LA's
interracial and integrated landscape. Racial integrationist policies were not needed.
Most non-white ethnoracial groups already shared time and space. Young people's
early interracial socializations even changed the face of traditionally all-white political
organizations. Mark Wild observes,

For larger rallies or demonstrations, the [Communist] party brought these
different groups together, creating an eclectic mass of protest who seemed to
speak with one voice on a broad range of issues. African Americans rallying in
support of the Scottsboro boys, Jews protesting Nazi Germany, Mexicans
aiding striking Imperial Valley farmworkers, old-line union members
supporting Tom Mooney, and Japanese protesting antialien fishing laws might
all end up at the same meeting.[91]

The Communist Party of Los Angeles (CPLA) and its related associations were among
the emblems of integration that epitomized the larger interracial qualities and realities
of LA's social-political and street life. Lack of social safety nets, nonetheless,
continued to affect young Black and Brown people. The Communist Party or the
Young Communist League could not shelter young people from society's ills. This
gave way to another dimension of street life organizing among young people—gangs.

Young people from all ethnoracial walks of life joined street organizations.
Street life tensions took place between gangs, but apart from white supremacist groups,
race played a peripheral role in interracial gang violence. Gang cohorts may have had
ethnoracial qualities but, as Mark Wild notes, ". . . affiliation did not necessarily break
down along ethnoracial lines."[92] Street organizations also reflected the larger social
violence reality in that interracial tensions among non-white groups were rare while
white interracial violence against non-white gangs was ordinary. Like their parents,
young Black and Brown people confronted similar white socio-political violence that
was also backed by official local and state forces.

Progressives used scientific and efficient 'institutions of delinquency' to
incorporate young Black and Brown peoples into the WASP American fabric. Their

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[90] Wild (2005), 96.
[91] Wild (2005), 182–183.
[92] Wild (2005), 100.

incorporation, however, all too often amounted to exclusion and family separation. Black and Brown children were to be state raised. As Miroslava Chavez-Garcia puts it,

> . . . young Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and African Americans the largest ethnic and racial minority . . . ended up at the principle correctional facilities (or reformatories) in the state: Whittier State School for Boys, located in Whittier, California; Preston School of Industry, in Ione, California; and the Ventura School for Girls, originally established as the California School for Girls within Whittier State School and later relocated to Ventura California.[93]

Progressives deported families or separated families, and their institutions of delinquency also replaced the role families and communities would have played in the lives of young Black and Brown people. Although the institutions were first designed to teach American values and patriotism, the large presence of young Black and Brown people in cities made reformers turn the function of institutions into institutions of captivity and premature death. Progressives used pseudo-science and eugenics to racialize and further criminalize—as well as pathologize—young Black and Brown people. At the end of the day, progressives incarcerated, tortured, sterilized, and even killed young Black and Brown boys and girls inside these progressive reformatories.

Progressives racialized and stigmatized young Black and Brown people as deviants and delinquents during the interwar years. If not seen as failures, then progressives succeeded here too. According to Miroslava Chavez-Garcia, through these institutions, the state invented and mass-produced "degenerate" Black and Brown "juvenile delinquents."[94] As mass migration came to California's Second Gold Rush (WWII industries), racialized notions of "juvenile delinquency" also followed and worsened for young Black and Brown people.

Black, Brown, White American Politics of Identity During WWII

The call for patriotism, loyalty, and national identity during WWII hardened whites' anxieties about themselves and race, gender, and sexuality.[95] As Alan Berube finds of the nations' highest forms of institutional discipline, notably the military, ethnoracial prejudices and values shaped white national identity, which in turn regimented society, pushing conformity to "a generally white, middle-class, and native-born norm."[96] Patriotism, therefore, was also a call to define and defend American identity. The dominant norm validated the heterosexual White-Anglo-Saxon-

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[93] Miroslava Chavez-Garcia, *States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012), 3.
[94] *Ibid*.
[95] Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance During World War II* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2008); Allen Berube (1990).
[96] Allen Berube (1990), 13.

Protestant (WASP) culture. The American*ess* modes and styles of young Black, Brown, and "*other*" non-white persons, however, were important alternatives. The dominant WASP culture, however, denied, shamed, but also punished non-whites who showcased their version of what it meant to be an American.

Between 1942 and 1950, the population in California grew by 53 percent. The population totaled 3.6 million. During WWII, Migrants came from the South, and the Midwest. More Mexican nationals also came to California under another US immigrant worker policy called the *Bracero Program*, which was another U.S. labor program negotiated with Mexico. California offered many jobs under Franklin Delano Roosevelt's War Industries program. In fact, during wartime, California was popularized as a "Land of Opportunity," and mass federal jobs ranged from consumer industries to war industries, to new road construction, to ports for movement of military artillery, to the creation of military bases. California's San Quentin and Folsom State Prisons were also included in the war industries. San Quentin and Folsom State Prisons were "READY TO ANSWER THE CALL OF THEIR GOVERNMENT [caps in original]."[97] Under California Governor Olson, San Quentin's and Folsom's prisoner labor war effort

> …produced more than two million dollars worth of war materials for the Army
> and Navy. Production included . . . Submarine nets, Cargo Slings, Assault
> Boats, wire rope slings, shell boxes, auto spreaders, scows, mess trays, valves
> and flanges, mattress covers, salvage of rubber and metal scrap, medical
> cabinet and numerous other items.[98]

The national budget was over 300 billion dollars, and, as Marilyn S. Johnson notes, "some 35 billion" of those funds alone went to California.[99] California received more than any other state in the nation, and more than any other state had received in the nation's history.

Seeking this "Land of Opportunity," these migrants dramatically increased California's ethnoracial diversity, indeed more than any other state had ever witnessed. California not only witnessed changes in its state economy but also in its political, social, cultural, and ethnoracial landscape. In many ways, California's growth became the nation's trendsetter, from the mixing and meshing of people to the mixing and meshing of cultures and music. Los Angele, for example, saw a mix of Blues, Jazz, and Latin music. Hollywood films and radio industries also glued the nation's culture together, and much of it was shaped by west coast interactions and industries.

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[97] *The San Quentin News,* 18 May 1945, Pg. 4., and 15 June 1945; Earl Warren Papers – Corrections Institutions, San Quentin State Prison 1943 – 53. California State Archives.
[98] Statement By State Board of Prison Directors, Earl Warren Papers – Corrections Institutions, San Quentin State Prison 1943 – 53. California State Archives. F3649977.1941-44 (6): See War Production.
[99] Johnson (1996), 8.

Experiences of Japanese Americans: Relocation and War Camps

While concepts such as "Arsenal of the Nation" and "War Effort" critically shaped contemporary national identity, white Anglo patriotism intensified violence against what white Anglos saw and deemed "un-American." California became the fertile battleground between what was and what was not the acceptable standard of 'American.'[100] Once again, with the backing of local, state, and federal governments, white xenophobic trends dominated California's landscapes in violent and carceral ways. White xenophobia mainly targeted Black and Brown peoples, but also Japanese Americans.

Rumors of spies, wartime propaganda, and questions of disloyalty created many waves of panic on the West Coast. Everything from schools to businesses to homes, including public life, witnessed mass surveillance by the state and federal governments. Civilians also participated in the surveillance of society. In the case of Japanese Americans, progressive President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which massively removed Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans from the West Coast. FDR incarcerated ethnic Japanese in internment camps such as the Manzanar Relocation Center, located in desert area of north of California's Death Valley. Most relocation centers were constructed in desert areas. Many ethnic Japanese lost their property, homes, and freedom, but they forged strong interracial friendships before incarceration. Non-Japanese people also concerned themselves with the well-being of their ethnic Japanese friends. Many took care of the property that belonged to ethnic Japanese folk. Others even followed their ethnic Japanese friends to relocation centers.[101]

Aesthetic and Self Expression Among Young Black and Brown People

Young ethnic Mexicans and Black people did not escape wartime white racism. Many American styles and trends developed among young people, but diversity threatened the emerging and increasingly hegemonic white identity. Dress codes made the mainstream think about what was and was not 'American.' In diverse cities like LA, young working-class people developed their own sense of American*ess*. As African Americans and ethnic Mexicans significantly made up the two other largest non-white ethnoracial demographics in LA, their combined fashions, music, cultures, and styles were also the most prominent reflection of youth culture. The most visual style of the time was the *zoot suit*. The *zoot* was a stylized dress code many young working-class people of many ethnoracial backgrounds adopted in LA. The zoot style originated from young Black people of Harlem, New York. Young people throughout

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[100] Alvarez (2008).
[101] Wild (2005), 1–8.

the nation, however, adopted and added their own local accentuations to their *zoot* style. LA set the tone for the West Coast.

Young people reclaimed their dignity in a highly middle-class and white racist society through these *zoots*, especially in LA[102] Because they could not access the same respect and privilege represented by the economic wealth of the dominant white ethnoracial citizenry, working-class young people invented their own American style, fashion, and drapes. Dressed in clean and sharp clothes, young Black and Brown people exuded a sense of pride and dignity. From the perspective of these youngsters, they displayed a sense of what it meant to them to be "American." *Zooters* from all ethnoracial backgrounds found themselves hanging out, often with one another.

Although establishments tended to segregate young people's multi-interracial hangouts into only a specific day of the week, interracial friendships between young people often encouraged racial integration. As Luis Alvarez tells us, young people from ethnoracial backgrounds usually crossed over the "Black Thursday" or "Mexican Wednesday" boundaries. [103] Asians and whites, like almost all young people, entered these establishments well suited and boot*ed* in the dress code of time—the *zoot suit*.[104]

With growing anxieties over who was and who was not American, however, the interracial intermingling and presences of *zooters* were criminalized in the mainstream media. As Luis Alvarez writes,

> Several fact-finding missions in Los Angeles, for example, discovered that juvenile delinquency among white youth, both male and female, had risen more sharply than that of Mexicans Americans and African Americans youth in 1941 and 1942. It was juvenile delinquency among non-whites, however, that much of the public thought to negatively influence white youth, posing dangers of race mixing, unlawful behavior, and immoral activity.[105]

Young white interracial violence, tensions, and crimes proved to be more prevalent than non-white, but society lionized whiteness and all too often ignored its criminality.

Young white people's criminal behavior, instead, was attributed to whites' interracial intermingling with non-whites. The policing of young white people indirectly resulted in the further racialization and criminalization of young Black and Brown people. The more crimes young whites committed, the more segregation was enforced. "Race mixing" was shunned, and young Black and Brown people were cast in the public imagination as the degenerate races and making white youth go bad.

The media constructed and reinforced negative stereotypes about ethnic Mexicans and African Americans. Similar tones rang for all young *zooters*, but

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[102] Alvarez (2008).
[103] Alvarez (2008), p. 19: see Fig. 1.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Alvarez (2008), 44.

Mexican *pachucos* and *pachucas* caught most of the blows of this developing American modernity. Mexican *zooters* were criticized, and mass media called them 'gangs.'[106] Media also referred to the young men as feminine because supposedly *zooters* worried too much about their appearance; the women were deemed too masculine because supposedly they displayed unfeminine/masculine demeanors. This discourse spread throughout the nation. The Washington *Daily News* reported to its east coast audience during the summer of 1943, "Hobble Skirts Hide Razors: Zoot Suiters Run for Cover but Their 'Cholitas' Carry On."[107] Many whites, Asians, Blacks, and Mexicans wore the zoot, but young Mexican Americans suffered the brunt of the state and social violence against zooters.

On the homefront, *zooters* became, as Luis Alvarez writes, "a lightning rod for popular conversations about the success and failure of the war effort and, ultimately, the boundaries of the wartime national polity imagined, waged, and worked."[108] White mobs and state action worked hand-in-glove in policing pachucos and pachucas, which further criminalized zooters. If the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) was not out harassing or arresting young Black and Brown people, they negligently failed to protect them from white mobs, in effect condoning white interracial violence. For example, US Navy sailors roamed the streets of LA in the hunt for *zooters*, but they mainly terrorized Mexican American communities. Servicemen not only entered Mexican American communities but also their homes. They also sized streetcars to capture *zooters*. The LAPD was aware of this but always turned a blind eye. News media outlets were also aware, but they championed white sailors' and marine violence as justified: "Zoot Suiters Learn Lesson in Fight With Servicemen."[109] Consequently, young ethnic Mexicans organized their own squads to defend themselves against the white sailors, marines, and other white mobs.

When young ethnic Mexican and other non-white *zooters* grouped together, the media further demonized *zooters*. The media and other socio-political forces succeeded in constructing the *zoot* American style not only as un-American but also as the style of "juvenile delinquents," "gangs," and "hoodlums."[110] As Eduardo Obregon Pagan

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[106] "Gangs Stay Off Street After Night," *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1943.

[107] William C. Payette, "Hobble Skirts Hide Razors: Zoot Suiters Run for Cover but Their 'Cholitas' Carry On," *The Washington Daily News*, June 11, 1943.

[108] Alvarez, (2008), 2.

[109] "Zoot Suiters Learn Lesson in Fight With Servicemen," *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1943.

[110] Newspapers constructed many racialized notions about young Black and Brown people. Among the most common were notions of "juvenile delinquents" and "hoodlums. For "juvenile delinquents" see Alvarez (2007), 43-44; for direct newspaper quotes see, Gene Sherman, "Youth Gangs Leading Cause of Delinquencies" *Los Angeles Times* (2 June, 1943). For quick newspaper clipping see also Larry Harnisch, "'Zoot Suit' and History - Part 4" in "Larry Harnisch Reflects on LA History," The Daily Mirror: (Accessed May 7, 2019) https://ladailymirror.com/2011/07/07/zoot-suit-and-history-part-4/; For a synthesis on zoot suit

underscores, "The LAPD assembled a secret 'hoodlum list' and assigned one hundred officers to 'apply aggressive police techniques' in arresting suspected gang members."[111] Sensational constructs such as "gangs" and "hoodlums" racialized young Mexican American as delinquents, seeing their American*ess* as unpatriotic.

The demonization took root in the infamous Sleepy Lagoon murder trial, where about 300 young Mexican American pachucos and pachucas were rounded up, sequestered, and incarcerated.[112] Officials targeted members and associates of the South Central LA 38th Street club. However, there was really no way to distinguish specific 38th Street club members from all *zooters*. The LAPD, therefore, locked up anyone that 'looked' like a 38th Street*er*.

In the Sleepy Lagoon Murder trial, all the evidence used against the young Mexican men and women also revealed hostile white racial anxieties, including the fantasies of the Aryan City of Los Angeles.[113] Marisol Chavez-Garcia reminds us that during the court procedures in the Sleepy Lagoon trial the prosecution racialized the young Mexican American as "blood-thirsty" Aztecs.[114] This was sufficient 'evidence' of degeneracy to unjustly convict and punish young Mexican Americans for murder.

The court case drama not only showcased racism against young Mexican men and women, but also how scientific and historical biases shaped and normalized popular negative perceptions of young non-white people such as Mexican Americans. Negative stereotypes about young Black people, *zooters* operated similarly.[115] The LA City Council went so far as to pass a resolution that criminalized young people for wearing a zoo suit. Clearly the state denied young Black and Brown men and women zooters their sense of American style, pride and American dignity, all of which stemmed in part from their interracial interactions within LA's diverse cultures.

"hoodlums" see Eduardo Obregon Pagan, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riots in Wartime L.A.* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 107, 120-124; for quick reference on "hoodlums" see also Ben Beader, "Zoot Suit Riots: Remembering the WWII era Los Angeles race riots" *Los Angeles Daily News*, May 30, 2013 (updated August 28, 21017): (Accessed May 7, 2010) https://www.dailynews.com/2013/05/30/zoot-suit-riots-remembering-the-wwii-era-los-angeles-race-riots/.

[111] Pagan (2003), 94.

[112] The known data comes from three main sources: 1. Police order; 2, Newspapers, 3, Cary McWilliams "Brief of Friends of the Court," 7. All cited materials in Pagan (2003), footnotes 93-94, p. 253.

[113] This is in reference to the "Aryan City of the Sun" in Kelly Lytle Hernandez "Hobos in Heaven: Race, Incarceration, and the Rise of Los Angeles, 1880–1910," *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 3 (August 2014): 425, 441.

[114] Chavez-Garcia (2012), 2.

[115] Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2010).

White people's "White Spots" and LA's Spatial Relations, 1950s

During the turn of the 1950s, reformers, developers, and city planners figured out a way to curtail the intermingling between white youth and youth of color in interracial hangouts. As Ira Katznelson demonstrates, "when affirmative action was white," whites benefited from state and federal programs to the degree that they were able to afford white segregated housing for themselves in suburbs far away from the interracial world of LA's inner cities.[116] This white privilege and white segregationist culture also informed housing, schooling, and immigration policies.

In Southwest, the US engaged in another massive racist ethnic cleansing Mexican-deportation policy similar to that of the 1930s. Dubbed "Operation Wetback," the US government targeted both undocumented and documented Mexican people. Ethnic Mexicans, As Herbert R. Sosa sees it,

> …became the focus of Americanization campaigns aimed at assimilating
> them. In addition, in 1952, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)
> initiated "Operation Wetback" in which the INS reportedly deported over one
> million Mexicans but made targets out of anyone matching the targeted skin
> color. In postwar Los Angeles, race and culture defined segregation
> spaces…[117]

In many ways, ethnic Mexicans and Mexican Americans also made various efforts to assimilate or become "white." In many ways, ethnic Mexicans assimilating efforts included fighting for social justice. Legally, ethnic Mexicans were considered white, given the agreement in the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty, of 1848, when the United States annexed northern Mexico (present day the US Southwest). Ethnic Mexicans, however, were never accepted as white. Nonetheless, they always struggled for their recognition as citizens.

Urban planning also worked against non-white peoples and produced segregation. Restrictive covenants, mass production of suburban housing, and school districts segregation kept non-white people in, what Mark Wild cites, their "el punto negro," or dirty 'black' neighborhoods while also restricting non-whites from entering "...the White Spot" of LA.[118] Suburbanization and white-flight left the inner city underdeveloped. Most white folks made their homes some 15 to 45 miles away from the inner cities.

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[116] Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* ([Norton paperback edition]. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006).

[117] Sosa (2013), 15; for more on Bracero Program and "Operation Wetback" see also Ngai (2005); Juan Ramon Garcia, Operation Wetback: The Mass Deportation of Mexican Undocumented Workers in 1954 (Westport, CT, 1980).

[118] Wild (2005), 38.

Not all whites were able to move as far or as fast, however, and those young people at the borderline train-tracks and developing freeways found ways to continue interracial interaction. Freeways and the expanding car culture fostered travel from place to place for young people to meet if not clash with one another. Young people from all walks of life traveled these expansive freeways that made up the city's arteries. Young people were able to move much faster and meet more quickly throughout the greater Los Angeles area. Television and radio also helped young people believe they belonged to an intercultural community.[119] These networks helped youngsters meet and develop friendships, have conflicts, exchange culture, and even engage in sex.

Intercultural dance halls such as the Pomona Rainbow Gardens and the El Monte's American Legion Stadium, for example, epitomized these interracial interactions in LA. Rock and Roll was active, and young musicians mixed and blended music styles. Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Orchestra, mixed with Conjunto and Country blends attracted many young people to the shows. Candelario Mendoza, one of LA's most popular disk jockeys of the time, exposed LA's young people to Little Richard and even to a young Mexican American Ritchie Valens.[120] Mexican American peoples mixed these styles. "Thee Midniters" band, for example, a popular Mexican American music band made its debut here.

Racial policies in the cities did try to keep young people from interracially intermingling. Young people, however, managed to transgress these boundaries. Most policies and laws were created to restrict young people from exiting what shaped up to be the inner city, but youngsters still found ways to meet each other at the outskirts of the city. The El Monte American Legion Stadium was located outside the inner city in the San Gabriel Valley, and white kids from Beverly Hills, Black kids from Compton, and ethnic Mexicans from all over LA frequented these concerts almost every weekend of the 1950s. Today's well-known disc jockey Art Laboe also made his debut in these interracial and intercultural gatherings. Even the American (Mexican American or Chicano) *lowrider* was born out of all this intermingling and intercultural exchanges.[121]

Crossing suburbs was a challenge to Black and Brown folks, especially through the suburbs that bordered cities from the inner city. Segregated housing zones could always limit young Black and Brown people from crossing boundaries, but boundaries did not limit white supremacist groups from inflicting interracial violence on Black and Brown communities. Since the 1940s and throughout the 1950s, white supremacist gang formations bordered the southeast area of South Central and Watts. Smaller cities

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[119] Matt Garcia, "Memories of El Monte: Intercultural Dance Halls in Post-World II Greater Los Angeles" in Joe Austin and Michael Nevin Willard, *Generations of Youth: Youth Culture and History in Twentieth-Century America* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1998), 157–172.
[120] Ibid: 159.
[121] Ibid: 161.

such Huntington Park, Bell, and South Gate, for example, were homes to the notorious white supremacist street gang *Spook Hunters*. Their name, like the Klan, represented an anti-nonwhite and anti-black sentiment. As Alex Alonso recounts,

> The club's name, "spook," demonstrated their racist attitude by the use of the derogatory term, and 'hunters' highlighted their desire to fight integration and promote residential segregation by hunting and hurting blacks. The Spook Hunters were active predominantly in the cities of Compton, Downey, Huntington Park, Lynwood and South Gate, trying to prevent the black population in the Central-Vernon community from moving into these white areas.[122]

Some members of the Spook Hunters were young white working-class people whose family could not afford to relocate to suburbs. The Spook Hunter network expanded mainly throughout South Central and the Southeast area. When they were not out hunting people of color (specifically Black people), *Spook Hunters* became the gatekeepers of their so-called 'white spots.'

As a response to white interracial violence, young Black and Brown people organized into street clubs in order to defend themselves against white gangs and mobs. In East LA, for example, young Black people organized themselves as the *Devil Hunters* against white supremacist street gangs.[123] In South Central, other Black clubs such as the *Businessmen,* and *Farmers*, and *Slausons* joined and attacked white establishments that were associated with the *Spook Hunters*.

Young Mexican people were not exempted from the 'spook hunt.' A young Daryl Gates, who would later go on to become the Chief of the LAPD in the 1980s, for example, roamed the streets of LA with his white supremacist crew on the hunt for members of the Mexican street gang called *White Fence*. *White Fence* was a predominantly ethnic Mexican street gang. It was not the only club in East Los Angeles, but it was one of the first and the one with the largest membership. As the Chief of police, Daryl Gates recounts "On Friday nights, we'd go looking for White Fence who dared to stray into Highland Park [white area]."[124] *White Fence* bordered Highland Park, and Daryl Gates and his white crew ran young Brown people out of the white spots of Highland Park.

Throughout the 1940s and early 1960s both informal, but also formal white groups policed, harassed, and reaped havoc on young Black and Brown people on the

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[122] Alex Alonso, "Out of the Void: Street Gangs in Black Los Angeles." In *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, ed. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón (New York: New York University Press, 2010): 141.
[123] Alex Alonso, "Out of the Void" (2010): 142; see also George Percy Barganier, III (2011).
[124] Chief Daryl F. Gates in Diana K. Shah, *Chief: My Life in the LAPD* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 291; For the Spook Hunter reference to this quotation see George Percy Barganier, III (2011): 35.

streets. Police officers and white mobs basically policed and enforced segregation with violence. Mexican clubs, such as the now "infamous" 38th Street gang from the zoot period, continued to organize themselves against white mobs and white gangs. What was clear was how official and unofficial violence was used to maintain "white spots" from what was popularly understood at the time as 'racial mixing.'

Eventually, white gangs or clubs remained in their segregated places. Urban planning, redlining, and even highways, along with police eventually crystalized "white spots" in the suburbs. Interracial conflicts between whites and non-whites declined on the street. The crystallization of barrios and ghettos also mildly segregated Blacks into predominantly Black neighborhoods, and Brown people into Barrios. Not so much in South Central, however.

Black and Brown street clubs and gangs continued their forms of organizing. Interracial violence between Black and Brown people, however, still did not surge in Los Angeles. As most accounts demonstrate, what surged were poor socioeconomic conditions that mainly fostered intraracial competition and tensions within street organizations. For young Black peoples in LA, Alex Alonso reminds us,

> . . . the rivalry between clubs was associated [in] altercations on the football field, disputes over girlfriends, and disagreements at parties. However, most clashes were actually rooted in socioeconomic difference . . . [125]

The banding together of Black street organizations against white racist gangs eventually was replaced by intraracial tensions, struggles, and violence up to the early 1960s. Young Brown peoples followed similar intraracial patterns. Both Black and Brown groups had intraracial tensions in common, but seldom did interracial tensions and violence escalated between the two groups.

Although white supremacist street organizations faded into the suburbs, young Black and Brown people still had to struggle with LA's official racist policing. Policy and policing continued to inflict injustices in LA's Black and Brown communities. By the 1960s, young Black and Brown people organized against formal institutions through ideas of self-determination and civil rights. Young Black and Brown people mobilized through collective movements to advance and defend their interests during the Civil Rights movement.

Young Black and Brown Peoples' Self-determination, 1960s–1970s

By the early 1960s intraracial violence and warfare declined. Many Black and Brown street organizations abandoned intraracial fighting to join political organizations and movements. At local levels, young Black and Brown people mobilized and built coalitions within the larger Black Power Movement and the Mexican American Chicano Movement. Between the 1960s and the early 1970s, young Black and Brown

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[125] Alex Alonso, "Out of the Void" (2010): 142.

people across the nation revolted against structural inequality, segregation, and police brutality. In California, young Black and Brown people abandoned their predecessors' attempt to assimilate. People sought self-determination instead. Young ethnic Mexican people became the force behind the Chicano Movement. Young Black people also became the backbone of the Black Power movement. As most accounts demonstrate, in both movements, older figures might have led decision-making processes and organizing, but young people always made up the bulk of these organizations.

Young Brown Berets in the 1960s

Mexicans Americans called themselves Chicanos and Chicanas, identifying with a political and ethnic populism building towards a cultural nationalism. Student, community, and street organizations came together in organizations and alliances such as the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA), the Crusade for Justice, Alianza, The United Farm Workers, and the La Raza Unida Party, and the Brown Berets.[126] Chapters and subdivisions of these organizations spread throughout the American Southwest. With the backing of young people, activism and mobilization prevailed.

The Black Power movement was composed of many students, community, and street organizations. Youngsters from various walks of Black lives made up the backbone of the movement. From youth and college-based groups such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (BPP), many young people who otherwise might have been involved in gangs instead joined the Black Power movement.[127] Working-class and college students Bobby Seale and Huey Newton started the BPP in October 1966 in Oakland, California. As the organization gained momentum more chapters were established throughout the country, including Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles chapters stemmed from the larger Black and Brown movements, and student and inner-city young people entered the cause. As in UC Berkeley and other universities and colleges across the nation, young people from the barrios and ghettos also realized they too had power, and so they too embodied the rebellious spirit of the nation's youth.[128] The political activism of the Black Power Movement

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[126] Juan Gomez Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940–1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Jose A. Gutierrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant: Lessons from Crystal* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998); Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999).

[127] Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

[128] I understand "student power" through the works of Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of

influenced the political activism of the Chicano Movement, but also the Barrios (neighborhoods).[129] As David Montejano notes, young Barrio people borrowed the Beret from the Black Panther Beret, and also created their own *freedom schools*—"La Universidad de Los Barrios," "Colegio de Los Batos."[130] Young people from the Barrios joined "la causa," or the cause of mobilizing "la raza" (the ethnic Mexican people)[131] There are many accounts of the Brown Berets' role in LA, but David Montejano's work on the San Antonio Brown Berets of Texas provides the most comprehensive study regarding the organization's structure, its goals, and its chapters that developed throughout the American Southwest, including in the city of LA.[132] Brown Berets' organizational efforts worked with the larger Chicano movement, but they also worked to end intraracial gang warfare, "barrio warfare" within their neighborhoods. Brown Berets forged intraracial barrio alliances or "truces."

Across the American Southwest, barrio youth learned about "la raza unida" and "carnalismo," concepts that paved the way for young people to build trans-barrio alliances. The Brown Berets went from barrios to barrios, to cities, to states proselytizing working-class young Brown people. These were common agreements and motivations that Brown Berets chapters circulated across the Southwest, including to LA. Barrio youth made their existence known; for they, too, carved out their political space and activism within the larger history of the Chicano Movement.

Young Black People in the Black Power Movement, 1960s

Many young Black people joined Black Power Movements too. Across the nation, the Nation of Islam was already active in politicizing Black peoples, including youngsters. As George Percy Barganier, III reminds us, "The growth of the Nation attracted large numbers of young Black men that would otherwise have become gang members."[133] Innumerable Black youth did not look to join gang cohorts but rather to be part of a struggle against social, political, economic, and policing powers that had oppressed them for years.

California Press, 2002), and Robert Cohen, *Freedom's Orator: Mario Savio and the Radical Legacy of the 1960s* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[129] Juan Gomez Quiñones (1990); David Montejano, *Quixote's Soldiers: A Local History of the Chicano Movement, 1966–1981* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

[130] Montejano (2010), 67–69.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid; David Montejano, *Sancho's Journal: Exploring the Political Edge with the Brown Berets*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012); for LA's Brown Berets see Miguel Marcelo Chávez, *Las cuatro esquinas: The Chicano Movement in the Westside of Los Angeles, 1963– 1979* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, California, 2010).

[133] George Percy Barganier, III, *Fanon's Children: The Black Panther Party and the Rise of the Crips and Bloods* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2011): 47.

The nation in general witnessed many protests, marches, and uprisings against structural inequality and police violence against Black and Brown peoples. In LA, for example, the 1965 Watts uprising – the 'riot' – galvanized mobilization efforts already expanding racial consciousness among Black people. Teachings of Black cultural nationalism appealed to young Black people, but once Black activist leaders such as Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were suspiciously assassinated, the cultural nationalism in Black activism shifted in the directions of Black Power freedom struggle. Their political and cultural fight quickly into, what Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin see as, Blacks against the American empire.[134]

In Los Angeles, young Black people joined the LA chapter of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. Eldridge Cleaver with Earl Anthony started a BPP chapter in LA. Anthony's interactions with the Black community made him suspicious, so the LA BPP let him go. Thereafter, former gang members played fundamental roles in the LA BPP chapter. Former gang leaders organized and encouraged young Black people in LA to fight for social injustice and against police brutality instead of each other. Among the leadership was former gang member Bunchy Carter. George Percy Barganier, III reminds us,

> Free from the hindrance of FBI informant Early Anthony, the Party in L.A.
> began to flourish under Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter. Leader of L.A.'s largest
> street organization, the Slausons, Bunchy would become the cornerstone of the
> Black Panther Party in Los Angeles.[135]

Former gang member Bunchy Carter played a significant role the LA's Black Panther chapter.

Panthers discouraged intraracial warfare among Black street organizations. The LA BPP actions and yearnings stressed intraracial amelioration efforts among young Black people, especially when uprisings broke out. George Percy Barganier, III makes clear that,

> In the wake of the 1965 Watts Rebellion young men began to abandon
> territorial differences that had become part of the established norm of street
> organization culture in favor of organizing Black radical politics.[136]

Organizing intraracial peace, eliminating intraracial territorial differences, and developing a political consciousness dominated BBP efforts with young people.

Interracial tensions between Black and Brown peoples, however, were never major themes in BPP discourses. On the contrary, Black and Brown youth activists mutually forged solidarity with each other. There is little evidence to suggest that the BPP had to first ameliorate interracial tensions with Brown people in order to build

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[134] Barganier (2011): 44; Bloom and Martin (2012).
[135] Barganier (2011): 50.
[136] Barganier (2011): 48.

interracial solidarity with ethnic Mexicans and Chicanos. *The Black Panther Community News Service* newspapers, instead, illustrated solidarity with ethnic Mexicans. At various times, *The Black Panther Community News Service* even dedicated headline cover stories on behalf of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers "BOYCOTT LETTUCE" campaigns.[137]

In other instances, the BPP demonstrated Black–Brown solidarity during the early 1970s in the San Quentin Six Defense Committee, where two of the six defendants were Mexican American Luis Talamantes from LA, and Nicaraguan American Hugo "Yogi" Pinell from San Francisco.[138] The BPP was indeed critical in forging solidarity between Black and Brown peoples, at local, state, and even the national, but also international levels with other colonial subjects across the world.[139]

By the time the Watts Riots or Watts Rebellion hit, and state suppression and violence were at an all-time high, Black–Brown relations were tighter. George Percy Barganier, III tells us,

> The increased repression politicized a vast array of disaffected youth,
> acceleration their alliance. Along the large number of whites in attendance at
> the funeral of eighteen year-old Thomas Lewis, was a large contingent of
> Brown Berets, one of them serving as pallbearer.[140]

Many non-black ethnoracial groups, such as the Brown Berets, demonstrated Black–Brown solidarity with the BPP during tragedies the latter endured. Together they participated in militant "Negro, Mexican-American Drill[s] at Funeral of Panther."[141] While the BPP's radical shift drew alliances across ethnoracial lines, as many accounts show, collaborative efforts between the local, state, and federal government under COINTELPRO violently tries to dismantle BPP, including its efforts at cross-racial solidarity. Although there was a decline in clubs, cliques, and gangs in LA, these efforts endured.

Both young Black and Brown people, however, accomplished what no other social service or government-sponsored agency, program, or institution could do—significantly alleviate intraracial and territorial gang violence. Rather than praising their efforts, however, local, state, and federal governments criticized and struggled mightily

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[137] *The Black Panther Community News Service*. Publisher The Black Panther Party, Year: 1972 Volume 8-27, Sept. 23: Cover Story: Boycott Lettuce; for an in-depth analysis see Lauren Araiza, *To March for Others: The Black Freedom Struggle and the United Farm Workers*. First Ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

[138] San Quentin Six Defense Committee. 1975. *San Quentin six: chronology of a frame-up = Los seis de San Quintín: cronología de una persecusión*. San Francisco: San Quentin Six Defense Committee.

[139] Bloom and Martin (2012).

[140] Barganier (2011): 54.

[141] William Drummond & Ray Rogers, "Negros, Mexican-Americans Drill at Funeral of Panther," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 August 1968. FB.

to undo these Black and Brown accomplishments, which met with government-sponsored discord, infiltration, and even violent, murderous state and federal repression.

Transitions in Black and Brown Political Movements

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, multiple power relations caused Black and Brown political movements and their momentum to decline. Owing in large measure to intraracial tensions within Black and Brown communities, state infiltration and suppression, suspicious deaths and incarceration of movement leaders Black and Brown movements that pushed for Civil Rights — or the Second Reconstruction — ruptured and declined. In addition, Black and Brown peoples fought to access higher and professional education. Membership in Black and Brown political organizations thus further declined as the pool of potential members dwindled, and leaders and foot soldiers individuals left, many attending college, graduate school, and professional schools.[142]

As the formal leadership and membership of both Black and Brown political organizations declined, many young people regressed back to old street organizing habits. The political "void" on the streets of LA gave rise to the Crips, Bloods, and Mexican American Cholo and Chola street organizations. Some street organizations never died out.

Los Angeles Street Organizations

As for the Crips, their origins stemmed from a young Raymond Washington, who ate out of the Black Panther Breakfast program in LA. The original acronym of the Crip organization was intended to be Community Revolutionary Inter-Party Service. They also had a constitution written by former Black Panther member Danifu.[143] Eventually Tom Bradley—the only African American to serve as mayor of Los Angeles at this point—accepted the CRIPS but he told members to change the word of the letter "R" from "Revolutionary" to "Reform."[144] This change also changed the direction of the CRIPS.

The Bloods grew out of the CRIPS. Intraracial disagreements and tensions split the CRIPS into two organizations. What the Blood and Crips had in common was that

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[142] For various works on how Black and Brown movement declined see David (2010); Quiñones (1990); Bloom and Martin (2012); Carlos Muños, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London and New York: Verso, 1980).

[143] See former Black Panther member Dhanifu, Author of CRIPS constitution, in Cle Sloan, and Antoine Fuqua, "Bastards of the Party" [Place of publication not identified]: [Fuqua Films, 2006].

[144] See Cle Sloan, and Antoine Fuqua (2006).

they both were, as Mike Davis states, "Bastards of the Party." [145] They were both products of the city, state, and federal government suppression efforts of "Black Nationalist politics."[146] Young Black and Brown people returned to ingroup competitions, tensions, and fighting—that is to say, they mostly saw intraracial tensions and violence throughout the 1970s and would last through the early 1990s (as Chapter Two, Three, and Four show). In terms of the 1970s, Black and Brown intraracial conflicts were common. Also common was white interracial violence inflicted against non-whites.

White interracial violence, backed by socio-political forces, turned out to be one of the worst aspects of the racial violence that affected Black and Brown people throughout the 1970s and the rest of the twentieth century. As Chapter Three will show, white interracial violence not only targeted young Black and Brown people but also Black and Brown children not even born yet. Amid the powerful anti-interracial politics against school busing and racial integration and desegregation, the media, politicians, and the LAPD revived the hyper racialized term "hoodlum" to concretize the criminalization of young Black and Brown people.

Conclusion

For much of the twentieth-century, young Black and Brown people have coexisted peacefully in LA. In fact, this pattern of Black-Brown coexistence dates even further back. Although not the topic of this dissertation, we can find Black-Brown coexistence and solidarity in the colonial era in Mexico under maroon communities called *palenques* or *quilombos* in South America. We can identify Black-Brown coexistence and solidarity even in the roles that African Mexicans such as General Vicente Guerrero played in the independence movement that abolished slavery in the nation-state making of Mexico. The focus of this dissertation, however, is American history, and interrogates the early 1940s precisely because of the massive and increasingly diverse migration that California witnessed during the mass mobilization industrial war efforts. Growing, often sudden, mass interactions of people from diverse ethnoracial backgrounds might suggest the possibility of social conflict, but except for white society, the opposite is largely true.

More often than not, Black-Brown coexistence lasted throughout the 1940s in the *zoot* era to the *rock and roll* era of 1950s and 1960s, to the political organizing of young people during the mid-1960s and 1970s, to the street culture of gangs, and continued through the birth of hip hop in the late 1970s and 1980s (subject of Chapters

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[145] This quote first appeared in Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. Verso, 1990 [Current Print, Vintage Books, 1992]. Later this quote gets taken up as the title of the documentary on the Bloods and Crips. See Cle Sloan, and Antoine Fuqua, "Bastards of the Party" [Place of publication not identified]: [Fuqua Films, 2006].
[146] Barganier (2011): 63.

Three and Four). Black-Brown interracial violence, nonetheless, did occur throughout these decades of California history but it was confined largely to California prison life. The following chapter discusses California prison life from the 1940s to 1970s. Chapter Two in particular treats the informal ethnoracial carceral culture of prisoners.

Chapter Two

The Beef: California's Ethnoracial Political Culture of Incarceration, 1941—1970

The only place in California where Black and Brown people were conditioned and socialized in a culture of Black-Brown interracial violence during the 1940s and 1970s points to California's prison life. Prisoners were conditioned and socialized to abide by the codes, rules, and regulations, including racial arraignments, of the informal carceral culture of prisoners. Given the relational markets of power and markets of race, navigating interracial violence was salient to a prisoners' survival. Interracial violence was most likely conditioned and socialized in prisons since the inception of both of California's first prisons, San Quentin and Folsom state prisons.

We know that prior to the 1940s, mostly prisoner con-bosses sat at the top of the prisoner social hierarchy.[147] The scholarship shows that con-bosses controlled much of the prisoner resources and prisoner arrangements. However, if we scrutinize the ethnoracial background of con-bosses, what becomes obvious is that con-bosses were typically white. During this time, then, white con-bosses were the ones with the upper hand in the informal carceral culture of prisoners. As California's population boomed and became very diverse during the Second Gold Rush, so did its prisoner population. This influx of prisoners brought with it a significant number of Black and Brown people, contributing in part to the dismantling of the white con-boss system. By the 1950s, informal prisoner organizations formed along racial lines, and their markets of power, of race, and of violence informed the codes, rules, and regulations, including racial arrangements of California's informal carceral culture of prisoners. As prisons developed in California throughout the second half of the twentieth century, California's informal carceral culture would also follow suit.

This chapter provides a historical understanding of California's informal carceral culture and how Black-Brown interracial violence were implicated in its relational markets of power and markets of race. The chapter quickly explores prisoner race relations from 1930s to 1950s before embarking on how California's informal carceral culture shapes an ethnoracial political culture of incarceration post-1950. I first argue that California's new informal carceral culture of prisoners surged when California Governor Earl Warren centralized California's penal system in the early 1944. Warren's California Department of Corrections (CDC) not only changed the prisoner administration, but also to prisoner relations. Centralization caused the

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[147] Ethan Blue, *Doing Time in the Depression: Everyday Life in Texas and California Prisons* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2012); Heather Jane McCarty, "From Con-Boss to Gang Lord: The Transformation of Social Relations in California Prisons, 1943–1983" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2004); McCarty (2004).

prisoner hierarchy to flatten, and by 1950 the informal prison culture became centered around ethnoracial group politics. In this ethnoracial political culture of incarceration, prisoners utilized their market of ethnoracial group power and violence as their way to negotiate the type of relationships prisoners would have with one another. Finally, the chapter shows that as California constructed new prisons, the informal carceral culture of prisoners along with its ethnoracial politics interacted and intersected with the same carceral pipelines created by Governor Warren's CDC (or centralization). In other words, the same informal carceral culture of prisoner spread throughout the system. Antagonistic Black-Brown relations evolved within the system.

Interracial tensions and violence among Black–Brown prisoners have their origins in this socialized anti-integrationist environment of California's informal carceral culture. There was a moment where California prison life did present Black–Brown interracial hope. This Black–Brown interracial opportunity happened during the radical prison movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s.[148] Prisoners from all ethnoracial backgrounds forged prisoner solidarity across ethnoracial lines to combat the injustices of the California Department of Corrections. The ethnoracial political culture of incarceration, however, eventually overwhelms the radical prisoner's movement. As more prisons mushroomed throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the ethnoracial political culture of incarceration also followed suit. By the 1970s, the political culture of incarceration expanded beyond prison walls.

History of Prison Structure and Informal Cultures of Prisoners

California prisons, as most American prisons, have been in the business of assimilation, especially inculcating among prisoners the tenets of American republicanism [List the most important tenets] As Edward Ayers demonstrates, the reformatory effect of the institutions privileged whiteness, particularly "white manliness."[149] California's modes of penology mirrored the national prison story. California's diverse demographics, however, had its penal particularities. The West Coast was diverse, so inculcating republicanism within its diverse population took on a different turn.

Shelley Bookspan tells us that California was unique in that its early start at caging people involved imprisoning a to a large extent an "alien," and "unassimilable" population.[150] Most American prisons did not have California's ethnoracial diversity

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[148] Eric Cummins, *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[149] Edward Ayers, *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South* (1984), 62; Mark E. Kann (2000), "Penitence for the Privilege: Manhood, Race, and Penitentiaries in Early America" *Prison Masculinities*: 21–34.

[150] Shelley Bookspan, *A Germ of Goodness: The California State Prison System, 1851–1944* (University of Nebraska Press, 1991).

prior to the Civil War. When San Quentin Prison opened in 1854, most of its prisoner population were Mexican Americans and poor Irish. The Mexican American population had been immediately forged as US citizens with the rise of the modern U.S.-Mexico border in the aftermath of the 1846 Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty. Although the terms of the treaty made Mexican Americans legally white, the realities of white supremacist racialization made them nonwhite. Mexican American were not treated as American citizens but were seen as a population to be ethnically cleansed from American society. Kelly Lytle Hernandez reminds us of California's various eliminatory capacities, including how San Quentin (as well as all other) state and federal prisons held captive Mexican Americans.[151]

Also, not many African Americans entered prisons prior to the Civil War because most of them were already under the carceral system of southern chattel slavery. After the Civil War, however, Blacks entered the same institutions of punishment as whites. The presence of Blacks in southern and eastern penitentiaries threatened the supposed white American manliness that these institutions claimed to offer. Black people's presence, Edward Ayers writes that these institutions "destroyed the reformatory effect the institution" held for whites.[152] White prisoners' feelings of pride and independence was challenged. Whites believed the privileges of republicanism and manliness only belonged to them, and not to former slaves. As a result, prisoner racial arrangements and segregation ensued. This divided prison life into two categories: privilege for whites who only constituted 'manliness' and 'independence'; and racial discrimination in punishment for nonwhites.[153]

Scientific racism also played a major role throughout the nation's criminal justice system(s). Particularly in the South, scientific racism heightened whites' fears of Black males, which in turn propelled the racial logic for racializing African Americans.[154] This was the nature of the Jim Crow criminal system, and, as David M. Oshinsky notes, it "made black populations more vulnerable than before"

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[151] Kelly Lytle Hernandez, City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

[152] Ayers (1984), 62; for further works on how states, the federal government, politics and power have planned, succeeded, and even failed at shaping American incarceration during their historical moments prior to WWII see David M. Oshinsky, *"Worse Than Slavery": Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice* (New York: The Free Press, 1996); Alex Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor: The Political Economy of Convict Labor in the New South* (London and New York: Verso, 1996); Mary Ellen Curtin, *Black Prisoners and Their World, Alabama, 1865–1900* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000); Rebecca McLennan, *The Crisis of Imprisonment: Protest, Politics, and the Making of the American Penal State, 1776–1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[153] Mark E. Kann (2000), "Penitence for the Privilege: Manhood, Race, and Penitentiaries in Early America" *Prison Masculinities*: 21–34.

[154] Curtin (2000).

emancipation.[155] The Jim Crow system returned Black people to labor in the fields no longer as slaves but all too often as convicts. David M. Oshinsky notes, whites' racial hostility backed by Black Codes and Jim Crow forces created a secured "convict-lease" system that captured mass populations of African Americans and forced them to labor in both the private and public sectors.

The South was not the only system committed to a convict lease force, however. Alex Lichtenstein reminds us that a "reliable and predictable . . . means of racial control and labor exploitation" was not just a southern thing, but a nationwide reality. [156] Convict leasing pitted rich against poor, whites against blacks, and ex-master against former slaves. In many ways, the working-class experienced the carceral arm of liberalism. Big business appropriated the state's prisoners as cheaper labor.

Free labor such as small farmers and many other poor whites could not compete with the Jim Crow convict lease system. By 1900, early Progressives sought to solve the challenges that convict leasing created for free labor. Progressives solved this problem by removing the use of convict labor from the private sector, but they would later transfer it for state-run projects.[157] Prisoner labor was everywhere.

This labor competition undercut free labor because free labor contractors lost out on government contracts. Convict labor became the leading labor supply not only for the "reconstruction" of the Southern economy but for reconstruction of the entire country. From railroads, schools, coal mines, to the production of almost every other industry, convict labor contributed in significant ways to American modernity.[158]

Progressive penologists invoked ideas of science, efficiency, masculinity, or citizenship to justify the purpose and function of prisons. Nevertheless, prisons could not exist without prisoner labor. Rebecca McLennan observes, "new penologists conceived of their task primarily as one of assimilating prisoners born in Europe and native-born Americans classified as "white" to the ideal, "manly citizenship." At the end of the day, however, prisoners' labor power remained "of foundational importance" for any penal program to have teeth. [159] Not one task that reformers dreamed could hold water without prisoners' work in the institutions. Although reformers would flirt with ideas and processes to abolish prison labor, this crisis of imprisonment would have its lasting footprint and consequences throughout the closing of the century.

Prisoners did resist, however. As Lichtenstein tells us, prisoner resistance was a "struggle against complete enslavement." [160] Prisoner resistance usually ushered in public support against the use of prison labor. Eventually, the state stepped-in to abolish

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[155] Ibid., 29.
[156] Lichtenstein (1996), 40.
[157] Lichtenstein (1996), 16.
[158] Lichtenstein (1996)
[159] McLennan (2008), 404, 50.
[160] Lichtenstein (1996), 151.

the convict labor system, but prisoner labor would persist, getting revamped in some fashion.

Public outcry against these modes of penology during the Great Depression pushed new progressives to re-conceptualize the "rehabilitation" ideology of the 1920s and 1930s. On the one hand, convict resistance brought the demise of prisoner labor; on the other hand, the public's protest against prison labor fed this decline. Unfortunately, prison labor further depressed already severely declining employment figures and wages during the Great Depression. In order to ease the "free world's" anxieties over joblessness and prison labor competition, by 1929 Congress passed the Hawes-Cooper Act, which prohibited the sale and transportation of prison-made "goods." Then**, i**n 1935, they passed the Ashurst-Summer Act, which regulated the use of prisoner labor. Abolishing prisoner labor came in the guise of "rehabilitation," but in practice the use of prison labor persisted. [161]

The carceral story of the West Coast not only involves Black and white people, but also ethnic Mexicans, Oakies, Asians, and Native Americans. Because of its demographic diversity, California's progressives had an earlier start at caging but also racially segregating its "unassimilable," while at the same time fostering a culture of punishment that privileged whites over non-whites. Bookspan explains, "In California, only white prisoners received the benefit of the one-man-per-cell ideal; foreign born or black prisoners suffered with several cellmates in tiny rooms designed for one."[162] This system created an ethnoracial hierarchy where power and the privileges of punishment also prevailed for white guards, a system that benefitted white prisoners. Since the inception of San Quentin in 1850s up to World War II, this was the case.

In prisons, most interracial tension and violence came from white groups pitted against nonwhites. Progressives, white prison guards, and even white con-bosses used what they understood was scientific and efficiency to classify and manage non-white prisoners in San Quentin State Prison and later in Folsom State Prions. All prisoners, Ethan Blue tells us, got "marked as racially and morally deviant . . ." but in an era where hierarchical racial ideologies informed white Progressive notions of 'delinquency,' only 'white-raced' prisoners "were considered potentially redeemable citizens."[163] All nonwhite prisoners were managed, disciplined, and castigated according to a common sense hegemonic racial difference that held whiteness at the top of the prisoner ethnoracial hierarchy. This was normalized.

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[161] Prison Industries Production for the War, Chronologically Arranged, Earl Warren Papers—California State Archives: Parole Legislation. 10 January, 1943. See also Ethan Blue (2012), 16-17.
[162] Bookspan (1991), xvii.
[163] Blue (2012), 38–39.

Black and Brown racialization in California prisons was also seen through the same 'degenerate' and incorrigible gaze that Progressives had constructed for young Black and Brown 'juvenile delinquents.'[164] As Blue elaborates,

> The reforms they championed, like others in the southern Progressive movement, were structured by race. "Progress" in the prison system, as in the increasingly rigid Jim Crow public sphere, attempted to firm up distinctions among black, Mexican, and white inmates, so that poor whites would not fall down the slippery slope of racial degeneracy and mix with people of color. Separating whites from ethnic Mexicans and African Americans was arguably more important than segregating first-timers from violent recidivists, so that those whites could be redeemed into proper American citizens, while ethnic Mexican and black prisoners were contained and disciplined as the lowest of workers.[165]

San Quentin and Folsom were immense institutions, and prisoners operated the ins-and-outs of prison administration and operations including the racially assigning segregated housing, tasks, and labor assignments. Prisoners were the prisons' main laborers. With the exception of prison guards and the warden, prisoners labored in everyday operations that made prison function smoothly. White con-bosses positioned themselves at the top of this hierarchical ethnoracial culture of incarceration. Con-bosses, for example, had the power to assign prisoners to the best or worse jobs. Con-bosses controlled many resources, which also allowed whites to control anything from food to shelter to even prisoners' sexual (consensual or coerced) relations in prison.

As World War II dawned, however, the informal 'official' con-boss system began to crumble. As early as 1943, California Governor Earl Warren attempted to racially integrate prisoners in state prisons to supposedly prepare prisoners for "citizenship."[166] Again, the system of prison labor continued but it was disguised under the mantra of wartime patriotism.

These new penal articulations and practices gave Warren power to reorganize California's entire penal system into a modern American "centralized correctional system," or the California Department of Corrections (CDC).[167] All efforts at fortifying the CDC, however, point to how Earl Warren sought in reality to undermine the Hawes-Cooper Act and the Ashurst-Sumners Act. Warren's aim was to resurrect

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[164] Chavez-Garcia (2012), 3.

[165] Blue (2012), 11.

[166] Preliminary Report of Governor's Committee on Penal Affairs: Folsom Prison and San Quentin, December 26, 1943; Submitted to Honorable Earl Warren, Governor of California: 11–12.

[167] Earl Warren, The public papers of Chief Justice Earl Warren / edited by Henry M. Christman. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959; On Penal Reform, "California's Sentencing and Correctional Methods": 23.

California's prisoner labor force. Warren motivated political and public opinion in his favor by making prisoner labor significant to the war effort and patriotism.

World War II also ushered in a new era of racial politics in American politics and morality. African Americans contended that "freedom from fear" should begin at home, especially when segregationist policies throughout American public spaces and institutions underscored the moral contradictions of fighting racism and fascism abroad. At local, state, and national levels, governments sought to ameliorate this criticism by installing integrationist reform efforts and programs. Warren's CDC was no exception. The creation of the CDC was based on curing prison corruption, and this entailed dismantling the con-boss system, especially its racially discriminatory aspects . However, the reformed CDC turned out to be less about fostering ethnoracial equality among prisoners than putting prisoners back to work.

Prior to Warren, prisoner reform programs in California had already been underway. One major step was in the creation of a separate institution for convicted women. When women were sent to prison, they sent them to sections inside men's prisons. Women suffered at the hand of guards and also male prisoners. During the 1930s, penal reform and rehabilitation rhetoric gathered steam. Women activists challenged the state of California to provide a separate prison that would only keep convicted women. By 1936, the California Institution for Women at Tehachapi (CIW) was established. The making of CIW set the tone for new reformatory goals throughout California's penal system.[168] Once CIW was established, policymakers and penologist also imagined building a prison for less violence offenders.

Since the 1930s, the State Board of Prison Directors had already studied, planned, and flirted with penal experiment like the ones Warren proposed. The State Board of Prison Directors, for instance, included in their plans building a prison for less violent offenders. Penologists had been gathering data, consulting penal experts, and even contracting researchers to resurrect prison labor conditions. The California Prison Affairs contracted University of California, Berkeley's political scientist professor Milton Chernin. Chernin studied the penal structure in its entirety. By December of 1934, Chernin argued in his *Legislative Problems No. 17* [??] that his findings warrant "a complete reorganization" of California's penal system.[169] Chernin continued his research for three years; and right before the US prepared to enter World War II, Chernin consolidated his research with The State of Prison Directors' earlier findings regarding the problems with California's Penal Affairs.[170]

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[168] Ibid., 92.
[169] Milton Chernin and Ronald Hanna Beattie, "Penal Report," Berkeley, Bureau of Public Administration, University of California, 1934: Legislative Problem No. 17.
[170] Milton Chernin, "Penal Reform in California," Bureau of Public Administration, University of California, Berkeley, 1937 Legislative Problem

The State Board of Prison Directors had concluded earlier that the inadequacy of the prisons' classification system produced institutional problems. By 1937, Chernin agreed in part but further added that the key problem was prison administration as a whole. One of Chernin's main critiques was the fact that the Department of Penology did not have control over other related independent divisions. The Division of Prisons and Paroles was controlled by the State Board of Prison Directors; Division of Prison Terms and Paroles, was controlled by Board of Prison Terms and Paroles; and Division of Women's Institute, was run by the Board of Trustees Institution for Women.[171] Consequently, Chernin's reports argued, related division did what they pleased or could refuse to corroborate with the mission of the Department of Penology. At bottom, a key question was the effectiveness of the State Board of Prison Directors' job.

By 1938 the State Board of Prison Directors bypassed Chernin's main critiques, and instead used his research to propose "a medium or minimum security institution which placed a primary emphasis on rehabilitation [for men]."[172] The Board of Directors refused to look inward and instead projected penal reform problems onto prisoners and on the weak categorization, and the classification and segregation system. Although the State Board of Prison Directors merited more scrutiny, the urgency of World War II helped The State Board of Prison Directors succeed in maintaining their independent status and authority over The Division of Prisons and Paroles.

The Board of Prison Directors sought the opportunity to make plans for a new penal institution in times when the prison population was expected to rise. From 1937 to 1938 the prisoner population had already increased in San Quentin from 5,001 to 5,377.[173] When San Quentin was built it was meant to house only 3,493 prisoners; Folsom was built to house only 2,000 prisoners.[174] The State Board of Prison directors warned of a potential prisoner increase during and after wartime. The solution was to build a new prison.

Unlike San Quentin and Folsom, the leading ideas behind the new male prison were reform and rehabilitation. The State Board of Prison Directors looked towards Chino Valley in Southern California as a potential site for the new innovative prison. The State Board of Prison Directors hoped to implement…

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[171] Milton Chernin, "Penal Reform in California," Berkeley, Bureau of Public Administration, University of California, 1937: Legislative Problem No. 3.

[172] Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California, for the Eighty-Eight and Eighty-Ninth Fiscal Years, 1937-1938: pg. 12; also see Bureau of Public Administration, University of California Berkeley, 1937 Legislative Problem, No. 3. Penal Reform in California, Prepared by Milton Chernin Research Associate.

[173] Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California, for the Eighty-Eight and Eighty-Ninth Fiscal Years, 1937–1938: 25.

[174] Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California, For the Ninetieth and Ninety-First Fiscal Years, 1939–1940: 12

the basic principles of classification and segregation so that it will not be necessary . . . to subject the occasional or accidental offender, the inmate for whom there is some hope of rehabilitation, to the demoralizing influence of association with the repeated or hardened offender.[175]

Chino State Prison soon became the State Board of Prison Directors' first attempt at creating a facility that reflected these reformist and rehabilitation notions.

The Board of California Prison Directors was not operating in a vacuum, however. For quite some time the "principles of classification and segregation" were ideas that the American Prison Association (APA) circulated around the country.[176] San Quentin and Folsom did not have a competent classification and segregation system. Although convicts were categorized by race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, type of crime for which convicted, and prisoners' IQs and psychological tests, the standard classification practice merely housed newly convicted felons in San Quentin and housed parole violators in Folsom. By chance, mentally ill prisoners could end up in mental hospitals, but this practice was uncommon. Usually, the mentally ill roamed San Quentin's and Folsom alongside the young, the old, and the "more" and "less" violent prisoners.

The APA, as well as the State Board of Prison Directors of California, understood that American prisons systems were failing. By 1938, at the Proceedings of the Sixty-Eight Annual Congress of the American Prison Association, E. Preston Sharp echoed the new popular American consensus on penology. Sharp argued "that classification is the answer to all evils."[177] In the same Congress of the APA, future director of the California Department of Corrections Richard A. McGee also backed Preston Sharp's bold argument.[178] McGee spoke of his experience as Warden of New York State prison and how the problem of weak classification systems was not only a local or state problem but also a national one. As Chino State Prison was in the works, penologists throughout the country hoped for California to succeed, especially given that it was in the Pacific war front.

When Governor of California Culbert L. Olson took office in November 1939, the Prison Board of Directors had already jump-started the new rehabilitation project. However, prison administrative problems did not cease. Olson inherited a prison administration problem during a time when penologists across the country viewed American Prisons as critical to the war effort. Olson launched the "Prison Investigation

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[175] Biennial Report of the State Board of Prison Directors of the State of California, for the Eighty-Eight and Eighty-Ninth Fiscal Years, 1937–1938: 13.
[176] See Proceedings of the Annual Congress of The American Prison Association Vol., 1938–1946 on classification.
[177] Proceedings of the Sixty-Eight Annual Congress of the American Prison Association, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 2 October to 7 October 1938, 205.
[178] Ibid.

Committee," recalled Kate R. O'Hare, ". . . to make the Department of Penology the best it could be."[179] On many levels, Olson did attempt to match prison reform programs with the war effort, but the Prison Investigation Committee found that penal mismanagement continued to undermine the State Board of Prison Directors, and industrial war goals were suffering as a result. Olson replaced the current members of the State Board of Prison Directors with his hand-picked prison administration, and in 1940 Olson's new State Board of Prison Directors helped jumpstart California's "first out-going prisoner under WWII Selective Services Act."[180] Olson's planned to send prisoners as workers in the war effort.

Additionally, Olson's administration, in concert with his new State Board of Prison Directors, implemented new classification systems in Folsom and San Quentin, including other aspects seen as vital for the war effort. In early-1942, Olson and his State Board of Prison Directors defended themselves when their "administration of California State Prisons [had] been questioned."[181] The State Board of Prison Directors presented their perspective and accomplishments during their administration. They listed and presented twenty-one accomplishments, which included "Commitments by the courts of all California Felons to San Quentin"; "Classification, segregation and transfer of convicts in and between prisons"; "Training program for guards established"; "Abolish shaving heads and wearing stripes"; and "Establishment of harvest camps as a war-time emergency measure by which millions of dollars of food crops have been saved by the farmers for the use of the Armed Forces."[182] Committed to his leftist politics, Olson's accomplishments reflected much of Milton Chernin's prison reform suggestions. Olson helped materialize many of Chernin's ideas for prison reform, except for one: the complete reorganization of California's Penal Affairs.

The closest thing to reorganization or centralization was noted in the last "accomplishment" section: "The Creation of a position of 'Controller' to coordinate the financial policy of all agencies under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Prison Directors."[183] Given Governor Olson's Leftist politics, it is uncertain whether he would have pushed for a centralized penal system to resurrect prison labor that new penologists yearned for. What is clear, however, is that even if Olson would have desired centralization, conservative Democrats dominated California's Assembly and

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[179] Summary of the California Prison Situation Prepared for Governor Earl Warren by Kate Richards O'Hare, Chronologically Arranged, Earl Warren Papers—California State Archives: Parole Legislation: 1.
[180] Calendar of Highlights in Folsom Prison History, Chronologically Arranged, Earl Warren Papers—California State Archives: F3640.986-Folsom (14).
[181] Statement By State Board of Prison Directors, Earl Warren Papers – Corrections Institutions, San Quentin State Prison 1943 – 53. California State Archives. F3649977.1941-44 (6):
[182] Ibid., See list of twenty-one (21) accomplishments.
[183] Ibid., See list number twenty-one (21).

pro-business Republicans controlled the Senate. Conservative Democrats and pro-business Republicans not only cut millions of dollars from Olson's budget, but they also killed any bill that Olson backed-up or proposed, even those on penal reform.

It was no accident, then, that the position of "Controller" coordinated the financial policy of all agencies under Olson's hand-picked State Board of Prison Directors. With a Legislature holding tight to the purse, Olson could not have accomplished as much as he did have he not allocated prison funds in part to help his Board succeed.

During the 1930s, President Roosevelt's New Deal policies were popular and boosted Americans' morale. As a result, Olson might have become a little overconfident, especially given his Leftist stances. New Deal policies ameliorated economic anxieties during the Great Depression. In 1934, Olson even played a significant role in the "End Poverty In California" campaign to elect socialist Upton Sinclair Governor of California. Although Sinclair lost to Republican Frank Merriam, the experience along with the strong support of President Roosevelt motivated Olson to run against Merriam in the following election.

The Emergence of Governor Earl Warren and Prison Reform

Once World War II became a fight for "Freedom from Fear," Americans increasingly shunned communism and socialism. But Olson did not heed the warnings and instead continued to go against popular views. From when he assumed the Governor office to nearly the end of his term, Olson's actions were seen as being socialist if not communist. Olson wanted to raise taxes, especially on big business. He also proposed universal health care in California and even granted pardons to well-known communists such as Tom Mooney and Warren Billings. Olson quickly became an unpopular candidate for reelection, especially during wartime. "His [Olson] lack of moral courage placed him, discredited…in the number three classification," Kate R. O'Hare told Warren "to your advantage no doubt Governor Warren."[184] By the time California Attorney General Earl Warren ran for governor of California, Republicans and conservative Democrats had already worn down Olson's credibility.

Earl Warren ran a moderate bipartisan campaign during wartime, and this helped him gain support from both Democrats and Republicans. Over the course of his political career, Warren had become very popular. Warren's moderate-conservative stance reflected concurrent Progressivism and enhanced his popularity. As Jack Harrison Pollack writes, Warren became what "the majority of California voters

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[184] Summary of the California Prison Situation Prepared for Governor Earl Warren by Kate Richards O'Hare, Chronologically Arranged, Earl Warren Papers— California State Archives: Parole Legislation: pg. 2.

wanted" during wartime.[185] When the votes were counted, Warren defeated Olson by a landslide, and on November 3, 1942, over 90% of California voters elected Earl Warren Governor California.

Earl Warren took office in 1943 and immediately went to work reforming "the evils" of California prisons. War effort anxieties surrounding prison mismanagement, prison labor, and the contradictions of racial segregation on the home front drove the governor on a patriotic penal reform crusade. The election of Earl Warren gave penologists hope, especially because Warren had a "spotless" career as Chief Deputy, District Attorney of Alameda County, and California's Attorney General.

Earl Warren was also the type of person that did not wait for controversy to arise. Warren anticipated and then confronted problems ahead of time.[186] In his first year in office, Governor Warren investigated penal institutions. He went to work right away on "the evils" of California penal affairs. Warren knew that if he could build public and bipartisan support, he could call the California Legislature into special session to reconstruct the penal system. Although Governor Warren would direct his staff in November of 1943 "to survey and investigate the penal affairs of the State of California," he had already singled out which of the two prisons—San Quentin or Folsom—would be the model prison to produce the best results for reform and centralization.[187]

Prior to calling the California Legislature into special session, San Quentin's Warden Clinton Truman Duffy and Governor Warren used San Quentin's newspaper *The News* and the San Quentin On The Air Mutual Broadcasting System to present their case on penal reform. For almost an entire year, patriotic rehabilitative images and headlines of Governor Warren, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the American Red Cross, and Inmate War Industries dominated *The News*' headlines. On March 25, 1943, for example, nearly three months after Warren assumed office as Governor of California, *The News* headlined read:

> "GOV. EARL WARREN, FIRST BLOOD DONOR": Governor Earl Warren was the first donor at Oakland's new Red Cross Blood Donor Center at its dedication ceremonies last Monday. Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Red Cross leaders took part in the ceremonies.[188]

The following month *The News* on its front page emphasized Eleanor Roosevelt's guest appearance at San Quentin: "Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt Tells Inmates She is Pleased By Their Attitude." *The News* quoted her, "'The President is going to be proud of the

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[185] Jack Harrison Pollack, *Earl Warren: The Judge Who Changed America* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 5.

[186] Pollack, 49.

[187] Preliminary Report of Governor's Committee on Penal Affairs: Folsom Prison and San Quentin, 26 December 1943; Submitted to Honorable Earl Warren, Governor of California.

[188] *The NEWS: California State Prison at San Quentin*, 25 March 1943: 1.

war work being done in San Quentin, and I know he will be proud of the way you are doing it,' said the Nation's First Lady last Thursday after she had inspected the prison's war industries."[189] In fact, almost every issue of the San Quentin newspaper praised its war efforts and linked them to Governor Warren's prisoner rehabilitative patriotic-labor-citizen rhetoric.

Governor Warren's Committee on Penal Affairs

By November 29, 1943, Governor Warren ordered his hand-picked Governor's Committee on Penal Affairs (GCPA) to investigate every penal institution in California, specifically San Quentin and Folsom State Prisons. Only two men's prisons and a women's prison existed in California. Between November and December, the GCPA had visited San Quentin, Folsom, and CIW. In less than a month the GCPA found numerous problems, including corruption, throughout the entire penal system. Once the investigation gave its preliminary findings, Warren was shocked at the administrative corruption rampant in the penal system.[190] Although all penal institutions suffered from corruption, the GCPA report only focused on Folsom State Prison as the problem-riddled prison model. This made sense because this had been Olsen's penal child.

At Folsom, the GCPA reported that prisoners were left in dark dungeons and often forgotten for months. The report further elaborated on the problem with con-bosses:

> . . . prison officials, guards and prisoners testified against the power and influence exerted by certain prisoners. The warden's practice of depending on inmate secretaries is evidence by the fact that the following prisoners were employed by him on different occasions successively: Burroughs M. McGraw, 22230; Charles B. Jones, 19944; Frank Howard, 20213; Burroughs M. McGraw, 22230; Oliver J. Peterson, 22848; Frank Howard, 23602; John F. Kurtin, 22784; Benjamin F. Crandall, 24369.[191]

Prison officials, guards, and prisoners testified about the problem of con-bosses, and showed how they were the ones who actually ran the prisons. This small list of con-bosses, however, glimpsed the ethnoracial background of prisoners in charge of the everyday workings of prison life. Con-bosses were mostly white, and their control exploited hierarchical race differences and racial segregation within prisoner populations.

The GCPA reported that the institutions were corrupt in prison administration and management, and backward for prisoners' living conditions. The report also

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[189] *The NEWS: California State Prison at San Quentin,* 15, April 1943: 1.

[190] Min S. Yee, *The Melancholy History of Soledad Prison: In which a Utopian Scheme Turns Bedlam* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1973), 2.

[191] Preliminary Report of Governor's Committee on Penal Affairs: Folsom Prison and San Quentin, 26 December 1943; Submitted to Honorable Earl Warren, Governor of California, 11.

emphasized how in Folsom State Prison (or Olson's jewel) prisoner racial segregation troubled both the prisoner population and its administration. Olsen was not responsible for these conditions, they also existed in San Quentin. The GCPA was only using Folsom – or Olsen's Folsom – as a way to criticize the former governors mishandling. According to the GCPA, racial segregation had negative implications for society when prisoners would get released:

> The moral and spiritual development of the prisoner must be encouraged to prepare him for citizenship. Hatred, resentment and intolerance are contributing factors to crime and the prison authorities must be wise in the example they set and the policies they establish in this regard. Great bitterness and problems of violence have developed out of this situation in civilian communities and it is wise for prison management to heed the warning and develop policies that lead towards the curing of any form of racial discrimination.[192]

The committee recommended "immediate correction"[193] to all penal institutions, some of which involved developing a program for the racial integration of prisoners. Weeks after New Year's Eve, Warren released the GCPA's report to the press, and an angry public and bipartisan support quickly rallied behind his penal crusade.[194] The information gathered by the GCPA gave Warren the credibility he needed to restructure California's entire penal system. Part of Warren's credibility also came in showcasing the potential of San Quentin prison as opposed to Folsom's failures.

Right before Warren called the Legislature into special session, *The News* and San Quentin On The Air Mutual Broadcasting System extensively disseminated Warren's discourse on how prison labor and centralization well prepares prisoners for citizenship. On January 14, 1944, for example, *The News* reported that "San Quentin On The Air Mutual Broadcasting System Tuesdays 7:30p.m." aired in almost 230 radio stations across the nation.

> Aberdeen, S. Dak . . . KABR;" "Bakersfield, Calif . . . KPMC"; Birmingham, Ala . . . WSGN"; "Chicago, Ill . . . WGN"; Cleveland, Ohio . . . WHK"; Columbus, Ga . . . WDAK"; Dallas, Texas . . . WRR"; "Denver, Colo . . . KFEL"; "Fort Lauderdale, Fla . . . WFTL"; Grand Rapids, Mich . . . WLAV"; "Greenville, Miss . . . WHAI"; "Hot Springs, Ark . . . KFFA"; "Indianapolis, Ind . . . WIBC"; "James Town, N.D . . . KSJB"; "Knoxville, Tenn . . . WBIR"; "Lincoln, Neb . . . KFOR"; "Los Angeles, Calif . . . KHJ"; "Wisconsin Rapids, Wisc . . . WFHR", even "Honolulu, Hawaii . . . KGMB.[195]

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[192] Ibid., 12.
[193] Ibid., 13.
[194] Min S. Yee, *The Melancholy History of Soledad Prison: In which a Utopian Scheme Turns Bedlam* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1973), 2.
[195] *The NEWS: California State Prison at San Quentin,* 14 January 1944: 2.

Through these channels of communication, Warren's San Quentin stood as the potential penal city on the hill in comparison to the penal mismanagement in Olsen's Folsom. Thereafter, in late January, Warren "called the California Legislature into special session to consider, among other things, a prison reorganization bill."[196]

Under Warren, California prisons would transform into institutions of "rehabilitation" that emphasized social welfare to prepare prisoners for citizenship. In March 14, under Warden Duffy's discretion, San Quentin On The Air radio show broadcasted how " . . . men at San Quentin were all fine men and that they were presenting their side of the case as an equal to other outside organizations, which have helped in the war effort, by emphasizing the work that the convicts have done, such as building submarine nets [etc.]."[197] This rhetoric about citizenship rehabilitation continuously emphasized that prisoners should be regarded as good citizens who care about their country and the overall outcome of the war. All this helped Warren successfully push Senate Bill No. 1 through the California Legislature. By May of 1944, penal administration gets consolidated and centralized under a California Department of Corrections (CDC).[198]

Under Warren, the GCPA impacted the prison system and ultimately changed the meaning of California penitentiaries. Warren and the CDC's new director, Richard A. McGee, planned to implement programs that sought to "rehabilitate" instead of punishing the prisoner. Rehabilitation, however, proved to be more about training and getting prisoners to work.

> The new director of the CDC seemed well suited to handle what he
> simplistically described as the "twin evils" of prison life: idleness and
> overcrowding . . . The new director established educational programs with
> competent instructors, opened vocational training shops in auto repair and
> furniture making and started some very basic programs in counseling and
> psychiatric rehabilitation.[199]

The Governor and the new CDC director seemed to embrace the challenges that change would bring to California's prison system. However, the changes not only applied to prisoners, but also meant changing the language and attitude that characterized prisons,

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[196] Earl Warren, *The Public Papers of Chief Justice Earl Warren*, ed. Henry M. Christman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); On Penal Reform, "California's Sentencing and Correctional Methods," 23.

[197] Governor's Office, Inter-Office Memorandum, Subject: Radio Broadcasts, San Quentin, 16 March 1944, *Earl Warren Papers* – Corrections Institutions, San Quentin State Prison 1943–53. California State Archives.

[198] Earl Warren, *The Public Papers of Chief Justice Earl Warren*, / edited by Henry M. Christman. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); On Penal Reform, "California's Sentencing and Correctional Methods," 23.

[199] Min S. Yee, *The Melancholy History of Soledad Prison: In which a Utopian Scheme Turns Bedlam* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1973), 3.

prison guards, and the administration as well. Prisons became "correctional training facilities," guards became "correctional officers," incarceration was understood as "in custody," education and counseling programs became "treatment," and the term "inmate" contained a new meaning.[200] Even the dark dungeons used to discipline misbehaving prisoners became "adjustment centers."

The question of race and racial discrimination, however, went under the radar of centralization and the war effort. Throughout 1945, the San Quentin newspaper continued to publish front-page headlines, various columns, and advertisements by the "War Industries Council" about how San Quentin inmates were in the business of helping their government, including in "war bond" efforts.[201] San Quentin and CDC promoted a public image of prisoners and prison reforms as one that produced not only good citizens but also loyal American patriots. CDC and Warren's patriotic penal reform effort, however, only blurred ongoing racial tensions that had existed in California prisons since their inception.

Governor Earl Warren and Richard A. McGee deemed race and racial discrimination as significant impediments to their centralization efforts. They applied what they practiced: they created a sub-centralized component to deal with prisoners. To discourage racial discrimination among prisoners the Governor's Committee proposed implementing at Folsom and at other institutions a prisoner's council modeled after San Quentin's Inmate Advisory Council (IAC). [202] From Warren's and McGee's perspective, a formal IAC would help heal racial problems among the prisoner population at Folsom as well as in all other institutions.

CDC's main rehabilitative and social welfare role, encompassing the work of the IAC, transformed prisons into inmate cooperative work environments that would primarily benefit the industrial war efforts. When Warren and McGee praised the CDC system and how it influenced prisoners, they never actually sought to foster prisoner racial harmony; rather, they prioritized the industrious war efforts and other prison industries that they implemented into the new system.

Early Stages of the CDC

By October of 1946, before the National Convention of the American Bar Association in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Governor Warren claimed to champion the

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[200] On the terminology and language change for the California Department of Corrections see Min S. Yee (1973), 4; Cummins (1994), 8.
[201] *The San Quentin News,* 18 May 1945, 4, and 15 June 1945; Earl Warren Papers – Corrections Institutions, San Quentin State Prison 1943–53. California State Archives.
[202] The overall outcome of the Preliminary Report of Governor's Committee on Penal Affairs: Folsom Prison and San Quentin, 26 December 1943. Submitted to Honorable Earl Warren, Governor of California, concluded that an Inmate Advisory Counsel would help the institution learn and adhere to prisoners' needs and concerns.

reorganization and reform of California Department of Corrections. In his address on penal reform, Warren proposed to penal reformers that a "centralized correctional system" was the solution to penal problems. "The new law created a Department of Corrections administratively headed by a Director of Correction"[203] Warren's presented his CDC as the promising model for institutional penal reform.

In both practice and discourse, Warren managed to Americanize that which was politically understood as un-American at the time; that is, Warren managed to rehabilitate convict prison labor. This helped Warren create inroads necessary to resurrect a positive image of and uses of convict labor. In turn, the IAC served more as the mediator or buffer that sought to integrate prison workspaces (including recreational spaces) for inmates of various racial backgrounds. Article 3 defined IAC's purpose:

> The primary purpose of the Inmate Advisory is to promote good will in the group life of the institution. By mutual understanding gained from permissive discussion of the affairs of the institution, much of the friction or resentment between inmates and staff may be avoided. The prisoners may become sympathetically aware of the problems of the staff and the latter may appreciate more realistically the psychological duress of prison life even under the most humane and considerate conditions . . . [to] not be permitted to develop into serious tensions to end in costly disturbances or riots.[204]

"Article 3" of the "Definition" and "Value of the Inmate Advisory Council" sought to make prisoners sympathetic towards correctional officers and the prison administration. The IAC's cooperation, nonetheless, was essential to the Governor's war efforts, as well as for the creation of CDC and the prison industries. CDC's prison administration or IAC, however, did not stop prison disorder, racial discrimination, or the costly disturbances. The model San Quentin prison was no exception, as a prison race "riot" broke out when two Black prisoners attempted to sit with white prisoners in the dining hall.[205]

At the dawn of the CDC, most white prisoners were incorporated into the positive side of CDC's rehabilitation plans, while most nonwhite ethnoracial groups were excluded. Also, the making of CDC did end the official con-boss system, as white con-bosses still held on to power, as they controlled the unofficial business of prison life. As Heather McCarty sees it, "Prisoner culture and the convict code remained intact

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[203] Earl Warren, The public papers of Chief Justice Earl Warren / edited by Henry M. Christman (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); On Penal Reform, "California's Sentencing and Correctional Methods," p. 23.
[204] Article 3, *The Purpose of the Inmate Advisory Council*, Corrections Administration: Inmate Advisory Council Report, 1954. California State Archives, 4.
[205] McCarty (2004), 42.

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even after the removal of the con-boss system."[206] White interracial violence continued to dominate prison yards.

Prisoners' Self-Empowerment

In the post-World War II years, the prisoner population increased. The "Black" and ethnic "Mexican" population, moreover, mostly grew while the number of whites began to decline.[207] Disillusioned with both the failure of prison reform and racial discrimination, prisoners sought self-empowerment. Black and ethnic Mexican prisoners became less tolerant of white prisoners and white con-boss dominance. Yet, prison administration and guards continued to favor white prisoners. In response, nonwhite prisoners organized themselves into ethnoracial prison group formations that later would turn into ethnoracial prison gangs.

Using notions and ideas that prisoners perceived belonged to their ethnoracial and political identities, new ethnoracial organizations used race as a tool to consolidate power in terms of the number prisoners they could absorb. The first two nonwhite dominant ethnoracial organizations to surge were the Mexican Mafia (*La Eme*) and The Black Muslims. Soon, thereafter, the Aryan Brotherhood sprang up, and much later *Nuestra Familia* and then the Black Guerrilla Family. These groups formed in response to both CDC conditions, white prisoner privilege and overall prisoner ethnoracial cultural and social relations.

In the mid-1950s, *La Eme* (or the Mexican Mafia) was viewed as a Mexican prisoner protectorate organization against white prisoners and CDC's racist administrative practices.[208] The Black Muslims also formed for similar reasons, but they carried out a more militant stance and response to the institutions' racist practices. As Eric Cummins reminds us, "As Muslim unity grew, the increasing power of black convicts on the yard threatened to reverse patterns of race domination in the inmate subculture; racial polarization intensified, and racially motivated disturbances increased."[209] The increase of both Black and Brown prisoners contributed to racial tensions and ethnoracial group formations.

Prisoner administrators and "corrections" officers also exploited in various ways prisoners' ethnoracial beefs, which only accelerated interracial violence. Many times, prison officials pitted prisoners against each other. At times, they set up prisoners in ethnoracial violent situations. Consequently, CDC's administration and staff also

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[206] McCarty (2004), 46.

[207] Ibid. 39.

[208] For an extensive work on California prison gangs see Alfredo Mirande, *Gringo Justice* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 200–211; Cummins (1994), 135–142.

[209] Cummins (1994), 71.

contributed to prison gang formations. As Robert D. Weide reminds us of CDC's role in prison gang formations and their reproduction,

> We should not underestimate the ability of prison staff and administration to manipulate, provoke, and facilitate prison gang proliferation and conflict in carceral environments, whether formally or informally, intentionally or inadvertently, and we need to consider the motives that could prompt them to do so in the first place. Inversely, we should not either overestimate the agency that prison gang members and their confederates have in affecting the trajectory of the groups they belong to, and their very lives for that matter.[210]

 Prisoners had this commonly shared experience with the institution and with the ethnoracial culture of prisoners. Prisoners either experienced things themselves or communicated those expected possibilities and probabilities throughout every prison. To a large degree, these ethnoracial formations eventually flatten the white prisoner hierarchy.

Furthermore, white prisoners also did not stay behind. Being outnumbered in prisons, by 1960 white prisoners united themselves against *La Eme* and The Black Muslims. White prisoners socialized all white prisoners under the white supremacist umbrella of the Aryan Brotherhood. As early as 1963, in San Quentin, the Black Muslims were pitted against other racial groups for striking and protesting CDC racist practices. The protests and strikes led to a series of racial conflicts between prisoners and administrators. By 1967, San Quentin witnessed a "riot," "the most serious disturbance" in the history of the prison.[211]

Ethnic Mexican and Native American prisoners belonging to the Northern California areas of California found themselves at odds with *La Eme*'s ideology, its goals, and practices. As prisons became an arena where prisoners struggled to survive the violence and racial power dominance of other prisoners, groups broke out from previous groups, but any organized group could not escape the label, the prisoner relations with, nor the potential of violence. This would give rise to other prisoner group formations.[212] *La Eme* pushed forceful tactics on this dissenting group of ethnic Mexicans and Native Americans from Northern California. Given that these Northern Californian prisoners saw their own power grow in terms of the higher number of prisoners from Northern Cali who entered CDC's facilities, they had enough social and ethnorical capital to form *Nuestra Familia*.[213]

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[210] Robert D. Weide, "The Invisible Hand of the State: A Critical Historical Analysis of Prison Gangs in California," The Prison Journal (Philadelphia, Pa.) 100, no. 3 (2020): 312-331.

[211] Ibid. Robert Minton and Stephen Rice (1972), 105; Cummins (1994).

[212] James B. Jacobs, "Race Relations and Prison Subculture," *Criminal and Justice,* 1 (1979): 1–27.

[213] For an extensive work on California inmate prison gangs see Mirande (1987), 200–211; Cummins (1994), 135–142.

Alliances and Survival Among Incarcerated People

As the prisoner population grew, survival depended on forging interracial or intraracial alliances. The survival of prison groups sometimes depended on developing working relationships and alliances with other ethnoracial gang groups. *La Eme* would ally with the Aryan Brotherhood. The Aryan Brotherhood, on the other hand, because of their white supremacist ideological considered Blacks organizations, including the much later the Black Guerilla Family, their natural nemesis. To survive, however, they also needed to have alliances. These working relationships created alliances and animosities.

Being intra-racial enemies of *La Eme*, *Nuestra Familia* developed working relations with The Black Guerilla Family.[214] That alliance implicated that *La Eme* would also beef with The Black Guerilla Family. These organizations cause serious disturbances not only in the prisons but also to themselves. Prisoners remained loyal to the "convict code." The white con-boss system diminished, but prisoners still espoused a convict code. Essentially, Heather McCarty reminds us, the culture was no longer of individuals but of a 'convict class' with all its ethnoracial groups. In addition, this 'convict-class' detested the CDC's prison staff and administration. Aside from racial and intra-racial issues, the ambience of the informal culture of prisoners was almost like 'Convict-class vs CDC' culture.

The convict code was particularly more intense around the Indeterminate Sentence Law, which was a law that kept imprisoners in California prisons without a determined release date. The Indeterminate Sentence Law gave power to the CDC and the Board of Paroles to determine a prisoner's release date even if prisoners were only sent to prison for arm robbery of a candy bar.

Under the influence of George L. Jackson, who was a prisoner himself, prisoners organized and politicized each other. Prisoners across ethnoracial lines worked with one another to combat CDC's administrative problems, including the Indeterminate Sentence Law during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Rather than settling for the racial dominance of prisons, prison groups of various ethnoracial backgrounds, including whites, participated in a prisoners' interracial solidarity effort with the goal to overthrow the oppressive powers that made their incarceration possible.[215] Prisoners' cry was under the revolutionary banner of political prisoners.

This prisoner effort turned out to be unique in the history of American prisons. As Angela Davis sees it, "The single greatest achievement of their collective resistance was the growing unity of Black, Brown and White prisoners, for the fomenting of racial

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[214] Ibid.
[215] Cummins (1994), 136.

hatred by the prison authorities has been the main bulwark of the uncurbed terror."[216] The California prison system witnessed prisoners from various ethnoracial backgrounds unite in San Quentin, Folsom, Chino, and Soledad. Prisoners were able to ameliorate racial tensions that they believed the administration had originally fostered.

> Officially, there was the Inmate Advisory Counsel, a traditional impotent body of elected convicts which negotiates minor grievances with Warden's Office… Inmate leaders acknowledged the self-defeating nature of internal fighting, and the word went out that race warfare is a technique used by prison power structure to keep the inmate divided and therefore impotent.[217]

Alliances among prisoners threatened prison administrations statewide. Prisoner interracial solidarity was achieved, especially when prisoners called for a prisoner racial solidarity "Holiday" on February 15, 1968.[218] The word went out in the *Outlaw*, an underground prisoner newspaper.[219] Aware of this, San Quentin's administration attempted to undercut prisoner unity by busing out ". . . to Folsom, Soledad, and other California prisons" suspected prisoner leaders. Rather than defeating prisoner unity, however, shipping prisoners only spread the growing prisoner solidarity to other prisons.

Busing and spreading these suspected leaders throughout San Quentin, Soledad, and Folsom, and other California state prisons contributed greatly to a rise of prisoner political consciousness between the late-1960s and mid-1970s.[220] Throughout San Quentin, Folsom, and Soledad prisons, innumerable prisoners no longer saw themselves as criminals, but as political prisoners incarcerated by a capitalist state structure. At Folsom, Angela Davis noted, "Prisoners—especially Black, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans—were increasingly advancing the proposition that they are political prisoners in the sense that they are largely the victims of an oppressed politico-economic order, swiftly becoming conscious of the causes underlying their victimization."[221] By 1970, political prisoner and prison intellectual George Jackson claimed:

> There are still some blacks here who consider themselves criminals—but not many. Believe me, my friend, with the time and incentive that these brothers have to read, study, and think, you will find no class or category more aware,

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[216] Angela Yvonne Davis, *If They Come in the Morning; Voices of Resistance* (New York: Third Press, 1971), 53.

[217] Robert Minton and Stephen Rice, *Prison life: A Study of the Explosive Conditions in America's Prisons* (1972), by the editors of Ramparts magazine and Frank Browning, 107; See also Cummins (1994), 123: The Inmate Advisory Counsel demonstrated here proves to be inefficient, and ignorant, about prisoner racial problems existing in prisons.

[218] Cummins, 117.

[219] See Cummins, 107.

[220] For Inmate Racial Solidarity in San Quentin see Cummins (1994); for Soledad see *Realities of Repression* (1971), Davis (1971).

[221] Davis (1971), 29.

embittered, desperate, or dedicated to the ultimate remedy—revolution. The most dedicated, the best of our kind—you'll find them in the Folsoms, San Quentins, and Soledads.[222]

Although the collective solidarity of prisoner racial groups was central in making the prisoners movement possible, ironically the movement pivoted around race and racism. A key issue was that most white prisoners did not identify with the broader issues affecting Black and Brown peoples. When the struggle intensified between prisoners and the CDC, white prisoners were the first to detach from the larger prisoner struggle. Once whites detached themselves from the prisoners' collective efforts, prisoners regressed to interracial tensions.

White prisoners found it difficult to identify as political prisoners because they understood that they were not a colonized class like Black and Brown people who made up most of the prison population. Simply put, white prisoners could not identify with the anti-racist politics of the increasingly prisoner of color-led and revolutionary prisoner rights movement. . So most white prisoners dropped out of the political prisoner movement and regressed back to the only ethnoracial political culture they knew, which was centered on maintaining and protecting white supremacy.

CDC officials not only played a role in racially segregating prisoners, but they also aided and abetted violent interracial spectacles in order to destroy prisoner solidarity. George Jackson described how these conditions could have been avoided.

> It doesn't have to be this way. Since the officials are segregating anyway, they could do it in such a way that there would never be any contacts between blacks and whites. They could give us this side of the first floor and them the other side or the reverse. They could even give people a choice as to whether they want to be segregated. I'm putting you on notice, Moody [Captain of Soledad], the first time I get shit thrown at me the whole country will know how it displeases me.[223]

Racial segregation among prisoners proved to be the strongest factor affecting the decline of prisoner intraracial and interracial political alliances. Interracial tensions and concerns were never really abandoned by prisoners. Minor interracial disturbances between prisoners began to ensue and accumulate. Nonwhite groups began to regress to protect their own ethnoracial group's best interests.

By the mid-1970s, the CDC and prison administration reported widespread interracial violence among prisoners. At a Congressional Sub-committee on Prisons, Prison Reform and Prisoner's Rights in San Francisco's Federal Building, CDC administrators discussed the problems with "subversive" prisoners. They recommended

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[222] George Jackson, *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson* (1970), 26.
[223] Jackson (1994), 230.

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prisoner racial segregation as the solution to "stop the bloodbath" in the system.[224] The killing of George Jackson by a correctional officer who served as a tower gunman seemingly ended the political prisoner movement. George Jackson was seen as the leader. While at the same time, state suppression was showing up. Ethnoracial gangs regressed back into maintaining the interracial and intraracial group power balance, if not control over prison life for the remainder of the twentieth century.

Over time the violent ethnoracial political culture of incarceration more and more centered on maintaining interracial and intraracial group parity among prisoners. As McCarty reminds, "Prisoner social relations transmuted from collective convict solidarity to antagonistic division along various axes—race being the most pervasive . . ."[225] Convict solidarity became fragmented along ethnoracial prison lines, and violent interracial retaliations resumed. Ethnoracial prison gangs revised and redefined the convict-code, and thereafter "[instead] of 'doing their own time,,'" McCarty reminds, "prisoners increasingly did 'gang time.'"[226] When interracial and/or intraracial prisoner diplomacy failed among prisoners, they resorted to group and prison gang violence in order to maintain equitable ethnoracial privileges and parity punishments across ethnoracial groups.

The ethnoracial political culture of incarceration found expression in ethnoracial prison gang formations. This culture of incarceration was enforced and reproduced by interracial and intraracial violence alongside the development of more California prisons. As the prison population expanded, alongside the development of more prisons in California, the prison culture only followed suit. [227] Philip Goodman explains, "The reasons for this turmoil were complex and included newly formed gangs, changes in prison population demographics, and new developments in prison policy, especially in relation to gangs."[228] The incorporation of prisoners into ethnoracial prison gangs intensified the violent quality of California prison life. As more prisons were built, and as the demographic shift and the prison population increased "the culture and organization of prison and street life [became] inextricably intertwined."[229] Ethnoracial prison gangs also competed for prisoners' allegiances. Ethnoracial prisoner organizations eventually absorbed prisoners or forced prisoners to identify with them. Prisoners not only did their time but also gang time.

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[224] Sub-committee appointed by the federal government, KPFA Radio recording of federal government (excerpts) Banc CD 162:1, 2, 3, 4.
[225] McCarty (2004), 2.
[226] McCarty (2004), 387.
[227] Geoffrey Hunt, Stephanie Riegel, Tomas Morales, and Dan Waldorf (Aug. 1993), "Changes in Prison Culture: Prison Gangs and the Case of the "Pepsi Generation,"" *Social Problems*, Vol. 40, No. 3., pp. 398-409.
[228] *Ibid*., 398.
[229] *Ibid*., 407.

Over time, the CDC worked this gang angle on the ethnoracial political culture of incarceration into its corrections' handbooks when dealing with its newly arriving prisoners at reception centers in California prisons.[230] As Geoffrey Hunt shows, CDC's prisoner ethnoracial segregation became a " highly institutionalized context, [where] 'race' [was] constantly produced and re-produced."[231] A prisoner's ethnoracial background (both group and street life) strongly pushed a prisoner into some category of an ethnoracial group that was also linked to gangs. The initial phase in prisoners' conditioning and socialization would begin this way. Violence or the threat of violence informed the classification.

Conclusion

From the 1950s up to the 1970s, the story of mass or socialized Black-Brown interracial violence points primarily to California prison life. Black-Brown interracial violence hardened under the violent ethnoracial political culture of incarceration. The ethnoracial political culture of incarceration came to be expressed through ethnoracial prison gang formations, and it was reproduced and enforced through intraracial allegiances, but mainly through interracial group rivalries and their potential for violence. Through the intrastate busing of prisoners, the ethnoracial political culture of incarceration germinated and reproduced in other prisons. This problem would only expand exponentially when California constructed more prisons in the 1980s and 1990s.

Violence in California prisons increasingly centered along ethnoracial lines. Prisoners entering California prisons may not necessarily belong to a rigid category of race, but race and prisoners' backgrounds– especially if affiliated with an ethnoracial street gang – fundamentally would assign prisoners to an ethnoracial political role they would play in prison life. Put differently, prisoners would do ethnoracial "gang time." The ethnoracial political culture of incarceration was common and critical to socialization in California prisons.

Unlike prison life, young Black and Brown people on the streets – that is, beyond prison life – continued interracial relations of coexistence in LA. Black-Brown interracial violence in LA was rare. As the following chapters show, the decades between the 1970s and early 1980s mainly witnessed episodes of intraracial violence among young Black and Brown people. Black and Brown clubs or gangs did not rival each other either on the streets of LA—not until after the mid-1990s at least.

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[230] Philip Goodman (2008). Forthcoming in *Law & Society* ""It's Just Black, White or Hispanic": An Ethnographic Examination of Racializing Moves in California's Segregation Reception Centers."
[231] *Ibid.*, p. ii.

Young Black and Brown people would continue to experience interracial violent largely at the hands of whites , as seen in institutions such as schools and policing. Whites played key roles in hardening a racialized violent hegemony that depicted young Black and Brown boys as "hoodlums," "animals," and as potential impregnators of "white girls."[232] As Chapters Three and Four show, nothing shows this more than the issues surrounding racial integration of the Los Angeles Unified School District school busing efforts, which co-laced with Proposition 13 — the anti-tax initiative that defunded public schools — and the hardening of a racialized and militarized policing culture targeting young Black and Brown people.

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[232] Barry Bushell, Letter to Judge Egly, August 10, 1977, *Paul Egly Papers*, 1977-1981 (Collection 1282. University of California, Los Angeles: Library, Department of Special Collections), Box, 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977: p. 1.
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Chapter Three

"Probably Black or Brown and Fierce as the Viet Cong": Black-Brown Intraracial
Violence and White Anti-integrationists Violence, 1970s

> Morris added that prison terrorist gang violence could turn into a Northern
> California vs Southern California battle in state penal institutions in the future.
> Both witnesses bolstered a subcommittee report which warned that the
> activities of the four prison terrorist gangs are expanding into the public secto**r**
> — Jerry Gillam, *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 1974

> Phillips Bardso, president of the Los Angeles Board of Education, said that
> "while we do have some violence between Black and Chicano gangs, it is not a
> major reason" for gang warfare.
> — Jack McCurdy, *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1974

In late May of 1973, around 8:35 pm, fifteen-year-old Ricardo Hearns, a "black youth," the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "was walking along Utah Ave, near 1st St., about a block away from" the Pecan Park in East Los Angeles.[233] Hearns had just walked away from a dispute he and other young Black and Brown people had had at the park while playing a game of basketball. As he walked away, someone came up behind him. Suddenly ". . . he was shot in the back and chest . . ." with a shotgun.[234] Soon thereafter, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) arrived at the scene, and while "investigating Hearns' death . . . they heard shots in the park area at 9:45 pm."[235] In what appeared to be retaliation, two Mexican American brothers, eighteen-year-old Antolin Martinez and his 20-year-old brother Joseph Martinez, were also shot while walking near the same park. Joseph ended up in critical condition, but Antolin died "at the scene." [236] The police speculated whether these two killings were linked to the killing of thirty-five-year-old Ernesto Trujillo, which had taken place a week earlier. The police eventually rounded up and arrested seven suspects, including Trujillo's older brother.

These three killings seemed to have involved, at first glance, what appears to be Black-Brown interracial violence. With the exception of prison life, however, these Black–Brown violent incidents were unique in LA. Other Black-Brown interracial

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[233] John Kendall, "Three Killed in Two Days as Violence Erupts on East Side," *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1973, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán, Calif., 1973): Article 5188, p. 80.

[234] *Ibid.*

[235] *Ibid.*

[236] *Ibid*.

conflicts most likely did happen, but they were not frequent or substantive enough for the *Los Angeles Times* to find worth reporting. In fact, Black-Brown interracial conflicts were so rare that the *Los Angeles Times* would only go on to report two other Black-Brown interracial violent incidents for the entire decade of the 1970s.[237] It would also be unclear whether these two incidents were racially motivated.

Although the data (or lack thereof) suggests that Black-Brown interracial violence was rare during the 1970s, by no means would racial and interracial issues affecting young Black and Brown people be absent from the *Los Angeles Times*. Black or Brown intraracial competitions, rivalries, or violence usually made for good newsworthy material. This alone, however, could not even scratch the surface of the interracial issues affecting young Black and Brown people. By contextualizing the most pressing racial and interracial issue of the 1970s – racial desegregation and integration of public schools through busing – we gain a better understanding of how ethnoracial groups engaged and interacted with Black and Brown youth.

Journalists and newspapers mostly report on immediate and contemporary stories. For the entire decade of the 1970s, the *Los Angeles Times* was preoccupied substantially with LA's state and police violence. The newspaper was likewise preoccupied with local whites' anti-integrationist violence against Black and Brown youth as it related to the desegregation of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the integration of its public schools through busing.The bulk of the evidence on interracial issues that mostly affected young Black or Brown people during the 1970s tells us that white Los Angeles saw a white ethnoracial culture in crisis. They saw LAUSD's racial integration efforts, notably its busing struggles, as a threat to White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant dominance. White anti-integrationist forces along with state officials not only racialized and criminalized young Black and Brown people to stall LAUSD's 'racial-mixing,' but their anti-integrationist endeavors seriously undercut California's struggles toward a racial democracy.

This chapter discusses the racial problems that young Black and Brown people faced with one another, with American institutions, and with white society in LA and California during the era of a supposed racial democracy (1970s). This chapter analyzes the salient interracial issues that impacted Black and Brown youth during the entire

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[237] For the additional two possible Black-Brown interracial conflicts covered in the *Los Angeles Times* for the decade of the 1970s, see Steve Harvey, "90% of Students Stay at Home After Shooting Incident," *Los Angeles Times* Sept 27, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, Sept.-Oct., 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, Calif., 1974): Article 4021, p. 90; Charles T. Powers, "Law and Disorder at San Fernando High" *Los Angeles Times* Sept 30, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, Sept.-Oct. 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, Calif., 1974): Article 4029, pp. 95–97.

decade of the 1970s.[238] The chapter's initial purpose was to interrogate race relations of the 1970s and account for the extent to which Black-Brown interracial violence might have ranged across LA. However, the data on interracial violence against Black or Brown people pushed in another direction. The chapter shows that among Black and Brown youth, intraracial violence dominated the 1970s, and that Black-Brown interracial violence was rare. In addition, in the chapter I argue that whites mainly struck the most significant interracial blows against young Black and Brown people during the decade. I start with a brief discussion of how the early 1970s signaled a rising racial democracy, and how young Black and Brown people were subject to those social and institutional developments. Next, I interrogate how pro- and anti-integrationist institutional cultures and policies shape young people. The chapter also shows how integrationists' procedures and policies impacts white culture. Finally, I conclude by showing how anti-integrationist construct and consume negative views of young Black and Brown people, and how they utilize these constructs to mobilize against LAUSD's racial integration busing plans but also against racial democracy. The record on race relations in both the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Paul Elgy Papers* overwhelmingly confirm this view for the city of LA, the entire state of California, and perhaps even the nation.[239]

Revamping the "Street Hoodlums"

Black and Brown activism and "progress" from the 1960s continued in California during the early 1970s, but these movements also headed towards a decline as the empire was preparing to strike back. The United Farm Workers' and Cesar Chavez's Grape Boycott and the Black Panther Party's "Free Hughey" and "the San Quentin Six" campaigns offered both signs of hope and distress. On the one hand, events and campaigns demonstrated Black and Brown people's mobilization campaigns; on the other hand, these campaigns also revealed the carceral blows the

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[238] Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, Jan–Feb 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972) (hereafter, Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*); *Paul Egly Papers*, 1977-1981 (Collection 1282. University of California, Los Angeles: Library, Department of Special Collections) (hereafter, *Paul Egly Papers*).
[239] The *Paul Egly Papers* contains LA's documents on LA's racial integration case, *Crawford vs. Los Angeles Board of Education.* The case lasted for a period of two decades (1963-1982), and it was significant because it turned out to affect not just LA but all of California. Here, these papers are significant because the papers also contain how newspapers told society how to interpret young Black and Brown people as they sent Judge Paul Egly letters and other documents regarding segregation and desegregation and the mixing of children. For collection see *Paul Egly Papers*, 1977-1981 (Collection 1282. University of California, Los Angeles: Library, Department of Special Collections) (hereafter, *Paul Egly Papers*).

empire threw against the political organizing of folks of color. The state's attack on Black and Brown social-political movements left consequences for the following generations of young Black and Brown people. Young Black and Brown people were left vulnerable to American institutions during, to echo W.E.B Du Bios's assessment on the First Reconstruction (1863-1880), the "splendid failure" that followed the Second Reconstruction (1940-1980).

Black and Brown activism brought attention and some changes to the structural inequality affecting Black and Brown communities. The 1964 Civil Rights Act and its immediate aftermath exemplified these racial and socio-political pressures and the nation's racial democratic achievements and progress. By the early 1970s, the moral fiber in California and Los Angeles seemed to sympathize with and favor a racial democracy. For example, on April 6, 1972, even an "Anglo Army" was seen "Behind Chavez " and the farmworkers.[240] On the surface, an ethnoracial democracy seemed to be unfolding.

At the same time, public schools continued to struggle to educate Brown and Black youth, especially in terms of providing a culturally relevant education. In 1972,

> The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights declared … that more than 1 million Mexican American students in the five states of the Southwest are still being deprived of a good education by suppression of their culture in the public schools.[241]

Newspapers and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights actively underscored that much work is still needed regarding young Mexican Americans. The nation claimed to bring this imagined racial democracy to fruition by signaling people's ethnoracial concerns. Los Angeles – and California overall – seemed to embrace this imagined ethnoracial democracy even at young people's early stages of life. Plans for a first "Spanish Sesame St. Set," reported the *Los Angeles Times*, were already underway.[242] "By the fall of 1973, Spanish-speaking pre-school children can look forward to a bilingual television series geared especially for them."[243] Socializing young people and the larger

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[240] "Anglo Army Behind Chavez, April 6, 1972" *Los Angeles Times* May 5, 1972, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1978): Article 0602, p. 57. Although the volume's title suggests that it begins with the month of May 1972, its *Los Angeles Times* section actually starts with the month of April.

[241] Daryl Lembke, "Latin Culture Excluded In Schools, Panel Says," *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 1972 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 0606, p. 64.

[242] Marlene Cimons, "Spanish Sesame St. Set," May 15, 1972, *Los Angeles Times*, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 0619, p. 82.

[243] Ibid.

society around the fruits of bilingual education seemed to be prioritized in this new racial democracy.

Despite these little tokens, young Black and Brown people continued to be disciplined and castigated for their ethnoracial backgrounds. The same institutions that claimed to champion bilingual education were also very hostile towards young Black and Brown people. These state actions were not rare. In fact, they were widely known.

> Mexican-Americans often speak only Spanish at home but are admonished against this and even punished for speaking it at school, according to the report…
> School principals estimate that nearly 50% of the Mexican-American first-graders in the five states do not speak English as well as the average Anglo first-grader.
> The report said that… main tools for overcoming language deficiencies are bilingual education, in which course content is presented in both English and Spanish.[244]

 Although newspaper reports pushed for favorable bilingual education for young people, public school officials and administrators continued to punish ethnic Mexicans for speaking their first colonial language that they often primarily speak at home.

Punishment for speaking another colonial language, such as Spanish, was both physical and psychological. In addition, this harsh discipline and punishment undermined learning the English language. As a young '*always running,'* Luis J. Rodriguez narrated his experience as a fifteen-year old with high school pedagogy in Los Angeles during the 1970s. Rodriguez recalls, "I had fallen through the chasm between two languages. The Spanish had been beaten out of me in the early years of school—and I didn't learn English very well either."[245]

Teachers, school administrators, and schools too often enacted violent pedagogical methods against Brown and Black people. Violence and pedagogy contradicted notions of a racially democratic curriculum. This violent pedagogy revealed a great deal about the larger social and political role that institutions played in the lives of young Black and Brown people.

The larger national concern surrounding race and interraciality had less to do with Black or Brown people but more with how white people feared the potential socialization that could stem from racial desegregation, racial integration, and 'racial-mixing' within the nation's public schools. While public school officials played racial democratic tunes and simultaneously castigated young Black and Brown people, white youth often did the same. They spray-painted on campus walls the same things they

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[244] Ibid.
[245] Luis J. Rodriguez, *Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.* (Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press; 1993): 219.

learned at home and in the community. "Mexicans Go Home! Greasers Stink."[246] Spray-painted racial slurs clearly reveal how certain people think of other people. The words and spray paint tell us a good deal about what Pierre Bourdieu calls the habitus in which young white people are conditioned and socialized.[247] In other words, the writing on the walls indicates how spray-painters were socialized to imagine, interpret, and perform their white racial identity and racism.

Hostile racial dynamics in school policy and procedures worked hand-in-hand with white ethnoracial communities and culture outside of schools, including socialized violent white-privilege. Young Black and Brown people did not have violent socialized relations; young white people, on the other hand, were conditioned and socialized to be anti-nonwhite. As interracial fights broke out between young Brown and white students, Rodriguez recalls, the police would only arrest Mexican American students.[248] In contrast, white students' racism went unpunished almost every time. Whites' anti-nonwhite actions aligned with the ideal discipline of whiteness.

As white supremacist actions went unpunished, anti-Blackness and anti-Brown*ness* would be enabled if not actively promoted. On the one hand, bilingual education debuted and functioned as a partial solution to address how LAUSD failed its ethnic Mexican students. On the other hand, the institutions hardly took responsibility for their failures. Educational institutions saw Mexican cultural values, for example, "Among the possible causes," explaining the low achievement of young ethnic Mexican in schools.[249] Whiteness was always a marker of achievement. The following chart describes alleged contrasting values and their effect on Mexican Americans:

SOCIAL GROUP:
Anglo—Upward mobility. Success depends on effort.
Chicano—Accepts as fact that he exists subject to God's will.
Chicano in School—Frequently lacks enthusiasm and confidence.
COMPETITION:
Anglo—Highly competitive.
Chicano—Noncompetitive
Chicano in School—May lack the ability to compete with peers.
ROLE OF FATHER:

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[246] Ibid: p. 178.
[247] For the concept of "habitus" see Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1990).
[248] Rodriguez, 100.
[249] Rodolfo Medina, "The Chicano, Education and Contrasting Values," *Los Angeles Times*, May 6, 1972, in Comité de México y Aztlán, News Monitoring Service, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 0609, pp. 67–68.

Anglo—Father shares authority with mother. Showing affection not considered unmasculine.

Chicano— "Machismo." Father dominates. Father-child relationships formal. Affection for younger children expressed.

Chicano in School—Misses male authority in the classroom.

ROLE OF MOTHER:

Anglo—Shares authority with father. Siblings accept her authority.

Chicano—Primarily to perform household duties. Submissive to father. Siblings dedicated to mother image**.**

Chicano in School—Questions authority of female teacher in the classroom.

HOME ENVIRONMENT:

Anglo—Many personal experiences enable child to develop concepts quickly. Study situation fair to adequate.

Chicano—Tends to be considered a ghetto by Anglo standards. Crowded and noisy. Lack of education materials and playthings.

Chicano in School—Often aggressive behavior. Lacks necessary experiences for conceptual development.

BODY CONCEPTS:

Anglo—Less Modest.

Chicano—Extremely Modest.

Chicano in School—Possibly embarrassed during physical education periods or physical examination.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS EDUCATION:

Anglo—Education considered important for boys and girls. Relationship between home and school important.

Chicano—Education subordinate to family duties. Considered most important for the male, for learning a skill.

Chicano in School—Apathetic in school. Often embarrassed by deficiency in English and few successful experiences. May become a dropout.

If all educators were aware of contrasting values effectively, programming would solve many of our problems.

Rodolfo Medina

Director, Alternative School,

Consultant to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare Pasadena [all in o.g.].[250]

Popular discourses and theories of "culture of poverty" dominated and informed educators' thinking about questions about race and nonwhite people, especially ethnic

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[250] Ibid.

Mexican peoples.[251] These theories were part and parcel of the problem among educators to the extent that even the Department of Health, Education and Welfare own Pasadena consultant, Rodolfo Medina (also probably Chicano), internalized Mexican culture as the problem. In what seemed to be in service of facilitating Mexican American students' low achievement, institutional experts did not look inward at how tracking systems and classroom policy created hostile learning conditions for young people. These ideological observations would have lasting structural implications for the next decade. In the meantime, it was clear that these ethnic Mexican students were collectively not assimilating or could not assimilate. In unorganized ways, students were most likely collectively resisting their mistreatment, subjection, and rejection in schools.

At the time, race and public education research had already advanced beyond the culturally deficient paradigms. Educator consultants such as Rodolfo Medina were reminded how "destructive stereotypes" were incompetent tools for understanding student learning.

> The letter to *The Times* from Rodolfo Medina… (May 6) seemed to reflect an honest attempt to describe the educational needs of Chicano children, but unfortunately it demonstrates a gross lack of knowledge about contemporary research in this field. The article in many respects parrots the racist writings of many who blame the Chicano culture for the failures of the schools. That Chicanos lack experience out of which concepts may grow is a false generality and a statement that reinforces destructive stereotypes used by uninformed educators.
>
> However, the most potentially damaging aspect of Medina's letter is his identification of Anglo values as positive, and Chicano values as deficient. Your readers may rest assured that sufficient research data is available to demonstrate a high motivation factor in Chicano families to succeed in school. It is well known by researchers that Chicanos begin school with a competitive level almost as high as that of Anglos. This small disparity is compensated by

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[251] The "culture of poverty" theory erroneously reduced nonwhite people's socio-economic and political conditions of oppression to cultural deficiencies of Black and Brown people, thereby ignoring the problems of structural racism. During the 1970s, Scholars, politicians, and public-school officials argued that culture explained the conditions of Black and Brown people. These erroneous frameworks had negative implications for nonwhite peoples that lasted up to the 1990s. For the origins of "culture of poverty" see Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sanchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963); ---, *A Study of Slum Culture: Backgrounds for La Vida* (New York: Random House, 1968).

the fact that Chicanos perform better than Anglos in cooperative tasks, a fact that should be explored as a teaching aid.[252]

In spite of these admonishments, however, most educators, consultants, teachers, and public schools did not restructure their institutions. Experts, instead, continued to diagnose alleged inferior cultures of peoples of color as the main problem that needed discipline, punishment, and 'restructuring.'

The main site where cultural restructuring culture took place, however, was in the physical structure of schools. Unfortunately, this restructuring also happened on the bodies of young Black and Brown people. Trying to restructure culture among young Black and Brown people was not limited to Pasadena alone, or Los Angeles, but encompassed all of California. Examples abound.

Santa Maria—Charges of excessive corporal punishment, including the taping of students' mouths, were made Saturday at a Civil Rights inquiry into alleged mistreatment of Mexican-Americans [children] in the tiny Guadalupe, Calif., school district.

Witnesses called by the California State Commission of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights testified that Mexican-American students had been struck and beaten in the district schools and their parents had been intimidated and in some cases subjected to economic reprisals for attempting to interfere with school affairs.

Community organized around this issue were fired from jobs and deported, such as Jesus Ortiz who worked at a Dairy Farm.

One witness said a teacher had taped the mouth of a girl student on seven different occasions. Another told of a girl having her head shoved into a fishbowl by a teacher….a boy being struck on the head with a large dictionary by a teacher and of a girl student being hit "on her behind," as the witness said, by a teacher wielding a yard stick which broke in two.[253]

The tools of learning such as tape, textbooks, and measuring yardsticks often became tools of punishment. How educators managed young Black and Brown people also provides a sense of how educators were socialized to use excessive force on non-white students.

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[252] For a response letter see 'The Chicano, Education, and Contrasting Values' by Emily Wolpers South Gate. *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1972, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 0621. p. 84.

[253] Dorothy Townsend, "Latin Students Abused, State Committee Told: Witness in Guadalupe Accuse School Personnel of Cruelty, Intimidations," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1972, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 0624; p. 88.

Anglo culture not only disciplined the bodies of young Brown people. Regrettably, anti-Mexican socialization, discipline, and punishment also extended into the family and community body. The same institutions that were supposed to teach and discipline students even went as far as punishing family and community members who sought to remedy the corporal punishment their children received in schools. In concert with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), administrators also surveilled, disciplined, and punished families and communities that protested schools' abuse of power. People were fired from their jobs, or the state could come and incarcerate and deport undocumented people for participating in demonstrations and protests against corporal punishment in public schools.

In LA, if school, police, and immigration were not enough issues that Black and Brown people had to worry about, the city's larger urban renewal projects also threatened their geographical existence. Disenfranchised communities in LA, such as Highland Park, located in East LA, also worried about losing their homes and communities to the "City's New Master Plan."[254] Urban renewal added insult to injury.

> Chavez Ravine, where the Dodgers now play, and Bunker Hill, where ultra-modern office and apartments [sic] buildings now rise, were both Mexican-American neighborhoods—once. That was before urban renewal came to both areas.[255]

Under the guise of an inclusive ethnoracial democracy, urban renewal plans forewarned ethnic Mexicans about their legacy of displacement. Concerns and anxieties over the city's urban planning were clearly justified, as this planning regime functioned more like the antithesis of racial democracy. Evidence of this was already seen in how public schools managed and underprepared young Black and Brown people for the future.

Whereas a racial democracy was widely touted, LAUSD officials instead intensified racial segregation in public schools. Since *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 and the ongoing *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* in 1971, the nation had struggled with desegregation and integration of K–12 public schools for seventeen years already. By late 1972, Los Angeles' struggle went further backward by embracing a sham racial democracy.

> The number of black and Mexican-American students in California schools with 50% or more minority enrollment increased by 192,000 over the past five years and the trend is gaining speed, a state report said Thursday.
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> The report, compiled by the state Department of Education, also said that the number of segregated schools climbed 110 between 1970 and 1971 to a total of

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[254] Frank Del Olmo, "Chicanos Pledge Fight Against Urban Renewal: Activist Fear Loss of Home in Barrios Under City's New Master Plan," *Los Angeles Times*, September 4, 1972 in Comité de México y Aztlán, News Monitoring Service, Sep-Oct, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 1733, p. 120.

[255] Ibid.

1,215. The actual number of minority student in so-called segregated schools increased by 60,000 in 1971, the largest rise since the ethnic census of students enrollment started in 1967, the study showed.

Los Angeles continues to lead the state in segregated schools with 257, an increase of 12 over 1970, according to the report.

The 257 total include 165 schools with 90% or more minority enrollment, most of which are predominantly black. The remaining are Mexican-American.

Anglo students were "the most isolated from other racial and ethnic groups."

More than 42% of the state's Anglo students were 90% or more Anglo in enrollment and 93% of them attended schools that were 50% or more Anglo.[256]

Ethnoracial disparities were not just classroom situations happening to young Black and Brown people but also consolidations of larger racial geographies.

California accelerated rather than ameliorated racial segregation in schools, but Los Angeles, more specifically, was becoming the trendsetter. State incorporation of young Black and Brown people proved more about corporal discipline and punishment than academic or vocational training. "An abnormally large number of black and Mexican-American children are still being placed in public school for the mentally retarded despite new California laws to halt the practice, a state report said."[257] Although the belief that an ethnoracial democracy was evolving in California and Los Angeles, Black and Brown students' ethnoracial backgrounds still mattered to public school officials when determining a student's life opportunities. As Rodriguez recalls the institutional tracking system, "the school separated these two groups by levels of education: The professional-class kids were provided with college preparatory classes; the blue-collar students were pushed into the 'industrial arts.'"[258] Public schools, as mass socializing institutions, undemocratically determined the life chances of young Black and Brown people. This ongoing tracking system denied Black and Brown students college opportunities. As mass-socializing institutions, they also instilled in young Black and Brown people a sense of how the larger social context thought about them and their potential to succeed in life.

As much as tracking systems reveal how young people's potentials are viewed, it also reveals much about how the *tracker's* gaze positions itself in the world.

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[256] Jack McCurdy, "Minority Students Rise in Segregated Schools," *Los Angeles Times*, September 15, 1972 in Comité de México y Aztlán, News Monitoring Service, Sep-Oct, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1972): Article 1752, p. 136.

[257] Jack McCurdy "Minority Ratio Still High in Classes of Retarded/Black, Latin Percentages Are Almost 2 to 3 Times the Average Despite New State Laws," *Los Angeles Times*, April 25, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, March-April, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1974): Article 1677, p. 103.

[258] Rodriguez, 84.

Nonetheless, Black and Brown students, their families, and communities still found ways to resist.

Resilience and Self-Defeating Intraracial Resistance

In some cases, students critically resisted these schools and punishment; in most cases, and with the demise of many social-political figures and leaders, students exercised agency in resilient forms of what Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal call "self-defeating resistance."[259] Black and Brown students exercised agency as a critique of their oppressive conditions, but their forms of resistance also paradoxically "help to recreate," if not worsen, "the oppressive conditions from which it originated."[260] A good amount of young Black and Brown people engaged in mixed combinations of unofficial and unsupervised "self-defeating" hobbies, activities, and groups of resilience and resistance.

While some young Black and Brown people resisted oppression by not attending school or engaging in unsupervised activities, others resisted by joining unstructured street organizations—or gangs. Echoing W.E.B Du Bois' general strike thesis, public schools also socialized young Black and Brown people to have their own collective student-based ethnoracial class consciousness. Often students walked off or avoided school pedagogy, its discipline, and its punishment.[261] However, students' ethnoracial class consciousness mostly went unacknowledged and misunderstood and thus interpreted as "L.A.'s Truants: Problem in Schools, Homes."[262] Indeed, students did skip class to hang out in more welcoming and inclusive spaces than schools; but educators and related institutions used students' actions to continue to reinforce oppression under the idea that Black and Brown people had incorrigible cultural deficit problems. The *Los Angeles Times* even gave lengthy narratives about this for the public to consume:

> They are the pre-dropout generation; the school age children who are not in school. Some have never been.
> …school officials there do not become aware of him until he gets in trouble with the police.

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[259] Daniel G. Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Examining Transformational Resistance Through a Critical Race and LatCrit Theory Framework Chicana and Chicano Students," *Urban Education* 36, no. 3 (May 2001): p. 310.

[260] Ibid.

[261] For works that influence my thinking on W.E.B Dubois' "General Strike Thesis" see Guy Emerson Mount "When Slaves Go on Strike: W.E.B. Dubois's Black Reconstruction 80 Years Later" Black Perspectives (African American Intellectual History Society, Dec. 28, 2015): http://www.aaihs.org/when-slaves-go-on-strike/.

[262] Celeste Duarte, "L.A.'s Truants: Problem in Schools, Homes" *Los Angeles Times* Oct 1, 1973, in in Comité de México y Aztlán, News Monitoring Service, Sep-Oct, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1973): Article 6980, p. 70.

> …there may be children who have not been enrolled because families fear they will be turned over to immigration authorities.
>
> Parents in these neighborhoods who have gone through school often "feel education hasn't helped them and they don't feel it's that valuable," said an East Los Angeles attendance counselor.
>
> "Competition is pretty much an Anglo game," said Michael Lindsay, a Probation Department worker in East Los Angeles, "and kids who aren't good competitors just aren't comfortable in a competitive world."
>
> In poverty neighborhoods there is also the problem of gangs. After years of failure in the school system because of infrequent attendance or educational handicaps, the gang member finds status in the gangs as well as others who share his failure in and lack of respect for schools.[263]

Already culturally racialized as criminal and deviant by academic advisors, a young Rodriguez recalls, "…it was harder to defy this expectation than just accept it and fall into the trappings …So why not be proud? Why not be an outlaw?"[264] Students self-dignified, and they also validated each other's dignified ways. In doing so, they also invalidated – if at least only to themselves – the authority and punitive pedagogical practices of public education and its institutionalization.

Youngsters built cohesion and solidarity with each other under commonly shared experiences to the degree that some found their empowerment through membership in unstructured street organizations. As Rodriguez reflects on his younger gang days, "gangs are not alien powers. They begin as unstructured groupings, our children, who desire the same as any young person. Respect. A sense of belonging. Protection."[265] Under the workings of the institution's informal punitive curriculum for young Black and Brown people, youngsters validated each other within unstructured cohorts of belonging, even if it was by joining a street organization, club, or gang.

In precarious ways, many young Black and Brown people empowered themselves through membership in unstructured street organizations. Self-dignifying gang cohorts also empowered and validated and, by default, also socialized young Black and Brown peoples with each other's struggle against public education. "I wanted this power," recalls Rodriguez of his gang and school days in LA, "I wanted to be able to bring a whole school to its knees and even make teachers squirm."[266] Rodriguez largely echoes common Black and Brown students' anxieties regarding their relationship with teachers and schools during this time. Young people contiguously yearned and struggled for their dignity to be acknowledged. If their dignity was denied,

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[263] Ibid.
[264] Rodriguez, 84.
[265] Rodriguez, 250.
[266] Rodriguez, 42.

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young people, too, made their bodies the place and space where they would contest and struggle for their dignity, even if it meant making authorities acknowledge them as a force to be acknowledged.

Black and Brown students may not have been able to comprehend the larger historical context in which their incorporation in the state was happening during the emerging racial democracy, but the ways they exercised agency with institutional powers shows how assimilation was also not an option available to them. Their incorporation was exclusion; they did not need to study exclusion because they lived it. Being part of gangs empowered many Black and Brown students to such an extent that they validated each other's sense of commonly shared resiliencies, contestations, resistance, and even their rejections of public schooling.

Self-Defeating Intraracial Rivalries

Many young Black and Brown people found camaraderie in gangs through the ways they sociably learn to resist, contest, and even reject the treatment they received in public institutions. Because the one-size-fits-all model of public education was not inclusive of their ways of learning, their needs, and their existence, many youngsters banded together and found refuge and solidarity in unstructured street organizations and cohorts of belonging. Young people created and reinvented themselves in gang life. Still, with surges in gang membership, gang competitions and rivalries rooted in the socioeconomic conditions in Black and Brown communities also surged. Although interracial membership was possible, ethnoracial identities primarily defined gangs and gang cohorts; therefore, competitions, rivalries, and tensions also happened within homogenous ethnoracial groups. Put differently, tension was mainly intraracial. Race played a peripheral role in the "beef" between unstructured street organizations.

As discussed in Chapter One, the increasing political decimation confronting Black and Brown movements and the decline of leaders gave rise to unstructured street organizations. Some street organizations had never been wholly abandoned, so they were revamped and only grew in numbers as more young people searched for their own groups to belong to. New street organizations also emerged. Nonetheless, the latest cohesive American Black and Brown organizations, fashions, and styles were accentuated mainly as *Crips* and *Bloods* for young African Americans and Chola and Cholos for young Mexican Americans. These groups were the two largest non-white ethnoracial groups in Los Angeles during the 1970s.

Building upon Robin D.G. Kelly's view on how unorganized ordinary people individually and collectively, and intentionally and unintentionally engage in acts of resistance, young Black and Brown people participated in many acts of resistance — even if self-defeating at times — under these unsupervised activities and unorganized

groups.[267] Though not always visible and not always understood by traditional standards of resistance, young Black and Brown people engaged in acts of resistance in their own terms by avoiding school and hanging out at their own dances, parties, their own displays of art and music shows. Fights, sex, drugs, and gangs also showcased youth resistance. In fact, these activities were very common working-class youth activities.

Discursive practices such as tended to focus only on young Black and Brown people's violent activities. They presented these youngsters as "hoodlums" and thereby shaped society's negative racialized views of Black and Brown youth. William L. Van Deburg explains that "hoodlums" of color were important for defining whiteness and the construction of non-white criminality. Van Deburg reminds us, "Just as villainy of any sort gives definition to heroism, Black evildoers help define honor and virtue for whites."[268] During the early 1970s, however, these white anti-black cultural constructs provided the structural rationales to police not just Black people but also Brown people.

> In a two-hour-long meeting, commissioners were told how gangs are
> terrorizing citizens and police manpower which should be used to combat other
> crimes is "being drained" to combat young hoodlums' activities.
> About 10 officers made reports to the commissioners, including Police Chief
> Edwards M. Davis, Ass. Chief Daryl Gates and Comdr. C. R. Gross . . . [269]

Institutions of policing in concert with institutions of mass communication were also not exempt from how the "culture of poverty" informed their understanding of young Black and Brown people and race. They reduced the problem to the normalization of race and of Black-Brown criminality. Their racialized construction of "young hoodlums" avoided serious conversations, analyses, and resources around real structural problems that created the conditions of young Black and Brown people in the first place. Top LAPD echelon officials consistently focused on how young "hoodlums" drained "police manpower" and thereby always advocated for resources that further prioritized policing young Black and Brown people. This "young hoodlums" gaze eventually would galvanize lasting support for police to cage Black-Brown criminality. This gaze would eventually harden and materialized later in the 1980s as Assistant Chief Daryl Gates, who would also go on to become Chief of the LAPD, would push for state and federal resources to create CRASH—or Community

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[267] For Robin D.G. Kelly's take on ordinary people's unorganized struggles of resistance see Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. (New York: Free Press, 1994): pp. 1–13.

[268] William L. Van Deburg, *Hoodlums: Black Villains and Social Bandits in American Life* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 217.

[269] Lee Harris, "L.A. In the Grip of Gang Crisis, Police Warns Commissioners," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov 30, 1973, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, Nov-Dec, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, Calif., 1973): Article 7433, p. 118.

Resources Against Street Hoodlums—one of the LAPD's top mass militarized policing and operations units in the 1980 and 1990.[270]

In the early 1970s, LAPD's rationalization of "Street Hoodlums" was not only in the context of the slight rise in ongoing intraracial competition and beef in Black and Brown communities, but also in the context of debates and trials about racial integration and public schools. The police spearheaded public understanding of alleged street hoodlum criminality in remarkable ways. Police blamed a supposedly weak juvenile system and the decline of Black and Brown political organizations and their leaders for the rise of Black-Brown criminality. The LAPD's claims include the following:

> Most of the blame was attributed to failures of juvenile criminal justice system, which was under staffed [and] under funded [sic].
>
> The system allows youthful criminals to escape through plea bargaining [sic]…
>
> Blacks are killing each other in gang-related activities, creating the No. 1 "gang crisis" area in the southwest and central section of the city.
>
> …there are more than 150 active gangs in Los Angeles.
>
> The most violent ones are in South-Central Los Angeles.
>
> Mexican-American gangs have remained rather consistent over the years.
>
> Gang violence has increased over the last year, with 17 gang-related shootings on school campuses, mostly in the southwest section.
>
> In attempting to explain the increase in black gangs, police said the demise of such groups as the Black Panthers and the U.S. organization were responsible. These militant groups and other black organizations gave the youth some place to focus their energy, officers said. Today, there are probably 27 different chapters of the Crips, the most notorious black gang, according to investigator Mike Maloney. Other gangs have sprung up to protect themselves from the Crips.[271]

The LAPD and the commissioners acknowledged the importance of Black and Brown political organizations and leaders in the lives of young people but did not advocate for adequate resources to be put in place in schools and within Black and Brown communities. Instead, the LAPD and commissioners advocated for more resources for policing, punishment, and caging young Black and Brown people with harsher sentences. They justified their policing and carceral interventions with an anti-black framework targeting supposedly intraracial suffering in school, especially in South

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[270] Donna Murch, "Crack in Los Angeles: Crisis, Militarization, and Black Response to the Late Twentieth-Century War on Drugs," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): p. 169.

[271] Lee Harris, "L.A. In the Grip of Gang Crisis, Police Warns Commissioners," *Los Angeles Times* Nov 30, 1973, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, Nov-Dec, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1973): Article 7433, p. 118.

Central where "Blacks are killing each other."[272] In South Central and in the greater Los Angeles area, and throughout California, homogenous ethnoracial groups frequently beefed with each other; that is, virtually *all* gang competitions, tensions, or violence was intraracial. In addition, police officers also tended to get involved in the beef themselves.

During the 1970s, young Black and Brown people experienced other forms of institutional violence aside from what they also endured in schools. These youngsters also endured institutional police violence. This violence also occurred statewide. In Northern California, for example, the "Shooting Death of Latin" by police "Sets Off Riot in Blythe."[273] This incident, however, was not an actual riot but "only peaceful march, confirmed by 'Sheriff's Capt. Ronald Bickmore."[274] Although it was a demonstration against police abuse of deadly force, the *Los Angeles Times*' headline denied the ethnic Mexican community its right to dignity and its right to protest.

In southern California community members also rose up in protest against police brutality. For instance, in one episode, "Chicano Sources charged that the disturbance stemmed from a Saturday night incident in which local policemen used 'excessive force' in breaking up an altercation at a wedding party."[275] The altercation at the wedding was likely an intraracial incident, and the community did not agree with how the police de-escalated the situation. In full indignation, days later "roving bands of youths, mostly Mexican-Americans, were involved in the outbreak."[276] Rather than acknowledging grievances, though, the police responded with more excessive force: "1 Shot, 31 Held in Violence at Santa Paula [jail]," one headline read.[277] Furthermore, a "curfew was imposed by Mayor Alan Teague in the wake of the most recent disturbance to hit this Ventura County community of 25,000 persons."[278] Indeed group violence had slightly risen across all young ethnoracial groups; but the media, public officials, and policing efforts mainly narrowed their focus on young Black and Brown people and showcased them as an emerging "hoodlum" problem.

Intraracial v. Interracial Violence

[272] Ibid.
[273] Exclusive to the Times from a Staff Writer, "Shooting Death of Latin Sets Off Riot in Blythe" *Los Angeles Times*, May 20, 1972 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1972): Article 0622, p. 85.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Exclusive to the Times from a Staff Writer, **"**1 Shot, 31 Held in Violence at Santa Paula" *Los Angeles Times* June 13, 1972, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, May-June, 1972 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1972): Article 0776, p. 122.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Ibid.

Significant for our historical thinking here, the common data available to officials for showcasing Black and Brown youth violence in the 1970s were predominantly sites of intraracial violence, not interracial. Regardless of interracial or intraracial conflicts, the media, public officials, and policing efforts were largely interested in targeting Black and Brown youth crimes and violence overall. Their main sources for violence were usually sites of intraracial violence.

For the whole decade of the 1970s, discursive practices tended to lump Black and Brown youth violence together. Almost every single such story exhibited "Man Fatally Shot After Gang Fight" narrative and reflected an intraracial situation that led toward a violent outcome. For example, sensational news stories usually spotlighted results from "…a fight between two Mexican-American youth gangs."[279] If Black-Brown interracial violence was common, then officials should have also been easily able to detect and reflect those trends in merely looking at violent youth incidents through a single Black or Brown ethnoracial group. This was not possible, however, because Black-Brown interracial situations were rare.

As seen above, ethnic Mexican group rivalries and violence were not with Blacks; conflicts between these groups were relatively rare.. The *Los Angeles Times* captured many intraracial beefs among young ethnic Mexicans. The most serious violent trend in a single year is representative of serious violent trends every single year of the 1970s.

> **Aug 6, 1973**: A would-be gang war mediatory was shot to death in Maywood after trying to prevent a fight between rival Mexican-American groups during a dance at an American Legion hall, police said.[280]
> **Nov 11, 1973**: "Shotgun Blasts Wound 2" [drive-by of only] Mexicans involved.[281]
> **Jan 21, 1974**: "2 Teen-Age Gang Members Slain; Reprisals Feared"
> "Two teen age gang members attending a baby shower in another gang's territory were shot to death Sunday, police said. [sic]"[282]

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[279] Times Staff Writer, "Man Fatally Shot After Gang Fight," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug 5, 1973 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, July-August, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1973): Article 6075, p. 103.

[280] Times Staff Writer, "A would-be gang war mediatory was shot to death in Maywood after trying to prevent a fight between rival Mexican-American groups during" a dance hall," *Los Angeles Times*, Aug 6, 1973 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, July-Aug, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1973): Article 6080, p. 105.

[281] Times Staff Writer, "Shotgun Blasts Wound 2," *Los Angeles Times* Nov 11, 1973 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, Nov-Dec, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1973): Article 7400, p. 95.

[282] Times Staff Writer, "2 Teen-Age Gang Members Slain; Reprisals Feared," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan 21, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, Jan-Feb, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1974): Article 8285, p. 100.

March 12, 1974: "Chicano Youth Slain During Park Dispute"

"San Bernardino—A 17-year-old Mexican-American youth was shot and killed Sunday night during an argument in city park between a group of Mexican nationals and a group of Mexican-Americans, police said."[283]

March 23, 1974: "The ambush slaying of a 19-year-old Los Angeles youth was being investigated as a possible flareup [sic] in a war between rival gangs." Police said they were seeking members of the 18th St. Gang for questioning in the death of Genessio Sanchez. Officers said, Sanchez, who was shot in the chest by a man walking outside his home, was a member of the Harpy's gang."[284]

Sept 30, 1974: "Party-Crashers Shoot 3 in Azusa"

"Some of them returned a few hours later and one of them opened fire on the guest with a pistol. John Joseph Camarea, 22, of Azusa shot in the heart and wrist and was in critical condition at County USC Medical Center. Michael James Nunez, 20, and Anthony Lozano, 21, both of Azusa, were in satisfactory conditions at the same hospital."[285]

Brown interracial tensions, to reiterate, dominated the 1970s. Just as ethnic Mexicans fought each other, Black youth violence echoed similar intraracial patterns for the entire decade.

Officials' concerns and sources for policing Black or Brown "street hoodlums" alone, more often than not, largely detect Black intraracial trends. In a one-day conference that took place in late April of 1974, dialogues surrounding the "Youth Crime Studied By Assemblymen" revealed that intraracial violence mainly informed officials' discussions concerning both Black and Brown youth violence.[286]

The rise in juvenile violence is not fueled by either interracial hostility or ideological causes, witnesses told a select legislative committee Friday.

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[283] Times Staff Writer, "Chicano Youth Slain During Park Dispute," *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, March-April, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1974): Article 1179, p. 62.

[284] Times Staff Writer, "The ambush slaying of a 19-year-old Los Angeles youth was being investigated as a possible flareup in a war between rival gangs." *Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, March-April, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1974): article 1189, p. 69.

[285] Times Staff Writer, "Party-Crashers Shoot 3 in Azusa," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept 30, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, March-April, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1974): article 4026, p. 94.

[286] Jack McCurdy, "L.A. Hearing: Youth Crime Studied By Assemblymen," *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, March-April, 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, CA, 1974): Article 1684, p. 107.

And violent acts by youth on and off school campuses have reached what one called "epidemic proportion," they agreed during the all-day hearing at the Convention Center.

Members of the Assembly Select Committee on Juvenile Violence wanted to know how much of the violence is caused by fighting *between blacks and Mexican-Americans* [emphasis added] and whether "leftist" activism promoted conflict. Police Chief Ed Davis echoed other witnesses when he said gang violence is "apolitical." "I know of no evidence that there is any politization [sic] among the gangs," he said.

Phillips Bardso, president of the Los Angeles Board of Education said that "while we do have some violence between black and Chicano gangs, it is not a major reason" for gang warfare. "There are more killings in the black area among themselves than elsewhere," he said. [287]

This one-day conference sought to identify problems and solutions to youth violence. Notwithstanding the conference's anti-black focus and thrust, it managed to reach a consensus: both Black and Brown youngsters more likely engaged each other in intraracial violence and gang warfare.

And of course, at the conference, no one pointed across the room or at themselves as contributors to young people's problems. Their proposed "solutions," instead gave way to what they were already prioritizing: "more money [for] tougher laws, a better court system, stricter school officials, new programs and more effective schools."[288] There was an alternative voice that spoke positively to the ideological "leftist" concerns that Members of the Assembly Select Committee had concerning violence and young people.

Fred Horn Jr., director of the Anti-Self-Destructive Task Force in South Central Los Angeles, noted that little juvenile gang violence existed "during the time political organizing and black student unions existed" in the 1960s and early 1970s. He suggested that the problem of violence grew up "in the vacuum created by the elimination of cultural and politically oriented organizations that raised the level of conscious" of black youth during the last few years. Horn argued for youth counseling within the minority community and other measures to fill the gap created by the decline of social and political action activities.[289]

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[287] Ibid.
[288] Ibid
[289] Ibid.

Fred Horn Jr.'s explanation echoed the same attempt "to explain the increase in black gangs" given to a commission in November of the previous year.[290] But as in previous years, this perspective fell on deaf ears. This would worsen as the issue of racial desegregation and racial integration of public schooling gained momentum.

An Anglo Racial Integrationist Crisis

Officials' inquiries into youth violence, political ideologies, and schools did have merit, especially around larger developing interracial anxieties around public schools. Commissioned committee members on youth violence first inquired about interracial violence, particular in and around public schools. This was because, in fact, major white anti-integrationist anxieties and tensions had been building up in and around racial desegregation and racial integration efforts in public schooling in California and throughout the nation. As *Los Angeles Time* staff writer Charles T. Powers put forth in his September 30, 1974 "LAW AND DISORDER AT SAN FERNANDO HIGH" regarding white opposition to school bussing efforts aimed at racial integration,

> They eyed the street warily, as if they expected a manhole cover to pop open suddenly (right in front of the four motorcycle cops), signaling the first wave of suicidal charge from a platoon of drug-crazed, revenge-bent students, probably black or brown and fierce as the Viet Cong, wielding switchblades, zip guns and Saturday-night specials.[291]

Racist themes and patterns always dominated the narrative about how white audiences viewed racial integration and Black and Brown youth culture in LA. Given the global Cold War was still present in the minds of Americans, the analogy drawn between the "Viet Cong" and Black and Brown youth culture attempted to cast young Black and Brown people as enemies of the state. This was no novelty, for various racial constructs of "hoodlums" had been applied to young Black and Brown people since WWII. And, as in the WWII era, "hoodlum" constructs in the 1970s continued to function among whites as stereotypes to critique, in fact justify, the failure to achieve racial integration.

By the mid-1970s, white interracial fears and white power began to merge and mobilize. This time around , Black and Brown youth also had to deal with aggressive white anti-integrationist forces backed up by a developing youth policing apparatus. Nothing reveals this aggressive anti-integrationist behavior more than the white

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[290] Lee Harris, "L.A. In the Grip of Gang Crisis, Police Warns Commissioners," *Los Angeles Times* Nov 30, 1973, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, Nov-Dec, 1973 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1973): Article 7433, p. 118.
[291] Charles T. Powers, "LAW AND DISORDER AT SAN FERNANDO HIGH" *Los Angeles Times* Sept 30, 1974 in Comité de México y Aztlán, *New Monitoring Service*, Sept.-Oct. 1974 (Comité de México y Aztlán, Calif., 1974): article 4029, p. 95-96.

"Anglo-base" of the racial "integration crisis" surrounding the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) school busing system.[292]

Mobilizing Desegregation, Integration, and Anti-Integration

By the mid-1970s, white opposition to school integration, especially busing to achieve it, had already become a national crisis. Between *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 and the early 1970s, school integration seriously lagged. In *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (April 20, 1971), the Supreme Court ruled in favor of school busing programs to accelerate racial integration in public schools. This pro-busing ruling exacerbated white interracial anxieties across the country. This was because major cities like Boston, Denver, Detroit, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Nevada, and Los Angeles already had pending their own local racial integration court cases. In *Morgan v. Hennigan* (June 21, 1974), Federal Judge W. Arthur Garrity, Jr. ruled that *de facto* segregation was as intentional as *de jure* segregation and thus in violation of *Brown v. Board* and the Fourteenth Amendment. Furthermore, Judge Garrity ordered the Boston School Committee to work together with the State Board of Education to devise a racial integration implementation plan.[293] The plan included busing, and it was supposed to be ready within three months. White Bostonians violently protested.

The violence escalated to the point where white Bostonians even attacked police and police vehicles. In such a moment, an observer noted: "Police […] patrol car [was] overturned by whites protesting bussing of blacks to Boston High."[294] Similar to the 1965 Watts Uprising (Riots), news of the anti-integrationists' violent protest widely circulated throughout the country. The dominant news narrative, however, differed from that of the "Watts Riots" in racial ways. Media depictions did not demonize white anti-integrationists' violence. On the contrary, media racialized white violence as having valid, even patriotic, justifications. The *Morgan v. Hennigan* decision ignited similar white anti-busing sentiments and mobilization efforts.

Also during 1974, Los Angeles confronted its own version of *Morgan v. Henning* in the courts on appeal. In LA, *Mary Ellen Crawford vs. Los Angeles Board of Education* had been pending since 1970, but in 1974 the wheels of justice were starting

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[292] Alfred W.S., Letter to Superior Court Judge Paul Egly, Nov. 30, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers* (Collection 1282. University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Special Collections, 1977–1981): Box 12, Folder, Anti-bussing letters – Answered 1977: pp. 1–3.

[293] Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report 1975*, *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 11, Folder Community Relations Service, Western Region, pp. 9–17.

[294] Ibid., p. 13.

to turn on appeal.[295] In 1970, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Alfred Gitelson had ruled in *Crawford* that LAUSD practiced *de jure* and *de facto* segregation when they denied a young African American woman by the name of Mary Ellen Crawford admission to her local, predominantly white pupil high school in South Gate, California. School officials, instead, had forced Mary Ellen Crawford to attend Jordan High School in Watts, a predominantly African American school. The case was filed in 1963, and by 1970 the local court ruled that the School District was in violation of both state and federal statutes that outlawed *de jure* and *de facto* segregation. Although the court did not order LAUSD to start desegregation and racial integration through busing, the larger ethnoracial political climate informed white Angelinos, and Californians in general. Judge Gitelson would eventually order busing given that this was a common and successful racial integration practice during the early 1970s.

White anti-busing advocates and anti-integrationists and officials at the local, state, and national levels severely criticized Judge Gitelson's ruling.. At best, Judge Gitelson was dubbed a "bussing judge"; at worst, however, a white right-wing extremist group plotted to assassinate him.[296] Andrew Furman's tells us that this right-wing group unknowingly contracted an undercover police officer and gave him specific instructions to shoot Judge Gitelson and then nail on his head a note that would read "This is for the ni**ers."[297]

Adding fuel to the fire at the time, neither Ronald Reagan, who was Governor of California at the time, nor the President of the United States, Richard Nixon, did anything to ameliorate the situation. They did the opposite. Both publicly scolded and humiliated Judge Gitelson, calling his court decision "utterly ridiculous" and "the most extremist judicial decree so far."[298] Both Nixon and Reagan exacerbated white anti-interracial and anti-integrationist sentiments. LA's white anti-integrationist forces echoed the sentiments of the nation's larger white anti-integrationist camp. Those sentiments demonized pro-integration courts, busing to achieve integrated public schools, on one hand, young Black and Brown people, on the other. A massive opposition campaign mobilized to unseat Judge Alfred Gitelson in the November 1970 election and succeeded. As Judge Gitelson departed his seat, Andrew Furman reminds us, Judge Gitelson lamented his removal, noting that there were "enough people who are truly racist" in California and LA.[299] Indeed, California's violent white anti-

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[295] *Crawford vs. Los Angeles Board of Education* case would last for a period of two decades (1963-1982). For major reference see *Mary Ellen Crawford vs. Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles*, 458 U.S. 527, 1982.

[296] Quoted in Andrew Furman's biographical work, in Andrew Furman, *My Los Angeles in Black & (almost) White* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2010): pp. 28–39.

[297] Ibid: p. 33.

[298] Ibid.

[299] Ibid.

integrationist sentiment had aligned itself with the nation's white opposition to racial integration and busing.

By June 1974, California's anti-busing proponents already anticipated and planned for *Crawford*'s appeal, especially given the implications of *Morgan v. Henning*. The *Crawford* case would not resume on appeal until 1976; meanwhile, LA's racial tensions and violence mirrored those of Boston. Reminiscent of the first Reconstruction in the aftermath of the American Civil War, white anti-integrationist violence was widespread.

In Boston, Los Angeles, and throughout the country, white anti-integrationist violence became a serious threat to school districts that participated in court-mandated school desegregation and busing. Since the outset of busing and desegregation during 1975, "Louisville [Kentucky] Junior High School and High School Principals were asked what actual problems concerned them on the opening days of school."[300] Within the first two weeks of August, among the many incidents school Principals reported were: "Picketing or protesting at schools [by whites];" "Bus blockage [by whites];" "bomb threats [by whites];" "Racial fights;" more "Bomb threats [by whites];" "[white] protestors refuse control;" and again "Repeated bomb threats [by whites];" and "Mass Arrests."[301]

White anti-integrationist forces in Los Angeles did not remain idle before the *Crawford* case resumed. One drastic suggestion was to lower the compulsory schooling age to fourteen years old in order to push Black and Brown students out of schools early. The main goal of the "School Drop Out Age: How old?" question was to forge some legal means by which to get "rid of unwanted students."[302]

> But others said schools already can and do force undesirable students out and
> that lowering the compulsory age might in fact improve this situation because
> of the proposed restrictions included in the subcommittee's [sic]
> recommendations. The debate over the lower compulsory age issue led to the
> only roll call vote of the two-day session.
> In that vote, the proposal fell just short of the required three-fourths majority
> needed to include it in the final draft of the report.

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[300] PRINCIPALS' CONCERNS ABOUT THE OPENING DAY OF SCHOOL, Community Relations Service, U.S. Department of Justice, August 1975, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 11, Folder Community Relations Service, Western Region, pp. 1–2.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Jack McCurdy, "'School Dropout Age: How Old?:" Debate flares on proposal to allow students to quit at 14," *Los Angeles Times*, March 4, 1975, in Comité de México y Aztlán *News Monitoring Service,* March-April 1975 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1975): Article 6679, p. 27.

But the proposal received enough votes to keep it alive. The matter along with a long list of other unresolved items is now scheduled to be discussed at the next commission meeting March 17 [, 1975].[303]

Since young Black and Brown people showed higher dropout rates, school officials targeted non-white students who they anticipated would attend public schools in their predominantly white suburban areas. This raised more flags than LAUSD officials expected. The larger critique of early pushouts, however, turned out did nothing about fixing dropout rates for students. Worker unions worried, instead, about how pushing young people out of high school early would worsen an already suffering job market. With deindustrialization, and with an immigration labor pool already seen as supposedly threatening American jobs, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor warned that a cheap labor surplus would flood job markets if the compulsory schooling age was lowered.

Additionally, a white anti-integrationist coalition in Los Angeles had just defeated a Black-Brown coalition ballot tax initiative that would have benefited public schools in South Central and East LA. The tensions inherent in these issues read: "Black, Chicano Areas Backed 3 Plans Strongly."[304] The Black-Brown coalition argued for public funds that were intended to enhance integration efforts and to improve Black and Brown schools. These funds, they argued, would not be going merely toward busing efforts. However, an overwhelming white majority from predominantly "White Suburbs beat School Propositions."[305]

A heavy "no" vote from the San Fernando Valley and other white suburban areas defeated the three Los Angeles city school tax increase measure on the May 27 municipal ballot.

At the same time, the predominantly black and Chicano areas of the school district voted overwhelmingly in favor of Proposition A, B, and C.

These South-Central and East Los Angeles areas also were strongly in favor of the district's successful 1974 school tax election. But this time, the percentage of "yes" voters was even higher.

However, the percentage of "yes" votes in the San Fernando Valley, West Los Angeles, Eagle Rock and Huntington Park areas declined in comparison with the 1974 return.

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[303] Ibid., 28.

[304] Jack McCurdy, "White Suburbs beat School Propositions: Black, Chicano Areas Backed Strongly" *Los Angeles Times,* June 8, 1975, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service,* May–June, 1975 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1975): Article 8226, p. 66.

[305] Ibid.

> Thus, the increased support in the minority areas for increasing school taxes
> was more than offset by the dropoff [sic] in favorable voters in these other
> sections of the district.[306]

Dominant narratives of white opponents of school busing usually denied race and racism as explanations. "Forced bussing" was usually expressed as white people's fear that courts would mandate white parents to bus their white children away from predominantly white community-based schools. If this would have been the case, then this anti-busing anxiety should have also shown up to support South Central and East LA schools. At worst, white students could have benefited assuming they had to attend these schools. At best, this would have also benefited the anti-busing movement because improving Black and/or Brown schools would have helped ameliorate some of the root causes and reasons for court-mandated busing.

By 1976, the Community Relations Service (CRS) sought to address problems and promote solutions regarding racial desegregation and integration of the public schools. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 had established a Community Relations Service (CRS) division under the United States Department of Justice, and its role was to help communities resolve interracial tensions, including "discriminatory practices."[307] During 1976, CRS alerted courts and the public on various episodes of white-sponsored interracial tension and violence. Nevertheless, CRS also noted grounds for optimism regarding "School Racial Problems" across the country.

> As the year began, there was widespread speculation that court-ordered
> desegregation would trigger major disturbances in "northern" cities—fueled by
> recent [school] history in Boston and Louisville. However, large-scale
> disruption proved to be the exception rather than the rule.[308]

While CRS noted many interracial tensions, CRS also noted that at some point; "Most communities facing [school] desegregation apparently were determined to make it work."[309] There were rays of hope, but there was still a lot of work to be done. This interracial hope, however, only confirmed white racial anxieties about integration. They saw racial desegregation and integration as more than a possible threat to whiteness; now, they saw it as a real threat. In fact, , CRS noted that there was an anti-integrationist force significant enough to undo or sabotage the nation's desegregation and integration hope and effort.

State-sponsored Police Violence

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[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid., p 1.

[308] Community Relations Service – United States Department of Justice, *Annual Report 1976*, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 11, Folder: Justice, United States Department of, p. 23.

[309] Ibid., p. 23.

While national attention focused on public schools as sites of interracial conflict, CRS would be surprised to learn that larger patterns of interracial violence had less to do with schools than with white institutional police violence on the streets where "minorities" lived.[310]

> If a public poll were taken, most people would probably cite school desegregation as the major racial problem in 1976. It did, of course, cause a great deal of trauma. But, while CRS does not keep comprehensive statistics on racial disputes nationally, most of the school disputes in which the agency interceded had nothing to do with implementing [school] desegregation. Moreover, the agency responded to more disputes involving minorities and the police – of other elements of the criminal justice system – than all school disputes combined. Specifically, there were 266 cases involving the criminal justice system and 202 school cases, accounting together for more than two-thirds of all disputes worked on.[311]

In their opening remarks regarding "A Year of Conflict," CRS observed that in terms of school desegregation, interracial tensions and violence were overwhelmingly between the police and minorities. More aptly, police and state violence terrorized Black and Brown communities. CRS noted that

> … a sizable percentage of minorities believe that white police "protect and serve" white neighborhoods and patrol theirs as enemy territory. Consequently, where minorities are involved, the changes [sic] of a <u>disastrous</u> [in o.g.] confrontation are significally [sic] greater.[312]

Once school hours were over, police officers to patrol Black and Brown communities and terrorize the people living there. CRS was aware that police violence against Black and Brown communities undermined desegregation and integration efforts.

While Black and Brown communities experienced police violence, the police exacted terror by specifically targeting young Black and Brown people. From coast to coast, for example, interracial police violence was rife.

> The Savannah conflict began when two white police officers—a male and female—killed a 21-year-old black [man] involved in a dispute with his grandparents.[313]

> Although the Mobile hanging incident involved no fatality, the black community was incensed over this painful reminder from the past. It reportedly began when eight white patrolmen detained two black youths in connection

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[310] Ibid., p. 6.
[311] Ibid.
[312] Ibid: p. 10.
[313] Ibid.

with an attempted or suspected robbery. They allegedly tried to frighten the youths into talking by pretending to actually knot a rope around one.[314]

As urban and widely dispersed as blacks, Hispanics—especially Chicanos and Puerto Ricans—figured in such disputes almost as often. They alleged that police abuse in their neighborhoods was a routine fact of life. Fatal shootings [by police] often ignited conflict.[315]

While school officials perpetrated anti-integrationist violence against young Black and Brown people, white people at large were disrupting desegregation efforts. When whites understood that desegregation might produce positive results, police-state violence shored up and terrorized both Black and Brown communities after school hours. "Was such conflict exclusively a black-white phenomenon? It was not. CRS interceded in virtually identical disputes involving Hispanic groups."[316] The anti-integrationist phenomenon would not let go. Indeed, white anti-integrationism oppressed ethnic Mexicans too. Although they operated through an anti-black framework, anti-integrationists targeted both young Black and Brown people.

Nevertheless, CRS remained committed to advancing desegregation and integration efforts, despite setbacks. CRA made recommendations similar to those of the 1968 Kerner Commission Report, which investigated the urban uprisings of the 1960s.. The CRS thus noted: "One obvious step is to build a bridge between police and minorities through community relations programs."[317] The Kerner Commission Report's recommendations, however, proved wrong in terms of police and community relations, and CRS should have heeded previous lessons. As in the 1968 recommendations, the 'bridges' only enhanced police presence in Black and Brown neighborhoods. The police would continue to maintain the white racial order. The shorter the bridges between police and minorities were, the greater the potential for institutional police violence on Black and Brown communities. The irony in all these recommendations, however, was that it was actually white anti-integrationist violence that posed the biggest threat to police; thus, police surveillance should have been directed at white communities, not Black and Brown ones.

The *Crawford* case resumed on appeal in early 1976. The Appellate Court ended up moving forward with Judge Gitelson's original 1970 ruling. In late June of 1976, the appeals court sent the *Crawford* case back to the Los Angeles Superior Court so that court procedures can resume as Judge Gitelson would have seen best. Judge

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[314] Ibid: p. 12.
[315] Ibid: p. 14.
[316] Ibid., p. 34.
[317] Ibid., p. 9; For Kerner report recommendations see, the United States, *The Kerner Report: The 1968 Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

Gitelson originally never mandated busing specifically. In fact, the school board implemented a "reasonable and feasible" plan where no school fell below 15 percent of the overall minority student population. Everyone – both integrationist and anti-integrationist included – well understood that this implied racial integration through school busing. Because Judge Gitelson was yet to be replaced in the Los Angeles Superior Court, however, it would not be until another six months before *Crawford* could be heard again. Meanwhile, white anti-busing forces in Los Angeles—and in California for that matter—did not wait but rather would organize, strategize, and mobilize an even stronger white base to become faithful destroyers of racial integration through school integration. Again, Black and Brown youth would bear the brunt of the blows.

Conclusion

Black-Brown intraracial tensions continued throughout the latter part of the 1970s. At the same time, Black-Brown interracial violence remained virtually nil. White anti-integrationist forces and state officials severely negatively affected young Black and Brown people. LAUSD's plan to integrate schools in part through busing met a brick wall of white resistance. A key element of this resistance was the dreaded fear of 'racial-mixing.' As a result, within the racist white imagination, Black and Brown youth were seen as "hoodlums." This criminalization seriously undercut the nation's vision of racial democracy.

LA's anti-integrationist forces hardened towards the close of the decade. These forces would not only call on Los Angeles or on California to prioritize nailing shut the coffin of their racial democracy. But also, this time around, they would become the nation's anti-integrationist trendsetter. As chapter four will show, bipartisan anti-integrationists and anti-bussing mobilization efforts in LA and throughout California give the New Right a critical early boost. By doing so, they helped prepare the soil for California's massive anti-democratic carceral institutions to germinate and mushroom. Seen another way, they would hammer the final nail in the coffin of racial democracy, in effect, setting up mass carceral structures to bury it more deeply through mass incarceration.

Chapter Four

The "Street Hoodlum" Imaginary: LA's Early New Right and the Making of a School-Busing Youth Network, 1976—1980

> Allan the people first learned of their [power] in Prop # 13.
> —Letter from Ralph Reid to Judge Paul Egly, June 19, 1979

> The Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's
> Department each has a gang crime division. The Police Department's is called
> C.R.A.S.H. (Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums)
> —*Colors*, Dennis Hopper, 1988. (MGM Home Entertainment, 1988).

On December 9, 1976, Judge Parks Stillwell was supposed to lead the desegregation-remedy phases in *Crawford vs. Los Angeles Board of Education*. However, a Black-Brown coalition – and both plaintiffs in the case – doubted Judge Stillwell's impartiality. Therefore, National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP), backed by the Mexican American Bar Association (MABA), asked Judge Stillwell to rescue himself from *Crawford*.[318] Judge Stillwell did just that. The following year, another Los Angeles Superior Court Judge would preside over *Crawford*.

On February 22, 1977, the docket lands on the desk of Governor Ronald Reagan's appointee, Judge Paul Egly. Days before Judge Paul Egly resumed on *Crawford*, LA's streets and schools had already been overwhelmed by anti-busing and anti-integrations protesters. As one February 19, 1977, *Los Angeles Times* headline read, "65,000 [mostly white] Student Absent in L.A. Protest on Busing."[319] Judge Egly's job, however, was not to decide on mandating bussing at all. Judge Egly's role was only to oversee that reasonable and feasible racial desegregation and integration phases be enacted. When the case resumed, Judge Egly required that the School Board produce a desegregation-busing plan that could ideally be implemented within a month—March of 1977.[320] The requirement outraged the white majority and its anti-integrationist force.

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[318] Ryan Edward Santos, *"Never Silent": Examining Chicana/o Community Experiences and Perspectives of School Desegregation Efforts in Crawford V. Los Angeles Board of Education, 1963-1982*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2016.) eScholarship.
[319] "65,000 Student Absent in L.A. Protest on Busing," *Los Angeles Times,* February 19, 1977, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service,* January–Feb, 1977 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1978): Article 6613, p. 73.
[320] Furman (2010), p. 38.

The white majority and anti-integrationists interpreted Judge Egly's decision as tightening, rather than loosening *Crawford*'s mandates. LA's anti-integrationist forces, especially from the suburbs of the San Fernando Valley, quickly mobilize against what they perceived was Judge Egly's and LAUSD's 'forced busing.' For the four years that *Crawford* would resume, anti-integrationists flooded Judge Egly's chambers with hate mail and even threatening letters. Some letters threaten to unseat him in elections, while other letters insulted and threatened him and other public officials. In their letters they criticized racial democracy. The broader anti-busing discourse they expressed was against busing, but at the core of their concerns was 'racial mixing.' More significantly, the record behind these white racial anxieties show how LA's white anti-integrationists mobilized bipartisan campaigns in their city, the state, and even the nation to destroy racial integration and busing, which, consequently, also implicated the demise of whatever was left of any racial democracy. Anti-integrationists' bipartisanism fomented the framework where the New Right could stand on for the future, including being responsible for setting up the groundwork for California's anti-democratic institutions—mass incarceration.

This chapter picks up where the previous chapter left off regarding anti-integrationists' role in criminalizing Black and Brown youth cultures and also on how they fomented mobilization efforts to end racial democracy in the final years of the 1970s, especially as it related to bussing. The chapter explores data from voting-behavior documents along with the *Paul Egly Papers* and also the racialized culture production of the *Los Angeles Time* to narrate a story of race relations surrounding young Black and Brown people and a powerful anti-integrationist culture of LA and all of California. That chapter argues that anti-integrations forged bipartisan efforts to stall racial integration, and in doing so, they informed the state on how altering or amending states' constitutions would limit racial integration spending as well as place limits on the rulings of courts and judges. The chapter concludes with two discussions: one, on how the state's budget prioritized spending on policing and prison building; and two, on how the limits on busing, nonetheless, does leave a bridge available for young Black and Brown people from the inner cities to crossover into suburban schools and forge relations with other young people. The chapter also continues to work under the assumption that Black or Brown racial violence was only intraracial, as well as that Black-Brown interracial violence was low.

The BUSTOP*ers* and Race Relations

By March 1, 1977, "L.A. Bussing Foes" banded together to hinder and disrupt LAUSD's desegregation busing plans.[321] In LA and throughout California, they largely

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[321] News media outlets interchangeably used the phrases "L.A. Bussing Foes" or "Foes of Bussing" to refer to people or the larger mobilizations efforts against busing desegregation.

came under the "BUS STOP" banner.[322] Foes of busing ranged from parents, students, and teachers to police, and even state representatives. In concert with BUSTOPers, also joined major Republican and Democrat leaders such as Paul Gann (R-Sacramento) and Alan Robbins (D-Van Nuys), as well as Republican George Deukmejian. These officials would go on to be significant to the BUSTOPers' movement. Republican Paul Gann would go on to co-author the epochal "Taxpayers Revolt" Proposition 13 in 1978, the initiative that would drastically disrupt public services especially for public schools. Gann would also go on to push Proposition 4 in 1979, an initiative that alter the constitution to further limit government spending, as well as prevent government from enforcing programs on local governments.[323] Democrat Alan Robbins would also go on to author bills and initiatives to halt California's court-ordered busing mandate, including Proposition 1 in 1979.[324] Republican George Deukmejian, who at this time was on route to become California's Attorney General, would succeed at policing "School, Violence, And Youth" and "Habitual Criminals [underscore in o.g.]" to the extent that his crusade against young Black and Brown people would eventually lead him to become Governor of California.[325] This was the type of bipartisan anti-

For an indication of its longevity see Jack McCurdy and William Trombley, "Rulings Seen as Big Setback For L.A. Bussing Foes," *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1979 from Comité de México y Aztlán *News Monitoring Service,* July-August 1979 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1979): Article 8957, pp. 40–41, and Pamela G. Hollie, "Foes of Bussing Hail Los Angeles Victory", *The New York Times*, March 13, 1981: http://partners.nytimes.com/library/national/race/031381race-ra.html)

[322] Although I am aware during this time there was an actual *Bustop Foundation*, a *Bustop Corp* and *Bustop Inc.*, I employ the term "BUSTOPers" to refer to all parties involved in the anti-busing mobilization efforts. For a dense inquiry into BUSTOP and mobilizations see, *Paul Egly Papers*: Boxes 8, 17, 22–26, etc; also see Herbert R. Sosa, *Fragmented Diversity: School Desegregation, Student Activism, and Busing in Los Angeles, 1963 – 1982* (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2013).

[323] Jarvis, Howard and Paul Gann, "Proposition 13: Tax Limitation—Initiative Constitutional Amendment," Voter Information Guide 1978, Primary (1978). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/846: pp. 56-63; Gann, Paul and Carol Hallett, "Proposition 4: Limitation of Government Appropriations—Initiative Constitutional Amendment," Voter Information Guide for 1979, Special Election (1979). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/865: pp. 18–22.

[324] Allan Robbins, "Proposition 1: School Assignment and Transportation of Pupils," in School Assignment and Transportation of Pupils California Proposition 1 (1979). https://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/861. See also Ibid: pp. 6-9.

[325] George Deukmejian, "Schools, Violence, and Youth," School Safety Center – California Department of Justice (Sacramento, Ca: Office of Attorney General, 1981); for a trajectory of Deukmejian since 1973 see copyright editions to ---, *Law in the School: A Guide for California Teachers, Parents and Students*. California Department of Justice (Paterson Smith Publication: New Jersey, 1980 [Copyright, 1973, 1974, Second ed., 1976, Third ed., 1980 by State of California]); for Criminal Justice Initiative to amend the California Constitution with Paul Gann

integrationist force that, henceforth, presented itself at local school board meetings, courts procedural hearings, and at public meetings and at officials' offices.

On the public surface, BUSTOPers' discourse touched on the unconstitutionality of the Court and of Judge Egly's busing mandate. BUSTOPers' individual letters to Judge Egly (also copied to many people of "importance" or of "interests"), were deeply seated on an anti-black politics that understood interracial and integration as a legal feature threatening racial whiteness. An early March letter to Judge Egly demonstrates that BUSTOPers held deep racist anti-interracial anxieties especially related to racial whiteness:

> First. I find that the results of integration so far illustrate that society on the whole will not benefit equally. When neighborhoods are "busted" eventually those affected neighborhoods become an enlargement of the so-called ghetto area. The Anglo-Saxon will not abide in such areas for long.
> In my opinion, the minority groups are demanding selfishly their "right" to grab and steal, and that is all.
> At the present time, I sense that the government is creating a army of "trusted" minority to impose itself firmly upon the Anglo-Saxon community. To accomplish this plan the government must reduce, alienate, and deprive the majority, then brainwash it into a world of helplessness and apathy.
> Empirically speaking apathy is simply depression [oppression]. It must deprive the Anglo of any identification or freedom of choice and systematically reduce its culture till it cease to exist [all in o.g.].[326]

Black and Brown communities were usually depicted as lacking work ethic, as undeserving, and as people that only wanted to "take" from whites. BUSTOPers usually employed racialized logics and fears that only cohered to racist anti-integrationist sentiments, including concerns over the possibility of diminishing the white "Anglo-Saxon" race.

In turn, young Black and Brown people were usually targets of white's racial anxieties premised on stereotypical depictions. "It is not now and never has been," wrote a Mrs. Neil McLennan in an early March letter to Judge Egly, "where one is attending school, but rather how one applies himself. Whoever wants to learn has the same opportunity my [white] girls had and bussing them [Black and/or Brown students]

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see ---, Attorney General, Letter to Paul Gann, August 7, 1981, re: in Gann, Paul, "Initiative Proposing Amendment to: Constitution—Criminal Justice," Criminal Justice California Initiative (1981). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/441): pp. 1–2; ---, "The Attorney General of California has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure," p. 1-8.
[326] Mr. Charles E. Galligan, Letter to Judge Egly, March 5, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box 12, Folder Letters – Anti-busing – Answered 1977: pp. 1–2.

won't change their will or desire to learn."[327] Writing from a white person's conditioned and socialized interpretation of race, structural inequality was reduced to ideas that projected Black and Brown peoples' cultures as deficit.

White Consumption of Black and Brown Student Media Depictions

Such notions also expanded anti-integrationist sentiments into the realm of rationalizing Black-Brown criminality, and thus the justification for policing of young Black and Brown people. As a letter from a Clifford W. Lazar to School Board member Kathleen Brown Rice (also copied to Judge Egly) reveals on parental concerns with "Armed Students" and "Violent Disruptive Students":

> Armed Students:
>
> A second parental concern is the carrying of guns and knives by students. [The solution:] The only way that this can be done effectively is to spend the money to implement the same kind of technique that the airlines used to avoid highjacking [sic]. Provide metal detectors and constrained passageways so that students going from one place to another must pass through the metal detector. There should be a number of detectors around campus so that there is no way to avoid detection. The metal detector should be crewed with sufficient security personnel to disarm an unwilling student.
>
> Violent Disruptive Students:
>
> The third parental concern is the continued presence on campus of violent students who disrupt the educational process of others. They should be excluded from normal campuses and provided an opportunity to be educated at more secure institutions staffed by marine drill instructor types who are capable of dealing with such people. Jacob Reese [sic] Junior High School used to be an example.[328]

Mr. Lazar's prison-like and quasi-militarized proposed solutions to school violence were informed by anti-black discourses. On the surface, Mr. Lazar seemed to be against exchanging students from predominantly white suburbia with students from LA's inner-city schools. This was far from the truth because it was white anti-integrationist violence around schools that actually ran rampant throughout the country. BUSTOPers, nonetheless, projected their racist views and violent ways onto young Black and Brown peoples.

In addition, media outlets including BUSTOPers did not racialize whites or young white people as they racialized young Black and Brown people. Mr. Lazar could

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[327] Mrs. Neil McLennan, Letter to Judge Egly, March 8, 1977, in Paul Egly Papers: Box 12, Folder Letters – Anti-busing – Answered 1977: p. 2.

[328] Clifford W. Lazar, Letter to Kathleen Brown Rice, Los Angeles City Board Of Education, March 29, 1977, in Paul Egly Papers, Box 12, Folder, Letters Addressed To Others with Copy to Judge Egly: pp 1–2.

not possibly desire prison-like and quasi-militarized conditions for white suburban schools. His reference to "they," and "such people," and the "Jacob Riis Junior High School" as a model example for policing students, tells us how race and racism informs Mr. Lazar's thinking. For example, Mr. Lazar's 'model' school reference Jacob Riis Junior High School, located in South Central LA. After 1968, Jacob Riis High School no longer existed, and it was also not a junior high school. A junior high school did replace it, it was Mary McLeod Bethune Junior High School. After the Watts uprising, Jacob Riis High School was restructured and renamed. However, during the Watts uprising in August of 1964, Jacob Riis High School was one of the many sites that received mass media attention, especially as California Governor Pat Brown appeared at the scene of Jacob Riis High School to "have lunch with high-ranking National Guards Officers."[329] Mr. Lazar's frame of reference myopically points to a racialized context of South Central—namely the Watts uprising—and how the National Guard had occupied the school. In other words, Mr. Lazar's proposed solutions highlight his racialized cognition of time, space, as well as his understanding of race, and his future projections for young Black and Brown people.

White BUSTOPers feared the larger implications that racial integration may have on racial whiteness. As a G. Roberts' April 27, 1977, letter to Bobby Fiedler (copied to Judge Egly), Executive Director of BUS STOP in Van Nuys puts forth:

> I would repeat, really like to know: who started this nefarious idea of INTEGRATION in the first place? I don't find this word in the Constitution or the amendments! It seems to me, those pro-integrationists want to turn this nation into supreme state of MULATOS! [all in o.g.].[330]

Often, BUSTOPers understood racial integration as racial-mixing, and how racial-"MULATOS"-amalgamation could potentially diminish the socio-political and historical construction of the white-raced American identity.

As the rest of the nation had done, some LA schools witnessed mild integration processes during the mid-1970s. The Community Relations Service (CRS) found that most communities eventually would be determined to make school desegregation work.[331] Perhaps LA's BUSTOPers were ignorant of these facts, and this explained why they feared "racial-mixing." Or, conversely, perhaps the fact that racial integration seemed promising brought on a larger white-Anglo racial crisis. After all, BUSTOPers'

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[329] For a sense of media converge behind Jacob Riis High School during Watts Uprising see Photograph dated Aug. 15, where California Governor Pat Brown sits to "have lunch with high-ranking National Guard officers" (Bill Murphy, Los Angeles Times, 1964) in "Photos: The Scenes of unrest from 50 years Ago" (http://graphics.latimes.com/watts-photos/).

[330] G. Roberts, Letter to Bobby Fiedler, Executive Director of BUS STOP, Van Nuys, April 27, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box 12, Folder, Letters Addressed to Others with Copy to Judge Egly: p. 1.

[331] Community Relations Service, *Annual Report 1976*: p. 23.

notions of "mulatto," "Anglo existence," and "ghetto" strongly indicated probable imaginaries than uncertain possibilities. BUSTOPers understood that most communities would eventually be willing to make racial desegregation work, and by that account the feared that sexual amalgamation might work too.

Many public officials, such as Judge Egly, and BUSTOPers included, had been informed about how people might be willing to make desegregation work. They, however, hesitated to critically address these observations out in the open. Instead, they allowed dominant anti-integrationist discourses on race, desegregation, integration, and racial "violence" to remain unchallenged. By the Fourth of July, BUSTOPers' racialized notions on busing also surfaced with patriotic undertones.

An Anti-busing Movement and The Fourth of July, 1977

On Monday, the Fourth of July, many news media outlets reported and showcased a BUSTOP boycott that had happened in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. While BUSTOPers had mobilized to demonstrate grievances, their strategies also anticipated Independence Day as another opportunity to provoke white anti-integrationist sympathy. To a certain degree, BUSTOPers were successful because even when liberal journalism critiqued the boycotts, they unintentionally depicted Independence Day demonstrations as a national day of white mourning rather than of celebration.

The *Los Angeles Times*' Bill Boyarsky and Celeste Durant, for example, went to San Fernando Valley Schools to capture BUSTOPers' genuine feelings about busing. Public discourse on school busing and desegregation revolved around "forced busing" alone, but Boyarsky and Durant knew that "Many at 4 Valley Schools Oppose Not Only Plan, but Integration Too."[332] However, Boyarsky and Durant "discovered" that some white students showed an interest in making desegregation work, and that "White Student's [anti-integration] Views" only echoed their parents' perspectives. [333]

White students at four predominantly San Fernando Valley High Schools—El Camino Real High School, Chatsworth High School, Granada Hills High School, and Van Nuys High School—expressed their "attitudes" on integration. Not surprisingly, the most diverse school out of the four was more of a positive outlier for integration.

Van Nuys High School—where the student body is 68.9% Anglo, 19.3%
Hispanic, 6.5% black and the remainder American Indian, Korean and

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[332] Bill Boyarsky and Celeste Durant, "Mandatory Bussing – White Students' Views: Many at 4 Valley Schools Oppose Not Only Plan, but Integration Too," *Los Angeles Times*, July 4, 1977, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service,* July-Aug, 1977 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1977): Article, 8429 pp. 55–58.
[333] Ibid., 55.

Vietnamese immigrants and Asian Americans—there is more acceptance of other races and cultures than the other three schools.[334]

White students at the other three schools also tended to provide positive glimpses to school integration but their negative influences seemed to be mainly informed by families' anti-integrationist stance on busing. At El Camino Real High School, a campus "with wide halls" and with "rooms for using televisions, films, and all sorts of other teaching devices," for example, two white students shared their thoughts on busing and desegregation.

"I think it's OK," a boy said.

A girl disagreed, "It's terribly far away for kids to go to school…I don't think it solves anything."

"I think it is preposterous that my little sister would have to go to the other side of Los Angeles just because of 200 years of injustice."[335]

Some white students were open to the idea of racial integration and desegregation, but their rebuttals also echoed BUSTOPers' thoughts on racialized time, space, and even history.

At Chatsworth High School, a "handsome," "44-acre" campus, and 90% "Anglo" student body, white students made similar expressions. "15 black students were bused to Chatsworth under the volunteer Permits With Transportation program (PWT), and they are doing well."[336] Most PWTs students were brave young Black and Brown people that were willing to attend white hostile environments in predominantly white schools. Black and Brown students did encounter white racists insults, but eventually all students were willing to work things out.

Nonetheless, white students saw integration "synonymous with busing," and their rebuttals stemmed from "conversations they heard at home."[337] A white student, for example, could not possibly ask, "Why should we pay high taxes and have to go to school down there?" if her parents had not informed her about how property taxes were implicated in public education.[338] Another eleventh-grade young white student also echoed her father's concern about basic rights, " . . . children are the one possession they can't take away and when they are forcing busing they are taking your right to do what you want to do."[339]Another white tenth-grader expressed his parents' views on busing, saying that his parents moved "here" because of the opportunities the schools offered, and that his father "would rather die than let me get on a bus."[340] A young

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[334] Ibid.
[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid: 56.
[337] Ibid.
[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid.

white tenth-grader described how her mother "…would get in front of the bus and her friend would get behind the back wheels before they would let me go."[341] What the news outlets captured much of was how the children of BUSTOPers protested integration through their parents' view on busing.

> "I don't see why we have to have desegregation at all," said a boy student council member.
>
> "Our country is based on the fact that all people are equal but by busing you are saying that's not true. You are saying the people aren't being given an equal opportunity and you are destroying the principle the country is based on."[342]

Believing that segregation also meant equality, this white student basically echoed the views of many white parents' 'separate but equal' clauses.

White students also owned their parents' racial fears. As another eleventh-grade white student noted, black students "stayed together" and he feared that "things would start to go wrong."[343] Ideas of racial fear and anti-blackness showcased how white parents had conditioned and socialized their children to think and act through racial prejudices. Interracial fights and other problems did happen between young white people and young Black and/or Brown people, but students and some school official usually found common grounds to keep problems from escalating.

Racism and resources also prevailed in white students' view regarding integration. For instance, one tenth-grade "girl" argued that there were "too many people coming into this school already," and that "classes are too crowded and people that are bused will probably get the best classes."[344] In addition, just like their parents, white students held unsubstantiated fears based on skin color:

> "There will be a lot of fights," said her friends. "It will be really crowded, and people won't get along."[345]

Notions of interracial violence dominated white students' views, despite many positive interracial signs. As sociologist Martin Sanchez-Jankowski's work finds regarding comparing Boston and LA schools, early interracial violence among young people in schools happens only at their initial interracial encounters but interracial tensions gradually taper off once students get tired of the violence or when they learn to accept each other.[346] In many ways, these were also interracial patterns happening in the San Fernando Valley. Students were getting along.

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[341] Ibid.
[342] Ibid.
[343] Ibid.
[344] Ibid.
[345] Ibid.
[346] See Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike: Ethnic Violence in High Schools* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016).

White-interracial violence, however, continued to influence white students' racial views. At Granada Hills High School, a 93% white school, a white versus non-white interracial fight that took place a year ago, for example, was still lingering in the public memory of the school.[347] In February of the previous year (1976), young white people who were not even students at Granada Hills High entered school premises. These young white people attacked Black students that had been bused in from another school. The interracial tensions and violence, however, were usually depicted as mutual interracial combat between whites and nonwhites.

White interracial fears, nonetheless, tended to focus blame on non-whites students as the aggressors even though young Black or Brown people were usually on the defensive. White BUSTOPers from the San Fernando Valley usually made the effort to unwelcome nonwhite students:

> Some [white] students said Bustop, the largest antibusing organization that
> started in the valley, is a potential threat to peace because it gives a parental
> stamp of approval to resisting integration.[348]

The *Los Angeles Times*' Bill Boyarsky and Celeste Durant were not far from the truth in assessing how BUSTOPers in the valley were actively disrupting integration efforts. After all, BUSTOPers' private letters were already communicating and would continue to shoe their anti-integrationist stance. Similar to BUSTOPers private letters, white "students also talked about their parents' taxes and of not wanting to go 'down there' [to inner city schools]."[349] Anti-busing and anti-integrationist sentiments were also couched on anti-tax assertions. Anti-interracialism, nonetheless, gave off more of a patriotic and jingoistic tone on this Fourth of July.

On the following day, July 5, 1977, BUSTOPers and the School Board presented their volunteer busing plan in *Crawford*, but Judge Egly rejected it. At first, BUSTOPers along with the School Board attempted to produce Plan A, a volunteer busing plan that would benefit whites while at the same time satisfy Judge Egly's interpretation of the *Crawford* mandate. The School Board came up with an Educational Planning Unit (EPU) aspect, but Judge Egly considered the proposal "ineffective" for desegregating the entire school district.[350] Egly criticized the plan as "hastily conceived as a reaction," and he decided that it was constitutionally unacceptable.[351] Judge Egly gave the board "90 Days to Draft Another" plan. The School Board was expected to produce this busing plan by October. Ideally, the plan

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[347] Bill Boyarsky and Celeste Durant (July 4, 1977).
[348] Ibid: 58.
[349] Ibid: 57.
[350] William Trombley, "Gives Board 90 Days to Draft Another," *Los Angeles Times*, July 7, 1977, in Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, July-Aug, 1977 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1977): Article 8438, pp. 63–64.
[351] Ibid.

would include an in-depth study and cost-efficient analyses to desegregate the entire school district.[352] Because he supposedly wanted realistic plans drafted, Judge Egly encouraged ongoing "volunteer" aspects of the plans to be test-driven despite his official rejection.

Julian Nava, President of the Los Angeles Board of Education, thought that speed would necessarily exacerbate situations. Nava thought that it was also critical to think about distinguishing between integration and desegregation, between lumping students together and providing students with adequate multicultural learning experiences.[353] Nava observed that teachers in the district were also not trained and equipped with the necessary funding and skills to materialize the large-scale student integration Judge Egly recommended. Nava argued that more funding would make the project possible.

Instead of funding such plans, however, BUSTOPers were already developing a base to launch an anti-tax revolt that would impact K-12 public schools. Their anti-integrationist forces, moreover, enlarged to the degree that anti-busing became synonymous with anti-taxes, especially as it related to the costs of LAUSD's K-12 bussing.

Immediately after Judge Egly's rejection, on July 5, 1977, Richard E. Ferraro, Member of Board of Education, and also speaking for an "Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Busing," and who was also backed by "5000 businesses, professional units and persons who make up" the "United Chambers of the San Fernando Valley, Inc." advised Judge Egly about their resolution to end busing.[354] In his letter to Judge Egly, Ferraro enclosed the document "RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE UNITED STATES CHAMBERS BY THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FORCED BUSSING" he planned to circulate for June 20, 1977.[355] Ferraro and the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Bussing had many grievances and demands. Amongst them was even the effects on the environment.

> WHEREAS, an environmental impact report should be required at once; it
> would reinforce our position that in addition to a threat to our liberty, bussing
> would bring a needless waste of energy and pollution…[356]

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[352] Ibid.

[353] Julian Nava, "It Takes More Than Teaching to Teach," *Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1977 Comité de México y Aztlán, *News Monitoring Service*, July-Aug, 1977 (Comité de México y Aztlán: Oakland, CA, 1977): Article 8451, pp. 75–76.

[354] Richard E. Ferraro, Member of Board of Education, Letter and resolution enclosed to Judge Egly, July 5, 1977 in Paul Egly Papers, Box 8, Folder Board of Education Correspondence, articles, etc. p. 1.

[355] Richard E. Ferraro enclosed to Judge Egly, "Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Busing, RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE UNITED STATES CHAMBERS BY THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON FORCED BUSSING," in Ibid: p. 1.

[356] Ibid.

BUSTOPers' such as the United Chambers of the San Fernando Valley, Inc. mobilized against busing on many fronts to the degree that they even argued that the air pollution coming out of buses could potentially be an environmental hazard in the San Fernando Valley.

In addition to demanding an environmental impact report, the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Bussing also called on anti-busing peoples to act and expand their mobilization efforts beyond their local district. They insisted on mobilizing against busing on multiple sectors of law and society.

> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the business community, citizen organization, Los Angeles Board of Education and individuals call on the United States Supreme Court of this land to declare unconstitutional mandatory bussing as part of our desegregation plan. We urge our national, state and local legislative bodies and every other organization opposed to forced mandatory bussing to use every legal and lawful means to insure this end.[357]

Richard E. Ferraro, the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Busing along with United Chambers of the San Fernando Valley, Inc, intended to mobilize aggressively against busing at every branch of local, state, and even the federal government.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Busing was only a reflection of what was a common anti-busing and anti-integrationist attitude throughout LA. Soon thereafter, aggressive anti-busing, anti-integrationist, and anti-taxation, including anti-public K-12 school mail flooded public officials' offices, including Judge Egly's chambers. The following postcards alone reflect BUSTOPers' jingoistic tone of mail that Judge Egly received (as well as the peoples of interests copied):

> July 7, 1977:   From: Raymond E. Beaker ,
> Sir: Anyone who doesn't bury his head in the sand can see that the Leninist power figure has my country seeming to fall into Soviet hands…
> Using our young people as political ponds and guinea pigs, and forcing bussing [sic] is about as American as Ivan the Terrible. How can you support such a thing?[358]
>
> July 11, 1977:   From D. Stead,
> It is time to repeal the Civil Rights Ammendment [sic] and get rid of a lot of judges. To date we have over a thousand dollars to spend on pamphlets the next time you run for office.
> The time for the NAACP and Minorities is on the wayne [sic, wane]
> The majorities anr [sic] getting fedup.

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[357] Ibid.

[358] Raymond E. Beaker, Postcard to Paul Egly, July 7, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box. 12, Folder: Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977.

No more monery [sic] wated [sic] on bussing

No more Judges that slap the criminals ont [sic] the wrist and turn them loose.

No more salary raises without voter approval

No more taxes for public schools close them up as there will only be welfare

recipients in LA They [sic] don't pay taxes

Inglewood no longer needs busing all the whites that had any money have

moved and taken their children with them [all in o.g.].[359]

July 11, 1977:   From: Unknown author

When integration becomes more important than education it is either time to

close the schools or get rid of a lot of Judges as we did Doctor and his women

friend. The tax payers are tired of busing—minorities [all in o.g.].

NAACP-Unions-and Judges involved in busing, slaping [sic] criminals on the

back and turning them loose – we cant get rid of unions or NAACP[?] but we

can get rid of Judges we have in past.[360]

Anti-integrationist politics, anti-K-12 public schools, and anti-tax assertions collapsed notions of "busing Judges" with socialism and communism and they were written under an anti-black framework. Anti-busing postcards, telegrams, letters, memos, and written commentary on newspaper clippings sent through private correspondence to (or copied to) Judge Egly also exhibited anti-black discourses as BUSTOPers' evidence for the ills of busing.

Anti-integrationist discourses merged with a patriotic anti-tax politic, and it signaled defunding tax dollars from K-12 schools in order to defund busing or any integrationist efforts. As they mobilized, they also did it under anti-black tropes. As a Mrs. C. Goldta asserted her patriotic undertones in a letter she sent to Judge Egly on July 29, 1977:

Slavery 200 years ago was wrong because it involved FORCE. This idea of

forced busing too is wrong.

…Turn this case around and give us back our individual freedom of choice.

Remember "taxation without representation" – 200 years ago – well, this is

where we are in the school desegregation case [all in o.g.].[361]

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[359] D. Stead, Postcard to Paul Egly, July 11, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box. 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977.

[360] Unknown author, Post card to Judge Egly, July 11, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box. 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977.

[361] Mrs. C. Goldstein, Letter to Judge Egly, July 29, 1977, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box, 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977: p. 1.

Mrs. C. Goldta sent this letter to Judge Egly after she had attended an anti-busing organizational meeting that had provided her "Free Lunch."[362] Mrs. C. Goldta attaches the front page of the meeting's program. In her own writing, Mrs. C. Goldta directs Judge Egly's attention, "Enclosure: (Please read and recognize the situation in "Ghost" poem.)":[363]

> **THE GHOST**: The Ghost From Freedoms Past
> from J.S. Lipsy…
> When called to work for Senator White
> I said my schedule was too tight
> When precinct meets rolled around
> I said that I'd be out of town.
> When Party help was need now,
> I said, "They're all crooks anyhow"
> On Election Day, the time to vote
> I spent the day out on my boat!
> And life rolled on, day in, day out
> About My future, I'd no doubt…
> Then one night while dreaming fast,
> I met the Ghost of Freedoms Past!
> He showed me faces, thin and bleak
> On folk who toiled through endless weeks..[sic]
> Meeting quotas, reaching goals
> Living under strict controls.
> He showed me children, reared by a State
> Whose aim was to indoctrinate!
> Empty Churches stood forlorn…
> Worship outlawed, buildings torn.
> The Halls of Congress collecting dust
> Voting Machines sealed by rust.
> And all were clad in uniform.
> He said when scientific tests were made
> My kids had been assigned to trade
> Their lives a drudge to menial chores
> They could aspire to nothing more […]."[364]

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[362] Mrs. C. Goldstein enclosed a patriotic poem by J.S. Lipsy, "THE GHOST: The Ghost From Freedoms Past." Poem was on the front cover of a program to a anti-busing meeting. See J.S. Lipsy, "THE GHOST: The Ghost From Freedoms Past Poem in Ibid: p. 1.
[363] Ibid.
[364] Ibid.

Mrs. C. Goldta's expressed anti-black notions that juxtaposed slavery and anti-taxation as they related to the American Revolution. Mrs. C. Goldta (as well as the people who attended the meeting) were being politicized to mobilize against busing through racist socialized ideas of history and patriotism.

BUSTOPers' motivation mainly adhered to how integration threatened their whiteness, including their own racialized way of life. As a Barry Bushell straightforwardly admits in his anti-black, "taxpayer" and anti-Native American letter to Judge Egly on August 10, 1977:

> Busing is still with us. I watched the commentaries on television regarding busing and amazed to learn that negro children now have at their disposal – at the expense of the taxpayers – cassettes which they can take home…
> That is all very nice, but who says that they need those little items, which the taxpayer's pay for, If they do, they why don't their parents, who are almost as rich as the Apaches go out and buy them for their gangsters [all in o.g.]
> Integration to white neighborhoods can only lead to more miscegenation prematurely pregnant white girls on welfare.[365]

BUSTOPers' assertions did not deny the fact that young white people—in this case, "white girls"—could not only get along with nonwhite students in schools but that even integration could lead to interracial romantic relationships. Racial mixing, and racialized gang violence, and, more significantly, miscegenation broadly informed anti-busing and anti-tax mobilization as it related to funding integration of K-12 public education.

By early September, the School Board along with many other contributors prepared "Abstracts of Plan and Plan Concepts for Pupil Integration" that they could introduce to Judge Egly in October.[366] The Abstracts of Plan and Plan Concepts also contained an overall estimated budget. "Estimated transportation costs for the 1977/1978 school year are $15,348,598. The hiring of transportation aides is included in the cost."[367] BUSTOPers also included their own busing plan within the Abstract of Plan and Plan Concepts. Their plan encouraged a volunteer-busing component, but it was also limited in the scope of desegregating the entire district. This, however, was only one effort in their many anti-busing battles. Judge Egly welcomed aspects of BUSTOPers' volunteer plan, even when they continued to protest at the courts, at LAUSD Board meetings.

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[365] Barry Bushell, Letter to Judge Egly, August 10, 1977, *in Paul Egly Papers*, Box, 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977: p. 1.

[366] Office of the Superintendent, *Los Angeles Unified School District, Abstracts of Plan and Plan Concepts for Pupil Integration*, September 8, 1977 in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box 7, Folder, Abstract of plan and plan concepts for pupil integration –appendices to ninth report of the court referee 1977 September 8.

[367] Ibid: p. 10.

As *Crawford* resumed in October through November, BUSTOPers feared what they perceived was Judge Egly's interracial stance. The Los Angeles School Board submitted their plan to the court in early October, but pro-integrationist such as the "Coalition for Black Elected Officials" and Assemblymen such as Julian C. Dixon also critiqued the plan "that if implemented the future of countless youngsters will be irreversibly damaged."[368]

BUSTOPers anticipated that Judge Egly would not favor significant aspects of their proposals; therefore, they also looked to halt busing through an anti-tax means. As a Mr. Lawrence M. Hovland drew Judge Egly's attention to newspaper clippings he had enclosed in his November 12th letter: "Here's the ULTIMATE "ANSWER" to FORCED INTEGRATION! [all in o.g.]."[369] Mr. Hovland hand-wrote these words with his own ink pen underneath a newspaper clipping entitled "Districts Running out of Money Ohio Schools May Be Forced to Close."[370] Along with his written "ANSWER," Mr. Hovland added his own sketches of arrows that pointed Egly's attention to a passage in the newspaper clipping.

> School officials in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Dayton say the cost of compliance with court orders to integrate, coupled with voter rejection of school tax increase, has contributed to their financial problems [all in o.g.].[371]

Mr. Hovland's underlined passage summed up the article's larger anti-tax call aimed at its white San Fernando Valley audience. Angelo F. Allio, a resident of Northridge (in the Valley), wrote this article. In it he proposed that K-12 public schools should be closed through an anti-tax means in order to halt court-ordered busing.

Allio's message was intended to call BUSTOPers to bankrupt K-12 public schools. Mr. Hoveland's actual letter to Judge Egly shows how the article was most likely interpreted by its audience:

> No Sir—as the enclosed newspaper so 'teaches' so clearly prove, --the whites will leave in <u>droves</u> and the G_ d__ school will go bankrupt before people will submit to this b__ S__ in the name of "integration" or "equality of education." What I am upset about? I'll just stand by and see fools like you—and all gave "ponderous pronouncements" and "pontifical prattling" and "pedantic platitudes" go "zzzzzzzshipp"—down the tubes–because it's the <u>TAX</u> paying white public Judge, who will be the final "judge" as to what this is all about

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[368] Julian C. Dixon, Assemblyman, Forty-Ninth District of the Assembly Democratic Caucus, Letter Judge Egly, October 24, 1977, *in Paul Egly Papers*, Box 7, Folder, Assembly California Legislature, Letters From Assemblymen: p. 1.

[369] Mr. Lawrence M. Hovland, Letter and enclosed newspaper clipping by Angelo F. Allio, Northridge to Judge Paul Egly, November 12, 1977, *in Paul Egly Papers*, Box 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977: Clipping from Angelo F. Allio, Northridge.

[370] Ibid.

[371] Ibid.

and whether or not "forced busing" is a viable or feasible concept—not you,
not your law books, not your federal marhsals, not your "Contempt Citations"
nor anything else and I'm laughing my head off because plain simple
economics is whats going to kill this "hydra headed" monster [all in o.g.].[372]

With a white supremacist tone, and with a display of disdain for the law, Judges, and the Courts, BUSTOPers like Mr. Hovland saw each other as a powerful white-taxpaying collective force – or a "white public Judge" – that could decide the fate of K-12 public education, and thereby halt busing, and by default stop racial mixing. Urging Judge Egly to "LOOK LOOK LOOK [all in o.g.]," Mr. Hovland sketched arrows that pointed to another passage of another newspaper clipping, "(HERE'S THE ANSWER)," he says:

School officials…say the cost of compliance with court orders to integrate,
coupled with voter rejection of school tax issues has contribute to their
financial headaches.[373]

As Mr. Hovland would have it, an anti-tax proposition would hinder interracial mixing of "116,000 students" with "(NI**ERS)."[374] BUSTOPers commonly shared these anti-integrationist and anti-tax attitudes.

The dominant anti-black discourses surrounding busing resonated well with white-aspiring or white-passing Brown people too. As an Antonio Chavez' letter to Mr. Clarke of Bustop Foundation (also copied to Judge Egly) exposes how anti-black notions were consumed by the public at large:

Judge Egly should tell the Nava's, the Dr. Docter's [sic], the Miller's, the
Watson's, Kathleen Brown Rice and the rest of their ilk to dedicate their efforts
towards the education of our children, to concentrate their efforts in eliminating
vandalism, *hoodlumism* [emphasis added], narcotics and pregnancies of pre and
teenage girls in our schools.[375]

Anti-integrationist and anti-tax attitudes usually laced their protest with anti-black discussion of "teenage pregnancies" and "hoodlumism" as they referenced both young Black and Brown young people. As Judge Egly's November 29 response to Mr. Hovland shows, "I, as a judge, am *not unaware* [my emphasis added] of your sentiments and I truly hope that any result reached in this case will be one compatible

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[372] Ibid: See Hovland's letter, p1.

[373] Ibid: On another newspaper clipping, Mr. Hovland sought to draw Judge Egly's attention to how anti-taxes was the answer that would eliminate integration. See newspapers clipping.

[374] Ibid: Mr. Hovland wrote the words "(NI**ERS)" above a passage that indicated the number of students potentially implicated in desegregation and busing.

[375] Antonio Chavez, Letter to Mr. Clarke, Bustop Foundation (copied to Judge Egly), November 21, 1977, in *Egly Papers*, Box 12, Folder, Letters – Anti-Busing – Answered 1977: p. 2.

with the Constitution."[376] Judge Egly's response to Mr. Hovland shows that anti-interracial questions about taxes, efforts to oust "busing Judges," and general anti-black discourse was common 'knowledge.' Overall, BUSTOPers showed that they were not only interested in halting busing alone but willing to bankrupt K-12 public education as another means to achieve their end.

The Spirit of 13

On December 29, 1977, Judge Egly did not approve any plan but only a procedure by which the Board of Education could go about finalizing an actual busing desegregation plan. Judge Egly's approved procedure, however, was widely misunderstood as if mandatory busing was what was already set for full implementation come September 1978. At the following Board of Education meeting on January 9, 1978, Julian Nava tried to clarify the news media's depiction of Judge Egly's statement regarding busing procedures.

> Following the issuance of Judge Egly's Order of December 29, 1977, it was widely reported in the media, and most recently in the lead editorial of this morning's Los Angeles Times, that Judge Egly had approved the Board's integration plan for one year, thus, clearing the way for mandatory busing in September 1978.
> Judge Egly's Order of December 29, 1977 did not approve the Board's Plan or any part of it. The Judge's Order was procedural in nature and not substance. It was issued as an amendment to an earlier Pre-trail Order to set out the procedure which would be followed in connection with the scheduling of hearings on the Plan. The Order is uncertain and inadequate in several respects and through the judicial process we should [the Board will] seek clarification of the Order. However, as I understand the Judge's Order, in an effort to accommodate a hearing on the objection of the NAACP and ACLU to the Board's Plan while the same time allowing for implementation of the Board's Plan in September of 1978, the Order set out the following procedures…[377]

Julian Navan's statement, however, fell on deaf ears given that the news media and newspapers and lead editorial such as in the *Los Angeles Times* had already shaped the discourse regarding Judge Egly's procedural "Order." The next day, Julian Nava wrote Judge Egly and shared his concerns about the overall situation.

> The attached statement I read yesterday at the Board of Education and its contents are self evident for your information. Almost universal confusing and

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[376] Ibid, Judge Egly's letter answered to Mr. Hovland, November 29, 1977.
[377] Julian Nava, Member – Board of Education, Statement at the Board of Education regarding Judge's Egly's Order, January 9, 1978, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 8, Folder Board of Education, Correspondence, articles, etc.: p. 1.

> lack of understanding is evident regarding your statement as to procedures to
> be followed in the Crawford case. I fear that misinformation and confusion can
> be detrimental to everyone concerned.[378]

News media and newspapers were inaccurate about Judge Egly's "Order" on busing, but Nava's encounter with white people's frustration revealed how anti-busing momentum expanded. Control over the narrative of busing was falling on the side of BUSTOPers.

BUSTOPers were already forging aggressive local, and statewide (probably even nationwide) response to busing. In anticipation to what they perceived would be an unfavorable Judge Egly's decision, BUSTOPers also mobilized on many other fronts. BUSTOPers' efforts ranged from media coverage to letters of protest, to filing *Bustop Motions* to Supreme Court of the United States, to an eventual BUSTOPer's anti-tax initiative to amend the California constitution and negatively impact K-12 public education. BUSTOPERS would also introduce Assembly and Senate anti-busing Bills to amend California's Constitution against busing. Anti-busing continued to operate under anti-black tropes and anti-integrationist sentiments. To a significant degree, this galvanized into something BUSTOPers would later call the *Spirit of 13*.

By 1977, anti-busing was almost synonymous with anti-taxes. This made people think about an initiative that was gaining momentum in LA's San Fernando Valley. Republican Paul Gann of Sacramento also had an office in the City of Van Nuys located in the San Fernando Valley. Howard Jarvis was also in Mid-city and in West Hollywood of Los Angeles.[379] Together Gann and Howard galvanized support for their "Property Tax Limitation" initiative.[380] Both Gann and Jarvis had been trying to cut taxes for some time. Prior to 1977, they were mostly unsuccessful. Jarvis had "been trying for" about "sixteen years."[381] Paul Gann came into the tax cut crusade in 1976, but he also had failed.[382] In July of 1977, however, thing changed. This time BUSTOPers mobilized anti-tax crusade's in Van Nuys and the overall San Fernando Valley area. BUSTOPers turned out be Gann's anti-tax base in southern California. As Gann recalls,

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[378] Julian Nava, Member – Board of Education, Letter to Judge Egly, January 10, 1978, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 8, Folder Board of Education, Correspondence, articles, etc.: p. 1.

[379] Howard Jarvis, United Organizations of Taxpayer Inc. 6431 West Fifth Street, Los Angeles Ca. 90048; and 515 Crescent Heights Blvd, Los Angeles Ca. 90048: See Howard Jarvis, United Organizations of Taxpayer Inc; and Ballot Title in Tax Limitation California Initiative 153 (1977). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/322: p.1; and p. 1.

[380] Tax Limitation California Initiative 153 (1977). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/322.

[381] Gann, Paul, and Gabrielle S. Morris. 1988. Oral history interview with Paul Gann: pp. 17-18.

[382] Ibid: p. 18.

GANN:…I had an office at that time in southern California, in Van Nuys, as well as here in Sacramento. And between our office and local taxpayers' group down there, and Jarvis's people, we turned in, I think it was *seven hundred thousand signatures* [emphasis added] in Los Angeles County alone.

…Orange County, we turned in *two or three hundred thousand* [emphasis added]…it was amazing how rapidly it went.[383]

Although Orange County was significant, it was LA's population – the Valley – that led the way with its "seven hundred thousand signatures." On May 15, 1977, Jarvis submitted his "proposed constitutional amendment to limit ad valorem property taxes to 1% of market value"; five days later he added the "name of Paul Gann" as co-sponsor to the proposition.[384] In the midst of busing turmoil, Gann and Jarvis joined forces and found political capital in BUSTOPers' anti-busing and anti-tax rally outcry in Los Angeles.

The valid signatures required to qualify a ballot initiative to amend the constitution was "499,846".[385] Orange County was already on the New Right conservative stance, but it would not be Orange County's actual "155,850" signatures that would get the Property Tax Limitation on the ballot.[386] The "First day Proponent can circulate Sections for signatures…" was July 6, 1977,[387] and only in a couple of days after the Fourth of July, Jarvis and Gann came out to Los Angeles to collect signatures. As Gann recalls,

So after the fourth day [of July], Mr. Jarvis called his board together and we did get together and we came out then in '77 to qualify for what turned out to be Proposition 13 in 1978.[388]

By December 2, Los Angeles County alone, and white suburban areas, in particular, turned out "569,708" signatures to qualify the "Property Tax Limitation" initiative for the 1978 June ballot.[389] If passed in June, the initiative would result in a homeowner's property tax cut that would result in approximately 700 billion dollars of annual losses in local government tax revenue. K-12 schools relied on about 47 percent of local

[383] Ibid: p. 20.

[384] Howard Jarvis, Letter to March Fong Eu, May 15, 1977 in Tax Limitation California Initiative 153 (1977). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/322: p. 1; Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann, Letter to March Fong Eu, May 20, 1977, in Ibid: p. 1.

[385] March Fong Eu, "TO ALL CLERKS/REGISTRARS OF VOTERS", July 6, 1977 in Ibid: p. 1; See also *The Rose Institute of State and Local Government*, "A Study of California Initiatives: 1976-1986," *Spring* 1988: p. 13.

[386] Howard Jarvis, "Property Tax Initiative Section for Signatures" in Tax Limitation California Initiative 153 (1977). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/322: p. 1.

[387] March Fong Eu, "TO ALL CLERKS/REGISTRARS OF VOTERS" in Ibid: p. 1.

[388] Gann, Paul (1988). Oral history interview with Paul Gann: p. 20.

[389] Howard Jarvis, "Property Tax Initiative Section for Signatures" in Tax Limitation California Initiative 153 (1977). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/322: p. 1.

funding. This was significant because, as James S. Catterall and Emily Brizendine would emphasize later, "No other institution … [was] affected most than schools."[390] The strategy for December of 1977, was to push the initiative so that it could make it to the June 1978 ballot. If passed in June, the initiative would go into effect the next fiscal year; and it that was following month.

　　　Because BUSTOPers' anti-busing coincided well with Californians' overall tax revolt, they, too, jumped aboard the anti-tax "gravy train."[391] As the anti-tax movement gained momentum in LA, Democratic Senator Alan Robbins "Representing the San Fernando Valley" from the city of Van Nuys alongside BUSTOPers also submitted on October 25, 1977 an initiative to amend the constitution against "compulsory busing" for the November 7, 1978 ballot. [392] Alan Robins' "Transportation of School Pupils 162 – Initiative Constitutional Amendment" was approved for the "First day Proponent can circulate Section for signatures …[on]…Tuesday, 12/13/77."[393] Alan Robbins and BUSTOPers came out to collect signatures for the "Transportation of School Pupils 162 (1977)" initiative in mid-December, but fifteen days later in December 27 they also filed a similar if not a copy of same "initiative constitutional amendmen[t] on compulsory busing [sic]" in case their current petition failed to qualify.[394] The initiative was called "Transportation Of School Pupils 167 (1978)."[395] In addition to both 162 (1977) and 167 (1978) petitions against compulsory busing, by early January of 1978, Alan Robbins introduced another Assembly Constitutional Amendment, No. 19, on

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[390] James S. Catterall and Emily Brizendine, *Proposition 13: effects on high school curricula, 1979-1983* ([Stanford, Calif.]: Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance, School of Education, Stanford University, 1984): p. 1.

[391] Although Howard Jarvis and his followers used "the taxpayers gravy train" metaphor to scapegoat immigrants and low-income communities, anti-tax people also used the metaphor to mobilize themselves; hence, my use of the "gravy train" riders. See Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004): p. 139.

[392] Alan Robbins – Senator Representing the San Fernando Valley – Letter to Attorney General Evelle Younger, re: proponent of the initiative on compulsory busing, November 22, 1977 Transportation Of School Pupils California Initiative 162 (1977) https://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/329: p. 1; See also "INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE VOTERS" Oct 25, 1977, Req. #16402 in Transportation Of School Pupils California Initiative 162 (1977): p. 1.

[393] March Fong Eu, "TO ALL COUNTY CLERKS/REGISTRARS OF VOTERS" in Transportation Of School Pupils California Initiative 162 (1977) https://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/329: p. 1.

[394] Alan Robbins – Senator Representing the San Fernando Valley – Letter to Attorney General Evelle Younger, re: initiative constitutional amendmen[t] on compulsory busing, December 27, 1977, in Transportation Of School Pupils 167 (1978). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/334: p. 1.

[395] Ibid.

"School busing" for the "California Legislature—1979-80, Regular Session."[396] BUSTOPers were not just mobilizing against Judges and Courts, but now they were working to amend California's constitution against busing.

By May of 1978, Alan Robbins came up short for the 162 (1977) initiative he filed on October 25, 1977; but his January 13, 1978 167 (1978) petition had already been approved to "…circulate Section for signatures…"[397] Robins needed 499,846 valid signatures to qualify the initiative to amend the constitution. By June 15, the 167 (1978) initiative almost qualified with "417, 378" signatures.[398] This time Robbins' initiative fell short by only 82,468 signatures. In this, Los Angeles led the way with its high "377,112" signature turn out.[399] While Los Angeles first embraced the idea of legislating specifically against busing, the 377,112 anti-busing signatures also showed their significance to LA's anti-tax movement. That is, if 377,112 anti-busing signatures are subtracted from the total 569,708 anti-tax signatures, the remaining 192,596 signatures show that about 66.19% of registered voters in LA significantly favored both anti-taxes and anti-busing. As the June election drew near, BUSTOPers were all aboard the anti-tax train.

In June of 1978, The People's Initiative to Limit Property Taxation appeared on the June 9 ballot as Proposition 13, the "TAX LIMITATION—INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT."[400] When voters headed to the polls, nearly two-thirds of Californians voted in favor of Proposition 13. This meant that Proposition 13 would go into effect immediately the following month—July was the start of the new fiscal year. Judge Egly continued to press the School Board to produce, what now could be an even more costly busing mandate plan.

With Judge Egly's uncertain *Crawford* court order nearing its September hearing, BUSTOPers did not remain idle. The outcome of Proposition 13 furthered empowered BUSTOPers. BUSTOPers continued to use their political base to mobilize against busing. They quickly expressed their movement as the *Spirit of 13*, which they claimed was an extension of Proposition 13. In July, BUSTOPers introduced to Judge

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[396] Assembly Constitutional Amendment, No. 19. Introduced by Assemblyman Young (Principal Coauthor: Senator Robbins), January 4, 1978. California Legislature—1979-80, Regular Session [ACA 19, as introduced, Young (Jud.). School busing.
(Coauthors: Senators Briggs, Cusanovich, Johnson, Nimmo, Richardson, Robbins, Russell, Schmitz, and Wilson, and *Campbell*), in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box 8, Folder BILLS: p. 1.
[397] March Fong Eu, "TO ALL COUNTY CLERKS/REGISTRARS OF VOTERS" in Transportation Of School Pupils 167 (1978).
http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/334: p. 1.
[398] Alan Robins, "Transportation – Assignment of School Pupil Section for Signatures" in Transportation Of School Pupils 167 (1978): p. 1.
[399] Ibid.
[400] Property Tax Limitation California Proposition 13 (1978).
https://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/850: p 56.

Egly's their own "Intervenor, Bustop's Motion" that would allow their non-party status in *Crawford* to enter litigation without regard to the original litigants.[401]

> In reliance thereon, immense efforts were utilized in planning the
> implementation of this plan – consistent of volunteer efforts – of parents, staff
> work, board deliberations, forming of clusters, forming of parings,
> appropriation of money—all of which were in full swing at the time of the
> filing of this motion [Intervenor, Bustop's Motion] [sic].[402]

BUSTOPers wanted their unofficial voice to become part of the legal conversations and influences. Anticipating Judge Egly's potential ruling for September, BUSTOPers wanted to disrupt previous outcomes that had ensued from previous hearings and litigations.

BUSTOPers did not stop there. BUSTOPers also looked to many other sectors and agencies of society to get involved in their larger anti-busing momentum. Aligned with the United Chambers of the San Fernando Valley, Inc., and its Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Bussing, BUSTOPers (also Integrated Educational Excellence Through Choice) produced an "Environmental Impact Report," where their main grievances was on how busing would negatively affect the San Fernando Valley's "Air Quality."[403]

BUSTOPers mobilized their anti-busing stance also onto the national stage. Bustop Incorporated, or "*Bustop, Inc*.," along with the support of California Attorney General, Republican Evelle Janson Younger petitioned the Federal Court of The United States "On Application for Stay" on behalf of parents and students.[404] BUSTOPers had been attentive to the recent August (1978) Columbus, Ohio case. With *Bustop Inc*., they hoped that Associate Justice William Rehnquist would stay "...the judgment and order of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in *Columbus Board of Education v.*

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[401] Anne Piete, Los Angeles County Lettergram and attachment to Judge Egly, July, 25 1978, Re: Intervenor, Bustop's Motion, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 9, Folder, Drafts, Rough Outlines, Judge Egly – School Integration Case.

[402] Ibid: pp. 1-2.

[403] September 1978, Draft Environmental Impact Report for Los Angeles Plan for Student Integration "Integrated Educational Excellence Through Choice" in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 10: p. 1.

[404] "Bustop, Inc.," to a large degree, was nationalized when they petitioned the Supreme Court of The United States "On Application for Stay". For case hearing see *Bustop, Inc., Applicant v. The Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles et al*. No. A-249. Denied On Application for Stay, September 8, 1978. [439 U.S. 1380 (99 S.CT. 40, 58 L.Ed.2d 88)], in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 22, Supreme Court of the United States – Bustop's Application for Stay, denied by Justice Rehnquist, 1978 September 8.

Penick, No. A - 134 (Aug. 11, 1978) ..."[405] To Bustop Inc.'s surprise, Justice Rehnquist "...*Denied* [sic]" their Application.[406]

> ...but that case is of course different in that the only authority that a federal
> court has to order desegregation or busing in a local school district arises from
> the United States Constitution. But the same is not true of states courts. So far
> as this Court is concerned, they are free to interpret the Constitution of the
> State to impose more stringent restrictions on the operation of a local school
> board.[407]

Justice Rehnquist denied *Bustop Inc.*'s Application for Stay on the basis that the Federal Courts do not necessarily hinder desegregation methods, and thus States Constitutions are allowed to "impose" any plan of desegregation. In addition, the judgment in *Columbus Board of Education v. Penick* had "stay" because the Court recognized that the financial burdens the School Board and school system would undergo since in start of the school year was too close to implement integration. Justice Rehnquist might have granted Bustop Inc.'s "Stay" except that, unlike in *Columbus Board of Education v. Penick*, Los Angeles desegregation implementation was different in that "The Board, however, raises before me no objection to the plan, and the Supreme Court of California has apparently placed its imprimatur on it."[408] In *Columbus Board of Education v. Penick* the board objected to integration because of funding issues, but in Bustop Inc.'s Application for Stay, the Los Angeles School Board did not make the similar pleas. It was only parents and children putting forth a complaint.

Justice Rehnquist, however, did recognize that Los Angeles' school racial desegregation or integration came with national implications.

> The desegregation plan challenged by applicants apparently required the
> reassignment of over 60,000 students. In terms of numbers it is one of the most
> extensive desegregation plans in the United States.[409]

Therefore, Justice Rehnquist also did not hesitate to insinuate to Bustop, Inc. where their potential power resided. Justice Rehnquist reminded BUSTOPers that their problem and their solution was in amending California's Constitution. Almost as if in concert with BUSTOPers, Justice Rehnquist directed their attention:

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[405] Mr. Justice Rehnquist, Circuit Justice, On Application for Stay in *Bustop, Inc, Applicant v. The Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles et al*. Supreme Court of the United States [September 8, 1978, No. A 249] in Paul Egly Papers,
Box 8, Folder BILLS: p. 3.
[406] Ibid: p. 4.
[407] Ibid: p. 3.
[408] Ibid: p. 4.
[409] Ibid: p. 1.

I conclude that the complaints about the parent and the children in question complaints about California state law, and it is in the forums of that State that these questions may be resolved. The application for stay is accordingly *Denied*.[410]

Throughout his "*Denied*" statement, Justice Rehnquist suggests to BUSTOPers that changing the law – or amending California's Constitution – was their solution.

Working in favor of BUSTOPers, by this time Alan Robbin's anti-busing activism to amend California's constitution had sparked conversations in the Legislature.[411] This time around, a series of Bills to amend the constitution on anti-bussing flooded the floors of both chambers of California's Senate and Assembly. Anti-black notions of taxes, drugs, racial amalgamation and racial violence, communism, and now amending the constitution, continued to inform BUSTOPers on how to understand racial busing. As a Mr. & Mrs. Gordon D. Conklin's letter to Judge Egly on September 28, 1978, shows:

[I]…represent thousands who tread my path. Impending forced busing has been with us for years, along with our Constitutional Freedom being taken away from us.

I've been thru the whole bit of THE PROBLEMS of public school discipline, exposure to drugs, smoking, etc, yes race fights, -- during the 60's the S.D.S students rights (?) to undermine the school, yes, they had enough power to break the dress code also – so parents had one mortgage cut out from under them. The S.D.S. was a subversive organization which <u>we</u> the parents knew and yes, there were Communist leaning teachers at the high school teaching (?) and we, the parents re-teaching.

Last Spring I worked with C.H.O.I.C.E. sponsored by Senator Alan Robbins Anti-Mandatory busing. As a Volunteer I worked many week-ends [sic] getting registered votors' [sic] signatures and turned in almost 400 of them. I sent money to CHOICE and also to BUSTOP and supported them also.

Do not think we parents will forget when election comes – some of your terms are up in Nov. and some next Spring – a couple of you sort of turned around because of parents' rath [sic] during Sept. – but we will vote you out too!

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[410] Ibid: p. 4.

[411] Assembly Constitutional Amendment, No. 19. Introduced by Assemblyman Young (Principal Coauthor: Senator Robbins), January 4, 1978. California Legislature—1979-80, Regular Session [ACA 19, as introduced, Young (Jud.). School busing. (Coauthors: Senators Briggs, Cusanovich, Johnson, Nimmo, Richardson, Robbins, Russell, Schmitz, and Wilson, ~~and~~ *Campbell*), in *Paul Egly Papers*, Box 8, Folder BILLS: p. 1.

> Mandatory busing has caused racial feelings out here and elsewhere that we
> never had before and they will <u>last</u>, that you, the Board of Ed. and some Judges
> <u>created [sic]</u>.[412]

BUSTOPers tended to deny their anti-black racism under the guise of constitutional rights. They attributed their activism, nonetheless, to the fact that they did not want their children to be with young Black or Brown people. As a Bernard and Harriet Levins letter to the Editor of the Los *Angeles Times* wrote on October 6, 1978.

> The Board of Education should do everything in its power to change the
> current Mandatory Bussing Plan to a Voluntary Bussing Plan. If this does not
> happen, then, there is no doubt in my mind that the Los Angeles Unified
> School District will become a completely Minority School District with
> practically all of the Anglos out of this School District, Private Schools,
> Tutoring Programs, moving out of this area, etc…Is this what the Board of
> Education wants? Is this with Judge Paul Egly wants?[413]

While they had more than a valid point of not wanting their children bused to predominantly 'minority' poor schools, racism and racialized violence usually defined the testing of BUSTOPers' character. Anti-integration continued to inform BUSTOPers.

Between December 4, 1978 through March 1979, anti-interracial Bills on anti-busing to amend the constitution flooded California's State Legislature.[414] Out of all of them, the most significant turned out to be "Senate Constitutional Amendment, No. 2—A. Introduced by Senator Robbins and Alex Garcia, December 4, 1978."[415] In support of SC2, Assemblyman and Majority Leader Howard L. Berman wrote to a Mr. Leonard R. Sakan,

> Let me first state that I am convinced that mandatory busing in Los Angeles
> has been an absolute disaster for our system of public education. I'm strongly
> opposed to the L.A. plan, and I'm angered by the serious damage it has
> inflicted on our school system. Instead of promoting integration, its main

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[412] Mr. & Mrs Gordon D. Conklin, Letter to Judge Egly, September 28, 1978, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 12, Folder Letters Addressed to others with Copy to Judge Egly, pp. 1-2.

[413] Bernard and Harriet Levins, Letter to the Editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, October 6, 1978, *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 12, Folder, Letters Addressed to others with Copy to Judge Egly, p. 1.

[414] See *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 8, Folder, Senate and Assembly Bills.

[415] Senate Constitutional Amendment, No. 2—A. Introduced by Senator Robbins and Alex Garcia, December 4, 1978; Amended in Assembly January 4, and 9, and March 7, 12, 13, 1979 California Legislature—1979-80, Regular Session [SCA 2., as amended, Robbins. School pupils; transportation] (Coauthors: Senators Ayala, Beverly, Briggs, Campbell, Carpenter, Craven, Cusanovich, Deukmejian, Marz Garcia, Johnson, Montoya, Nimmo, Richardson, Russell, Schmitz, and Wilson): Introduced by Senators Robbins and Alex Garcia, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box 8, Folder, Senate and Assembly Bills.

impact has been to encourage thousands of [white] families to pull their
children out of the system.

I am, therefore, supporting the passage of SCA 2, and will definitely vote for it
when it comes before the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Where there is no
absolute guarantee that the enactment of SCA 2 will end the L.A. plan, it has,
in my judgment, the best potential of any measure before the Legislature.[416]

Among BUSTOPers, SC2 became very popular, to the degree that it also mobilized the
same voters that had championed Proposition 13. As threatening letters from an anti-
busing Ralph Reid told Judge Egly in January 1979, "The people have learned with
Prop. #13 they now have the power."[417] In what was dubbed the *Spirit of 13*,
BUSTOPers also managed to elect anti-busing and anti-integrationist members to
Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

By summer of 1979, the majority of the new board of LAUSD (LAUSD) stood
against mandatory school busing. The Board majority declared that they would "…halt
the mandatory busing plan", because "the busing program is unpopular with a majority
of citizens."[418] The Board created conditions where all students and families felt the
costs of potential integration and busing. To a certain degree, white-flight private
summer school option became almost like leasing suburban public-school space with
privatized fees that low-income communities from the inner city could not afford.[419]
BUSTOPers continued to limit student exchange as well the arrival of Black and Brown
students from the inner city into white suburban schools. In some places, summer
school for Blacks and Mexicans was held in a "run down two-car garage" for those that
could not afford "private options for summer school."[420] Private options basically
became class rhetoric for limiting the learning of young Black and Brown people, while
temporarily privatizing public space and resources for white children to attend summer

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[416] Howard L. Berman, Assemblyman, Majority Leader, Letter to Mr. Leonard R. Sakan and
copied to Judge Egly, February 22, 1979, *in Paul Egly Papers*, Box 7, Folder, Assembly
California Legislature, Letters From Assemblymen: p. 1.

[417] Ralph Reid, letter to Judge Paul Egly, June 19th, 1979, in *Paul Egly Papers*: Box. 16, Folder:
Letters from Reid – anti-busing – (Ralph F. Reid, 1201 West Valencia Drive, Space # 25
Fullerton, CA 92633), p.1.

[418] Kevin Broderick, "Busing Still Key Issue for New School Board: For the First Time, Foes of
Egly Plan Will Have Majority," *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1979 in Comité de México y Aztlán
News Monitoring Service, July-August 1979 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, CA, 1979):
Article 8955, p. 38-40.

[419] Jack McCurdy, "Summer School fee Programs Debated," *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1979 in
Comité de México y Aztlán *News Monitoring Service,* July-August 1979 (Comité de México y
Aztlán; Oakland, Calif.; 1979): Article 8954, pp. 36-37.

[420] Solveig Torvik, *San Francisco Chronicle* July 27, 1979 from Comité de México y Aztlán
News Monitoring Service, July-August 1979 (Comité de México y Aztlán; Oakland, Calif,
1979): Article 8943, pp. 1–269.

schools. On the ground, what was happening was, as LA Times staffer Jack McCurdy wrote, the practice was fragmenting "society into economic classes."[421]

Anticipating the November 1979 ballot, BUSTOPERS were able to push SC2 for a special election. It appeared as Proposition 1, the "School Assignment and Transportation of Students" bill.[422] This time around, the Robbins amendment (Proposition 1) passed in a landslide, and while it did not hinder busing per say, BUSTOPers were able to amend the Constitution to stop Court order (or judge) mandates or programs, especially related to requiring white children to attend school with young Black and Brown people in Black and Brown communities.

Unhappy with the outcome of Proposition 1, pro-busing groups pushed the United States supreme court to question the constitutionality of Prop 1 as it related to how both *de jure* and *de facto* coexist to create the condition of segregation. As Herbert R. Sosa reminds,

> In the early 1980s, the United States Supreme Court raised the standard of proof of *de jure* by adding the concept of "intentionality" to permit a remedy of mandatory busing in the *de jure* segregation cases when it found California's anti-busing Proposition 1 constitutional. The idea of intentionality made the finding, or lack of finding, of *de jure* even more susceptible to federal interpretation, and the Court permitted *de jure* to exist as long as it was not an intentional *de jure* act.[423]

Depending on where people stood on the busing issue, the Court either ruled in favor of integration or segregation. The Court did not rule against integration in terms of prohibiting busing; but California's constitution made it the case to put limitations on courts and judges on what they can and cannot do. In a nutshell, bipartisan anti-integrationist Californians tied the hands of courts and judges.

Conclusion

BUSTOPers and anti-integrationist were successful in halting racial integration, but their collective efforts also provided the framework that eliminated the decade of a supposed racial democracy. LA's white anti-integrationist forces mobilized bipartisan campaigns against racial integration; thus, implicated racial democracy. The broader anti-busing discourse they expressed was against busing, but at the core of their concerns was the racial threat that 'racial mixing' posed on racial whiteness. Racialized constructs like "hoodlum," "animals," and "habitual criminals" spiraled a racial 'logic' by which bipartisan anti-integrations alliances forged and mobilized. This anti-

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[421] Jack McCurdy, (1979): Article 8954, pp. 1–269.
[422] School Assignment and Transportation of Pupils California Proposition 1 (1979). https://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_props/861.
[423] Sosa (2013), 10.

integrationist force mobilized a city-wide and state-wide social-political wave that shored up in public schools, on law enforcement, at town hall meetings, at courts, at politicians' offices, in voter initiatives, and at amending the Constitution of California.

This anti-integrationist movement would have lasting consequences for the future of all Californians, including young Black and Brown people. Bipartisan anti-integrations forces and their political framework already provided the conservative New Right its base, especially because mostly Republics turned out to be anti-integrationists' champions. The "spirit of 13" ideology consolidated mostly all white anti-integrationist under a single social, political, and economic power base. This same spirit – that is, from constructing racial tropes to mobilizing policing forces to operating from the same anti-integrationist framework and network to amending California's constitution – also informed how policies, voting behaviors, and political parties would done and undone in California and in Los Angeles for the future to come.

The New Right conservatives placed themselves on the driver seat of this massive vehicle. Republican Daryl Gates had just become LAPD's Chief of Police prior to the passing of Proposition 13, and he would remain their throughout the 1980s and early-1990s; Republican Ronald Reagan would move on to become the President of the United States in 1980; Republican George Deukmejian would move on to be the Governor of California in 1982; Republican Paul Gann would move to amending more of California's Constitution to prohibit judges and courts from lowering sentences by placing mandatory minimums; and California voters would move on to construct nine more prisons in the 1980s, and later another twelve during the decade of the 1990s.[424] Young Black and Brown "street hoodlums" and "habitual criminals" would move on to inhabit their racial democracy in California's anti-democratic institutions of incarceration.

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[424] On the chronology of prisons opening for intake see California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, "California State Prisons Chronology." (Accessed February 2, 2019). https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Prisons/docs/CA-State-Prisons-chronology.pdf.

Chapter Five

"Art: Positive! Gangs, Shooting: Negative!": The Rise of the Black and Brown Kings
and Queens in the Carceral City LA, 1980—1991

VLADTV: ... [during the 1980 and 1990s] you are a kid that looks Mexican,
even though you're half Mexican, you look Mexican, but you are part of the
Bloods [Black street gang]?
B-Real, from Cypress Hill: Yes.
— VLADTV (July 2020)

Beat Street is a lesson too/Because...ah! you cant' Let the streets beat you.
Uh!/Tell me who's going to dream the impossible dream/ Of the beautiful cities
in the islands' genes?
When your works of art brought into being/All that the ghetto stopped you from
seeing
Because each and every time you touched the spray paint can/ Michelangelo's
soul controls your hands…
So just throw your hands in the air/and wave them like you just don't care
And if you believe that you're the future, scream it out and say "Oh, Yeah!"
— Grandmaster Melle Mel, "Beat Street Breakdown" in soundtrack of Stan
Lathan's *Beat Street* (1984)

Chicana graffiti writer InBloom started her graffiti writer journey in Los
Angeles, California, at the age of fourteen, sometime in 1990. Graffiti writing gave her,
recalls InBloom, "advantage of the graffiti opportunity of crossing borders, and barrios,
and neighborhoods, and streets, and blocks" throughout the greater Los Angeles area.[425]
Unlike what was possible at the time for street gangs, InBloom opted for graffiti writing
because of the broader social and interracial interactions she could have with various
young people from different neighborhoods and that were from different ethnoracial
backgrounds throughout LA.

InBloom's main place to hangout was in South Central LA, but she originally
was from an unincorporated area east of Downtown LA and east of the Los Angeles
River basin commonly known as East LA. However, once she was introduced to, what

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[425] InBloom, NTS Queens and MTA graffiti crew member, in Alejandro Garcia, *From
Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups: A Short Street History of South Central L.A.
Race Relations, 1980s-1990s* (Oral History Project, Protocol ID: 2012-01-3953 (Waldo E.
Martin)) (hereafter, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*).

she recalls being "…the epicenter of graffiti in South Central during its best time," InBloom made South Central LA her second home.[426] Her own graffiti writings usually accompanied InBloom's neighborhood travels, and this first earned her a reputation and fame in South Central LA that later would spread throughout the larger Los Angeles area. Graffiti writers, however, thought she originated from South Central LA; if asked, InBloom would never deny it. As InBloom recounts, "I didn't live there [South Central]," but "Yeah! I'm from the bottoms [of South Central] if somebody was to ask me."[427] To a large degree, she did not deceive; in many ways, InBloom did give birth to her graffiti writer identity in South Central. InBloom's name and her graffiti's crew acronym first blossomed year-round throughout South Central's streets, cityscapes, and highway walls to the RTD (Rapid Transit District) public bussing transportation system of the time. It came about that hardly anyone in the graffiti writer movement during the early 1990s was unaware of the name "InBloom One" from the Next To Serve (NTS also Notorious) crew.

In many ways, InBloom's story on graffiti writing and neighborhood travels represent commonly shared experiences and interactions most young Black and Brown people had with graffiti writing during the 1980s and early-1990s. On the one hand, LA's graffiti writers would construct the visual culture of West Coast hip-hop; on the other hand, the rising shadow of the carceral state would also inform and influence graffiti writers themselves. Through hip-hop's social capital, young Black and Brown people validated each other's sense of graffiti-writer identities in a world of deindustrialization, street gangs, informal street-economies, and mass carceral forces. In a world—namely, the streets and of hip-hop—that recognizes power, presence, and meaning in graffiti, it makes sense that graffiti crews negotiated and navigated the stressful rise of the carceral state with their unique marks, stamps, symbols, scratches, images, letters, and signatures throughout the City of Angels. Looking at young Black and Brown people from this street perspective, it should not be counter-intuitive that youngsters dabbled in graffiti to express their lived conditions, while also asking others to join. And many did "got up" and joined, including their suburban peers.[428]

This Chapter tells the story about how South Central LA's interracial graffiti writers of the 1980s and early-1990s "got up" or used "getting up" to communicate and navigate a world of multiple relationships symptomatic of deindustrialization and a developing carceral state. "Getting up" was youngsters' innovative channel of communication to reclaim and validate their own existence and dignity apart of cohorts they called "Kings" and "Queens." The chapter first concludes InBloom's trajectory to

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[426] InBloom, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.
[427] Ibid.
[428] "Getting up" was a common vernacular used by narrators to describe how graffiti was used to communicate. See Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

South Central, since it helps conceptualize the mundane life of hip-hop and graffiti. The Chapter then provides a glance at the historical structure that young Black and Brown people inherited from the anti-integrationist squabs of the late 1970s. At the same time, the chapter shows the emergence of hip-hop, and how youngsters from South Central LA consumed it and projected it. West Coast hip-hop served as a social critique of society, but it was also graffiti writers who kept its visual critique in the public imagination. The chapter argues that, while islands of street gangs limited young people from forming alternative forms of grouping fully, graffiti writers and crews navigated various street-archipelagos and inscribed their alternative hip-hop network of survival in the City of Angels.[429] Ironically, one of those first archipelagos would be LAUSD's volunteer busing that connected students from the inner-cities such as South Central with other students throughout LA, including with students from the white suburbs. The chapter then surveys the heyday of the "King" and "Queen" graffiti crews and concludes with a glimpse into the 1991 George Holliday video that captures LAPD officers beating an actual King—twenty-five year-old, Rodney G. King.

Mundane Life of Hip Hop and Graffiti Writing

Young Black and Brown graffiti writers incorporated hip-hop culture and graffiti writing into their everyday mundane way of life. Hip hop and graffiti writing was part of young people's everyday walk to the local grocery store, their neighborhood travels, attending or skipping school, their public transportation rides, including at possible hospital visits. Hip-hop was not just heard coming out of music speaker or emcee's lyrics, it was also everywhere and with everyone graffiti writers made contact. InBoom's original neighborhood of residence was the Aliso Village government housing projects located in East LA, but her everyday life interactions paired with hip-hop would not hold her back from touching graffiti in South Central LA.

InBloom came to know South Central LA through relations she forged with two South Central girls she esteemed as "cousins." InBloom's cousins were two biological sisters that lived in South Central. One of the sisters attended the local George Washington Carver Junior High School (or Carver) in South Central, located near Central Avenue and Vernon Avenue cross streets. On the other hand, the older sibling did not attend Carver but was bussed by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) bussing system to the same junior high school that InBloom attended in East LA. As InBloom recounts the story of her friend-cousin, "She came from South

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[429] I remind that scholars conceptualize gangs and their territories as structurally and socially specific organizations that offer youngsters few choices for alternative grouping or identity inside neighborhoods; hence, islands. For islands and street gangs see Martin Sanchez-Jankowski, *Islands in the Streets: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1991).

Central, and she was bussed in from her area into East LA."[430] It would not be long before InBloom, and her new friend forged friend-cousin relations.

One day both InBloom and her cousin skipped school from East LA to meet up with the sibling of her cousin, who attended Carver Junior High in South Central LA. InBloom's cousin had a pregnant sister who had not sought prenatal care for herself because the pregnancy was kept discreet, especially from their parents. InBloom and the pregnant girl's sister (InBloom's cousin) headed to South Central to take the pregnant girl out of school so they could all support her and help her seek prenatal care.

From East LA, InBloom and her cousin took the Rapid Transit District (RTD) public bussing system to South Central. They both walked to Soto, the nearest main street closest to their junior high school in East LA. There, they boarded the number 18-bus line that headed toward Downtown LA from East LA. Once in DTLA, recalls InBloom, "[we] walked down to like Central [Avenue], caught the 53 [bus line], got off on Vernon and Central, walked over to Carver, got her [the pregnant girl] out of her class…"[431] After exiting the junior high school, the young women ran into a large crowd of young Black and Brown graffiti writers.

Most of the graffiti writers were from the Next To Serve (NTS) crew (also known as the "Notorious Kings"). These Black and Brown graffiti writers walked up to the three girls and asked the three young girls, retells InBloom, "You write?" The two sisters responded by pointing at InBloom: "We don't, but she does," remembers InBloom.[432] After that graffiti-writer encounter, InBloom and her cousins continued on to seek the prenatal care they needed for the young pregnant girl. Yet after that impromptu meeting, InBloom continuously returned to South Central LA to visit her cousins and as an NTS graffiti crew member. The NTS crew also had several young girls and women who referred to themselves as the Queens, the Next To Serve Queens or the Notorious Queens. From East LA, InBloom would become NTS's most prominent queen in South Central.

InBloom's interactions with South Central LA might seem exceptional, especially because she came from East LA's Aliso Village, which was also home to one of the oldest ethnic Mexican street gangs known as the *Primera Flats* (PF or La Primera). InBloom also had many friends and relatives that were already members of La Primera. Although she was expected or highly encouraged to join her resident street organization, InBloom did not join the local gang or any other gang for that matter. InBloom, instead, became part of a larger Los Angeles street movement and network of young Black and Brown people known as graffiti writers, taggers, or – as the writers called themselves – kings and queens. InBloom found this possibility in South Central

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[430] InBloom, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.
[431] *Ibid.*
[432] *Ibid.*

LA.

InBloom was already a graffiti writer in East LA before going to South Central. One of her first significant efforts at graffiti writing came when InBloom attempted to consolidate graffiti writers under a single crew. In East LA, InBloom had first formed the RTD crew, a spinoff of the public transportation system's acronym—Rapid Transit District (RTD). Her crew's acronym, however, stood for Rough Tough and Dangerous (RTD). She figured that by forming an RTD crew, many writers would also recognize the larger message and intent, especially since the letters "R," "T," and "D" were common graffiti writer vernacular. The RTD was the veins in, out, and throughout LA.

InBloom's assumptions were not far from being reality; as she navigated the streets of South Central, she found that an RTD crew also existed. It also aspired the similar idea and concept as she had thought. The difference between the East LA RTD crew and the South Central RTD crew was in the last letter they later applied to the crews' acronym. The East LA crew became RTDM—the last letter "M" stood for the word "mob." The South Central crew was underscored by its RTDK—the last letter "K" stood for the word "kings." Many crews all over Los Angeles sometimes added: "K's" and "M's" and even "Qs" or other letters or even removed letters from their crews' initials. Crews did this in order to highlight a new aspect or concept about the identity and crews. These adjustments reflected the contemporary moment and history young people inhabited at the time. RTDK and RTDM, on the other hand, mostly remained consistent. RTDK and RTDM crews did not change letters because this was precisely how these two different crews could distinguish their styles and art forms from one another.

InBlooom's time in South Central, including the second home she made with the NTSs and NTQs, eventually shaped her focus in significant ways. InBloom let go of being the leader and member of the RTDM crew, and instead focused her attention on NTS(Q). But InBlooom never really abandoned her original ideas for forming an RTD crew. Much later, her opportunity would once again arrive when the official RTD (Rapid Transit District) restructured its transportation system in 1993 under the name Metropolitan Transit Authority, or MTA.

The Southern California Rapid Transit District (RTD) merged with the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission and gave birth to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, or MTA. This metro system consolidated bus, light rail, heavy rail, and bus rapid transit public services, including some expressways. This also opened up new possibilities and opportunities for InBloom, and in concert with others, she forged what later would become the infamous MTA crew.

Figure 1. Photo Caption "Largest Piece of Graffiti Ever Made." (Photo by Gunter909)

Figure 2. Photo Caption "Worlds Biggest Graffiti." (Photo by Gunter909)

No clear evidence tell the meaning behind the letters of the MTA graffiti crew. Still, speculators such as Sergeant Jeffrey Koontz of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) were not far from the truth when thinking that the MTA crew stood for "Metro Transit Assassins."[433] After all, InBloom's MTA crew did go on to "kill" it at "getting up." As his USACE crew prepares to buff out MTA's graffiti, Sergeant Koontz tells the KTLA press "the specific tag that we are after today is one of the largest in the United States," located in the LA River basin, "..its approximately 2000 feet long, and about 60 feet high."[434] In the same gaze and spirit, Councilmember of District 14, Jose Huizar – echoing a debunked "Broken Windows Theory" – also says, "this is one step of many, that we're going to make sure that we conquer the LA river."[435]

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[433] See Sergeant Major Jeffrey Koontz of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in "MTA. World's biggest graffiti piece get buffed!!" Youtube, Oct 12, 2009: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdfnFHJ6g0g

[434] Ibid.

[435] See Jose Huizare, Councilmember of district 14, in Ibid.

Consolidating graffiti writers under one crew proved to be more complex than what InBloom had anticipated. Nonetheless, the origins behind the thoughts, motivations, aspirations that inform InBloom's MTA does provide a not so much 'broken window' into the carceral world that forged hip-hop and graffiti writers during the 1980s and early 1990s, especially in South Centra LA. During this period, the graffiti writers' interracial movement did leave its mark, stamp, symbol, image, tag, and signature distress, agency, and resistance throughout the City of Angels.

Inheriting "Street hoodlums" and "Habitual Criminals"

The ethnorcial political climate of the 1980s was not without precedent. Bipartisan anti-integrationists forces of the late 1970s started moving their champions – The New Right – into significant seats of political power in the 1980s. The New Right as well found socio-political capital in their 1970s racial tunes about "Street hoodlums" and "Habitual Criminals." These tunes would be central to how New Right*ers* would earn their seats at political power, as they utilized themes to ask society how to interpret Black and Brown youth culture.

Bipartisan anti-integrationist political framework of the late 1970s gave New Righters its teeth. Their collective efforts first eliminated a decade of a racial democracy, and in the 1980s they would suffocate it with mass carceral policies and the construction of nine more prisons. Republican Daryl Gates was already ushered in as LAPD's Chief of Police, and he diligently worked at militarizing the LAPD. Throughout this decade, he would be responsible for creating Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) teams and Community Resources Against Street (CRASH) Hoodlums units among many things.

Republican George Deukmejian was on his way to become the Governor of California in 1983, but he was already the Attorney General in 1980s. George Deukmejian was known to be a champing against "Habitual Criminals," as he had written many editions of the same book, *Law in the School*, during the 1970s where he advocated for the condemnation of the repeated offenders.[436] With Republican Paul Gann, George Deukmejian were already collaborating on amending the California Constitution with a Criminal Justice Initiative they called "the Victims' Right Bill" that targeted whom they dubbed "habitual criminals"; and once again, Gann's Los Angeles voter power-base in the San Fernando Valley would lead the Victim's Right Bills for

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[436] George Deukmejian, "Schools, Violence, and Youth," School Safety Center – California Department of Justice (Sacramento, Ca: Office of Attorney General, 1981); for a trajectory of Deukmejian since 1973 see copyright editions to ---, *Law in the School: A Guide for California Teachers, Parents and Students*. California Department of Justice (Paterson Smith Publication: New Jersey, 1980 [Copyright, 1973, 1974, Second ed., 1976, Third ed., 1980 by State of California]).

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approval for election with their 15,162 signatures.[437] If this was not enough, former California Governor and anti-integrationist, Ronald Reagan was just sworn in as the President of the United States of America. These conservative powerful forces also informed society how to study young Black and Brown people (Broken Window).

Racial Integration in The Hood-Barrio

Youngsters from various group formations grouped themselves into interracial groups in South Central LA. Graffiti crews were one significant aspect of South Central's interracial relations. The majority of graffiti crews not only reflected the Black and Brown demographics of South Central LA, but their interracial makeup also exemplified interracial relations in the "hood" and in what was also simultaneously the "barrio."[438] Youngsters inhabited a predominantly Black and Brown community, where graffiti writers coexisted in interracial ways—ongoing patterns witnessed in the City of Angels since Worlds War II.[439] (Sounds like transition to Hood Barrio).

Before the emergence of graffiti crews in South Central LA, a major demographic shift occurred during the 1970s. Because of the racial integration school bussing effort, white flight headed for the suburbs, hills, and even the valley, such as in the San Fernando Valley. The remaining poor Black and Brown population stayed behind in South Central. During this time of deindustrialization, major manufacturing companies and jobs were outsourced out of the United States and into the neoliberal world of globalization. In LA, the impact of deindustrialization was hit hardest throughout the mills and businesses that ran along the rail lines. These main areas ran from Downtown LA to South Central's eastside (or the bottoms), Watts and Compton, and even towards Long Beach, California. Because they were the larger demographic at the time, the impact of deindustrialization was visible primarily within the Black community, although deindustrialization negatively impacted both Black and Brown

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[437] Criminal Justice Initiative to amend the California Constitution with Paul Gann see ---, Attorney General, Letter to Paul Gann, August 7, 1981, re: in Gann, Paul, "Initiative Proposing Amendment to: Constitution—Criminal Justice," Criminal Justice California Initiative (1981). http://repository.uchastings.edu/ca_ballot_inits/441): pp. 1–2; ---, "The Attorney General of California has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purpose and points of the proposed measure," p. 1-8.

[438] In street life, "hoods" are usually referred to as low-income African American neighborhoods. "Barrios" are generally thought of as Mexican/Latino low-income communities. Since both Black and Brown peoples were simultaneously living and sharing the same space and community, I employ the term "hood-barrio" to reflect that reality.

[439] I use the terms Black and Brown here as employed by my narrators. They use the term "Black" to refer to Black people, or people of African American descent, and they use "Brown" or "Hispanic," "Mexican," even "Spanish," "Latino" to refer to people of Mexican descent and other Latino peoples.

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communities equally. Major manufacturing industries were replaced by smaller industries with low-wage, migrant and immigrant labor.

At the same time, many migrants and immigrants arrived in South Central LA in the 1970s. The population continued to grow throughout the 1980s. Most migrants were of ethnic Mexican backgrounds. While some came from within many of Los Angeles areas such as East LA, others were from Latin American countries, mostly from Mexico and Central American countries. These people came to South Central LA in search of affordable housing and to escape economic displacement and wars experienced in their home countries. To note, globalization and neoliberal policies produced most migratory conditions, either in the homefront or Latin American countries.[440] Most migrants, nonetheless, sought to better their families' lives. Through remittances, many also sought to ameliorate living conditions for families back in their home countries.

In search of affordable housing and job opportunities, migrants looked towards South Central's eastside post-industrial manufacturing areas—or, as the new laboring pool of people called these sweatshops *las fabricas*. Although *fabricas* literally means "the fabrics" in Spanish, workers colloquially referred to the overall post-industrial manufacturing mill zones as *las fabricas*. Perhaps this was because most sweatshops were involved in the garment industries. *Las fabricas* were located along Alameda Street, a road that stretched from Downtown Los Angeles through the eastside borders of South Central and the cities of Watts and Compton. Some even ran all the way towards the city of Long Beach in the South Bay LA Harbor Area.

These deindustrialized zones reopened in the 1980s, producing perishable items using mostly undocumented migrant labor. As Mike Davis notes between immigrant labor and *fabricas* relations:

> If the Eastside [of South Central] manufacturing employment made a spectacular recovery in the 1980s, it offered little opportunity for Blacks, as the new industry overwhelmingly consisted of minimum-wage sweatshops, super-exploiting immigrant Latino labor in the production of furniture or non-durables like clothes and toys.[441]

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[440] For a take on how globalization and U.S. Neo-liberal policies affected Latin American countries, which consequently produced migration to the United States see William Robinson, *A Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class and State in a Transnational World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); ---, *Latin America and Global Capitalism: A Globalization Perspective* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Rosamaria Segura, *Central Americans in Los Angeles: Images of America* (Arcadia Publishing, 2010); Alfonso Gonzales, *Reform Without Justice: Latino Migrant Politics and the Homeland Security State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[441] Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (Vintage Books, 1992): 305.

Mayordomos preferred undocumented migrant and immigrant laborers because they could pay them less than minimum wages.[442] Workers colloquially used the term *mayordomos* to refer to managers or headperson (major head) in charge of manufacturing companies.

The growth of the Brown population in South Central LA had increased by roughly 100% between 1970 and 1980. By 1980, the migrant population was not only visible, but their children also made an impressive presence in public spaces and institutions such as local parks and public schools, and even much later in the historical 1992 LA uprising.

> In the historically black neighbourhood [sic] where the riots [uprising] began, the Latino population has grown by 119 per cent in the past decade, according to the most recent US census. The parents or grandparents of today's residents are from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and other Spanish-speaking countries.[443]

The children of this would-be parent or grandparent migrant population were socialized to coexist with Black people. The interracial upbringing of these young Black and Brown people was reflected in the many official and unofficial interracial groups in which they participated. Interracial tensions were uncommon.

Furthermore, if interracial tensions did emerge, they mostly remained at individual and isolated levels. Entire Black cohorts or groups did not rival with entire Brown cohorts.[444] In other words, tensions were not due to race or ethnicity. Nonetheless, and as much of the gang scholarship shows, encounters did lead to youngsters' particular ways of grouping. Some joined ethnoracial groups and/or gangs. Ethnoracial gangs were also interracial, although they were characterized mainly by race and ethnicity, as in the Crips, Bloods, and Cholos (or the "*Eses*").[445] To underscore

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[442] The term *mayordomos* is associated with either an owner or manager of a mill. Immigrant workers laboring in (South Central) L.A. commonly employ the term to refer to their employers/managers as *mayordomos*.

[443] Covering the April 29, 1992 story of South Central Los Angeles Riot (Uprising) was by Gale Pollard, "LATINOS BRING RACIAL MIX TO BOIL," *The Guardian*, May 1, 1992 (FOREIGN, 7); Also, for similar stories relevant to Southcentral L.A.'s demography see *Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1990, which underscores that the Latino population increased 200%.

[444] I employ "cohorts" in order to understand how differences and subtleties reveal not only levels of life stages and experiences, but also how groups' subtleties and experiences reflect history. For "cohorts" see Deborah D. Jackson and Elizabeth E. Chapelski, "Not Traditional, Not Assimilated: Elderly American Indians and the Notion of Cohort," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* (2000): 229.

[445] For more see James Diego Vigil in, *Rainbow of Gangs: In the Mega-City* (Austin: University of Texans Press, 2002); Martin Sanchez Jankowski, *Islands in the Streets: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1991); Davis, *City of Quartz*; Alex Alonso, "Out of the Void: Street Gangs in Black Los

this interraciality, nonetheless, Black peoples' regular interactions with Brown people gave birth to the interpretive term "Eses."

African Americans in South Central hardly used the word "Cholo" to described Brown gangs. Instead, Black people dubbed Brown gangs "Eses" because they frequently heard Cholos utilize the Spanish street pronoun "ese" or "esa" in their everyday street vernacular. For example, instead of "hey, you!," the streets would hear Cholos enunciate "hey, ese!"; or instead of "that guy" or "that," Cholos often spoke "ese vato" or "ese." Cholos utilized many Spanish street terms but the most common was "ese," which is also Spanish for "you" (e.g., "you crazy guy"/"ese vato loco").

At first, Cholos did not even refer to themselves as *Eses*. Cholos would later adopt the term because they understood how Black people read Cholos, given the everyday interracial interactions they all shared in their neighborhoods. The term "Eses," however, was forged in this history, and in the 1980s it was part of the everyday street vernacular.

During the 1980s, gangs were the most popular form young people used to cohort. However, the following popular form or alternative street form organizations would eventually be in the graffiti movement. Early "Black-Brown encounters" shaped youngsters' sense of grouping and belonging. With the influx of ethnic Mexican and other Central American migrants and immigrant communities into South Central, ethnoracial prejudices surfaced between Black and Brown people. As Baby One, an ethnic Mexican graffiti writer from the "Cant [sic] Hold Back Queens" (CHBQ), recalls her experience when she was between eight or nine years old in 1980:

> When we first moved in [to South Central LA], I moved-in on 47th and…between Central [Ave] and Hooper [Ave]. So that was right, like the heart of South Central. And at the time I don't think a lot of the African Americans—we called them Black—wanted us there. There was always this friction between us and them, so it was different because there was more African Americans there than Hispanic. So you couldn't really relate…you didn't feel right at home because there weren't enough Latinos or Mexicans or whatsoever you can associate with.[446]

From her early years, Baby illustrates how existing tensions between Black and Brown peoples were due to situations of difference and unfamiliarity. "Encounters," however, were ongoing for arriving migrants and immigrants up through the early-1980s to mid-1980s. These interracial tensions happened mostly among individuals, and did not typically lead to interracial violence. As Baby One explains to me (Alejandro Garcia) when I ask:

Angeles" in *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, Eds. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón (New York University Press, 2010).
[446] Baby One, CHB Queen crewmember, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

AG: What about this question of "getting jumped"? Do you think that was like a common thing for like most, let's say, Latinos, Mexican kids?
Baby: I think that happens because a lot of people that lived in the area…well where I lived there's an alley and in the alley there was, they called it a drug house, or crack house. It was a house where – it was abandoned – but people went there to use drugs, to buy drugs. In order for those people to get money, was to steal or rob, and we [Mexicans] were easy targets.
AG: So that was what was common?
Baby: Yes, I think it was just common.…Well I think that's what started building, they started building…the Hispanics started building gangs, and tagging crews, and crews, and party [crews] and everything, just to unify and to, um, to be…to stand up solid. You know, to the people that were doing this to us.[447]

Although Baby One gives insight into how friction was experienced by individuals belonging to an ethnoracial group, her comments also indicate how other overlapping street power relations played a role in forging conflict. Narcotic street drug economies clearly contributed to these racial anxieties. Yet Baby continually makes clear that conflicts were not based on ethnoracial backgrounds because once grouping happened, tensions seized irrespective of race. Vulnerabilities or tensions were not based on race but instead on encounters or access to informal economies and resources, notably the drug world.

In 1981, Neal Blandon, or Rick Ross, or "Freeway Rick," from South Central distributed cocaine "in South Central." By 1982, Freeway Rick's clientele in Los Angeles was predominantly the Bloods and Crips gangs. Freeway Rick distributed so much cocaine throughout South Central LA that he probably made roughly a million dollars daily or weekly. At first, they sold powder cocaine, but eventually, the powder was remained with baking soda to produce "crack" cocaine. This created the "crack" addiction epidemic in South Central, which fit into a broader national context of crack cocaine.

Largely, the everyday lives of young Black and Brown people were affected by these conditions, but the state response only worsened conditions in South Central. As Donna Murch tells us, "The Reagan administration invoked African American suffering—with the 'crack baby' as its most potent trope—to rationalize a new and vastly intensified carceral regime."[448] Rather than seeing the crack problem as a public health and social issue, the state opportunistically exploited this serious public health problem as a crime and punishment problem. This gave rise to mass militarized policing units and operations such as Chief Daryl Gates' SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) teams, CRASH (Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums), a

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[447] *Ibid*.
[448] Donna Murch. "Crack in Los Angeles: Crisis, Militarization, and Black Response to the Late Twentieth-Century War on Drugs." *Journal Of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): 169.

collaborative joint policing and rounding up effort between the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles County Sheriff (LACS), and Operations Safe Streets (OSS), a mass surveillance gang database system. As Donna Murch puts it, "While the LAPD, SWAT, CRASH, and Operation Safe Streets besieged neighborhoods such as South Central, Watts, and Pico-Union, wealthy enclaves such as Baldwin and Windsor Hills remained largely insulated from domestic warfare against the poor and most vulnerable."[449] Murch's observations are revealing. One graffiti crew's acronym – US – made it plain; young people in turn expressed how they felt under siege during this historical moment. This crew inverted the original "US" meaning as it related to them. Black and Brown youth in South Central inverted the meaning of the United States acronym – U.S. – and created a U.S. graffiti crew. With art, signs, signatures, scratches, and paint, young Black and Brown did graffiti all over the city with a larger message that spoke about how young people interpreted their experience – Under Sieged (US).

Signaling things to come, Baby One shows how graffiti crews were an alternative way young people could confront street challenges. Baby One gives us insight into how alliances were formed to defend one's self. "Standing-up" was how young people cohort*ed* together to navigate street power relations. As she narrates, graffiti crews became an alternative form of grouping organized to confront street challenges.

"Getting jumped" was not only reflected the social anxieties of young people but they could also easily get caught in urgent life-or-death situations. South Central street challenges were not only common youth experiences. By placing young Black and Brown people at the center of street life, we glimpse the constant carceral bombardments and life-or-death situations they endured. Similar to Baby One, Mar One, an ethnic Mexican graffiti writer from the Under No Control (UNC) crew, narrates to me his experiences he witnessed right outside his home.

> Mar: Well the thing is, you know again, and I am only speaking for myself, but I know that in the particular community where I grew up in South Central LA, it's just shootings and killings, I mean, that was everyday! We are talking about…I would see little kids in elementary [school] bringing guns…trying to shoot each other, you know…?
> AG: Really?
> Mar: …just because they were Crips or Bloods. And you know, at such a young age, you know, you begin to see how easy people die. I mean, not to sound…you know, not to blow things out of proportion or anything but it's just…
> AG: …this is what you saw, what you witnessed.

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[449] *Ibid*. 173.

Mar: As an example, one day they [unknown people] burned a car in front of my house, and they [the community and authorities] found two dead bodies in there, you know?

AG: Wow!

Mar: So you know, this was all gang violence and it was related to drugs, right?…and you see these little kids trying to blow [shoot] each other up at such a young age and man! You know… I mean for me it was more like this is just…it [graffiti] was my way of saying: "you know what? I am here, I am alive and this is who I am [a graffiti writer], and I do not expect everybody to like what I do, but…

AG: …but then you had another cohort of people who actually…

Mar: …right! Who recognized it![450]

Just as Baby One, and as all the oral graffiti histories narrate, Mar One's illuminates how young people exercised agency. Mar's environment was constrained gangs, policing, and underground economies. Although these conditions were not situations they could easily ignore, they were ones that young people had to learn to deflect, dodge, and indulge. They also had to disengage as well. For Mar, as for all South Central graffiti writers, the graffiti identity and their graffiti cohorts would be what would eventually come to provide young Black and Brown people with a different way to narrate their own existence.

Daily Life in the Context of Street Organizations

The sight of Bloods and Crips did not escape young Brown people, just as the opposite was true. Black ethnoracial groups such as Bloods and Crips were already present in South Central since the FBI's COINTELPRO target of Bunchy Carter and his leadership of the Black Panthers in South Central LA.[451] The presence of ethnic Mexican gangs also did not escape young Black people. The 1940s, the "zoot suit riots," especially the Mexican American (Chicano) 38th Street club, had already marked its history in South Central, involving the "sleepy lagoon" murder trial incident (See Introduction and Chapter One).

Individual interracial tensions did not have as severe implications as they would have at an ethnoracial-gang/group (Cholos) versus ethnoracial-gang group (Bloods and Crips) level. Interracial street gang/group violence was uncommon because "hoods" and "barrios" and their parameters were interracially shared during the 1980s and mid-1990s. If ethnoracial gangs crossed gang territories to engage in tensions or violence, it was less for interracial reasons than intraracial ones.

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[450] Mar One, UNC, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

[451] Alonso, "Out of the Void"; George Percy Barganier, III, *Fanon's Children: The Black Panther Party and the Rise of the Crips and Bloods* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2011); Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, *Black Against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

Gangs avoided interracial street group conflict because it destabilized their shared neighborhoods. While Bloods would not share their territorial neighborhood with Crips, they would coexist with Cholos. Similarly, Cholos' claims or markings on territories would only have implications for other rivaling Cholos, as a Cholo territorial neighborhood was either shared with Crips' or Bloods' territories. Tension at street group levels was commonly intraracial, and not interracial.

Furthermore, it was not only hoods and barrios that were interracially shared. Although gangs might have possessed more of an ethnoracial quality, ethnoracial cohorts of gangs were also interracial.This was partly because this generation inhabited a mutual coexistence wherein young Black and Brown people's upbringing was already racially integrated. Baby One described some interracial tensions at the individual level when she was young, but in the following she also describes the interracial impact of interracial friendships:

> AG: So let's talk more about you being in school now: you are active in South Central now [during the early 1980s], who were the people you commonly interacted with? Like in schools, or parks, on the streets before you got involved in the graffiti group?
> Baby: Um, ha, ha, ha…so I did have some Black friends, you know, I did have Black friends because that [Black culture] was there. I mean the music, the food...everything. So you kind of started fitting in…[452]

At local schools, parks, school buses, and other organizations, youngsters like Baby experienced ongoing forms of Black-Brown coexistence and groupings.

Young Black and Brown people joined interracial baseball and basketball teams and other park activities such as Pop Warner football and cheerleading. By 1985, Thomas Jefferson High School, Lock High School, Fremont High School in South Central, and Jordan High School in Watts had each witnessed the ethnoracial transformations of its athlete teams shift from predominantly Black to both Black and Brown.

Although they may have kept an ethnoracial quality, ethnoracial gangs were not exempt from the mixings. Black and Brown youngsters exchanged and adopted each other's cultural styles, artifacts, and even members. South Central LA witnessed many young Brown people become members of Bloods and Crips gangs. Similarly, Black youngsters joined Cholo (or "*Ese*") gangs. Black people dressed in their own version of the Mexican Cholo. For example, some wore khaki pants with flannel shirts, which was most commonly associated with the Chicano gang attire. Black gangs adopted the same street dress codes and attire that Chicano cholos wore, including creasing their working-class khaki pants and shirts. Mern, a Black graffiti writer, recalls:

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[452] Baby One, CHBQ, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

AG: So since we are on this sort of middle between graffiti crews and gangs, was there anything different in terms of the ethnoracial composition of the graffiti crews and gangs? For example, you started off saying how it was all these Blacks and Latinos, and even Caucasians, and Hispanics, they were are all part of these crews, would you say that gangs in South Central looked the same like that?

Mern: …But the Black gangs…as long as there is a Spanish [Brown] guy that's down [an ally] we really don't [have issues]…Spanish people have a lot of pride, and they want to protect their culture, and try to keep it all Spanish, and that's cool. But, you know, guys that grew up in the neighborhood that was…kind of like you see some guys that act just like a Mexican guy would act, but he's Black. You know, [wear] Pendleton [Cholo shirts] tied [buttoned] up all the way to the top. Then you see Spanish [Mexican] guys that's from gangs, from Black gangs, and they are dressed like the Black gangsters.[453]

To reiterate: South Central witnessed large numbers of Brown youth join Blood and Crip street organization. In the same manner, Black youngsters joined Cholo group. For example, the same Mexican American 38th Street club/gang that was implicated in the sleepy lagoon case of the 1940s, had in the early 1980s a Black youngster named Blacky. Over the years, Blacky would go on to become one of 38th Street's OGs [original gangsters], which is of the highest honors or veteran statuses a gang member can earn in his or her street organization due their experiences and longevity in the barrio's local gang.[454]

Although this generation of gangs witnessed much interracial cultural exchange in terms of gang membership, gangs maintained an ethnoracial distinctiveness. In other words, Cholo gangs were still recognized as Chicano or ethnic Mexican groups but with Black members, just as Bloods and Crips were associated and recognized as Black groups with Brown members. As half-Mexican and half-Cuban emcee/rapper B-Real from the Cypress Hill hip-hop group admits in an interview about his early teenage days in South Central,

VLADTV: ... [during the 1980 and 1990s] you are a kid that looks Mexican, even though you're half Mexican, you look Mexican, but you are part of the Bloods [Black street gang]?
B-Real: Yes…[455]

Brown people in Black gangs, and Black people in Brown gangs may not have been as frequent, but interracial gang membership were also not anomalies.

There were ethnic Mexicans that criticized other ethnic Mexicans who joined Blood or Crip gangs. One common derogatory term used to refer to these ethnic

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[453] Mern One, CHB, Black male in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*
[454] Field Note: Throughout one of my research sites, I learned about Blacky's name as he is mentioned as an OG from 38th Street. Also, I did have the privilege get to meet him.
[455] B-Real Interview to VLADTV (July 2020).

Mexicans was *mayateros* and *mayateras*, which was understood in the hood-barrio as Mexicans that want to be Black as opposed to Brown.[456] Most likely, what all witnessed was interraciality. Although an undeniable criticism, the term simultaneously underscored a tightly knit kin-like relation on kinship that ethnic Mexicans formed with Black people.

Black people also found humor when they joined Cholo gangs or resembled ethnic Mexican culture. People in South Central referred to these Blacks as *blaxicans*.[457] Mern One gives a sense of how this term's interracial origins and meanings.

> Mern: Yeah. Like growing up on the Eastside [of South Central], you know, I used to see Hispanic families always having self, you know, sustained…you know, they grew their own foods, herbs, vegetables, fruits, chickens, this, that, and the other. And we were the only Black family that was doing that.
> AG: Oh, really?
> Mern: Yeah, they used to call us the Blaxicans.
> AG: Ha ha ha, Blaxicans?
> Mern: Yeah, and I liked that because it showed that we were ready for the struggle. But we didn't want to struggle, so why not develop your own farm and produce what you can, produce within your square footage of …you know?
> AG: So who called you guys…[blaxicans]?
> Mern: they just looked at us like that, you know what I mean? Some of my friends they used to clown [tease] like "y'all raise chickens, and they make too much noise in the morning"
> AG: they thought it was Mexicans doing it, but it was…
> Mern: it is us! Ha ha. They knew because they used to buy eggs from us, so they couldn't complain too much because we had the best eggs in the neighborhood. Ha ha ha.[458]

Even though the context of the conversation I was having with Mern One was about how his great grandparents had brought their farming skills from the state of Mississippi when they migrated to South Central, decipherable from the conversation are the cultural context of agriculture and farming that are also associated with Mexican peoples in California and Los Angeles. Blaxicans was both a term of endearment and a criticism of Blacks who looked down upon the rural, country ways associated with ethnic Mexican people's lifestyles.

South Central's interracial cultural exchanges did not even escape the street–world outside prisons, including prison life. Much later a Chicano prisons gang leader also from an Artesia gang criticized one of the Menendez brothers — from the

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[456] *Mayateros or mayateras* was a derogatory term used by certain ethnic Brown people to express their disapproval of Latinos and Latinas joining Black gangs.
[457] *Blaxican* was not derogatory. It was used by Black youth to express a cultural exchange.
[458] Mern One in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

infamous 1998 Menendez Brothers murder case. He said that on of the Menendez brothers looked like a wan-to-be "cholo from South-Central Los Angeles" because Menendez wore a "do-rag" over his head.[459] This 1998 observation was not in a vacuum, for this prison-gang leader had been around many gang members all his life, including South Central. He understood that the interracial and intercultural exchanges between Black and Brown people, as in the "Cholo from South-Central," were common in South Central LA. Whether seen as derogative, condescending, or complimentary, mayatero and blaxicans were terms indicative of South Central's commonly shared experiences and interracial group memberships. Although this generation of gangs witnessed interracial cultural exchange, gangs maintained their ethnoracial distinctiveness.

"Beat Street:" The Rise of the Kings and Queens

The interracialism of South Central "Hood–Barrio" neighborhoods, however, was the context in which gang members' little brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews and nieces, and children and perhaps even grandchildren grew up in. Brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews and nieces such as Baby, Mar, Jamnk, and Mern, and InBloom were coming into adolescence during this time too. Their observations of street life situations taught them the rules of engagement and disengagement that they quickly learn in order to navigate their own life possibilities.

During the early '80s, youngsters such as Baby did not hold back either, but they tried to defeat (beat) the streets. And although they witnessed street and gang tensions, they sought an alternative to gangs. Graffiti crews were one aspect of South Central's interracial relations during the 1980s and mid 1990s. This graffiti writer movement inhabited a "Hood–Barrio" street community life where Black and Brown youngsters intermingled with one another since their early years.[460]

By 1984 new interracial forms of youth groups emerged, and they went beyond prior ethnoracial grouping such as gangs. The majority of youngsters first sought alternative to gangs, especially because youngsters who witnessed gang formations found it difficult to endorse the purpose of gangs and gang violence. As Jamnk One, an ethnic Mexican from the Kill 4 Pride crew reflects:

> Jamnk: Me, personally, I was around that [gang] stuff my whole life since I can remember and it just never drew my attention to it. I thought it was stupid. I don't need…gangs. I think about it now, gangs, "what are you fighting for?" "For a fuckin' street that doesn't belong to you?"

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[459] Chris Blatchford, *The Black Hand: The Bloody Rise and Redemption of "Boxer" Enriquez, A Mexican Mob Killer* (Harper Press, 2008): 115.

[460] The term *graffiti writer* or *writers* is how graffiti artists and/or taggers identify. Just as the traditional meaning of a writer carries with it a creative or artistic meaning, graffiti writers also view themselves within this light.

But then again, I think about my crew K4P, what is that? You know, what's K4P? What is that? And then I saw it as, like, well, I see it as we're a bunch of artists that are creating something. Not necessarily destroying or killing other human beings. You know? We are creating art, whether it was legal or illegal. You know, it was a form of expression. And for me, I think I went that route because I did not want to go through that gang route, you know? And I remember in junior high getting jumped by a bunch of gang members over some girl…and when that happened to me, I was like "fuck these fools! I don't need this [gang] shit"[461]

While not all-street violence can be directly linked to gang activity, graffiti writer narratives often evoke these street power relations as tensions they avoided by seeking an alternative to street groups.

That alternative became hip-hopping, dancing, emceeing, d-jayin, and graffiti. Mern One also recalls:

AG: So what was it about…why not gangs? Why didn't you join a gang? If, if…

Mern: …Art: Positive! Gangs: Shootings, Negative! It was an easy choice for me. Ha ha.

AG: …Simple...

Mern: And I had uncles that were gang bangers, so…you know? They was cool with this and that, and everything but it [gang banging] wasn't for me. I was, you know, non-violent. I wouldn't mind fighting, but when someone wanted to pull out a gun I was like "hey, hey, it's not that serious!"

AG: Would you say that most of the people that you were growing up [with] felt that way?

Mern: Yeah! Definitely, that's why everybody became a graffiti artist *vs* you know, gangsters. Because their uncles…a lot of the older generation was gangbangers. Even the younger generation, I got friends my age [at the time] that did decide to become from the gang in the neighborhood—but some were from the gang and were also from the local tagging crew at the same time. You know? Then eventually some did get influenced to go kind of strictly gang banging.[462]

Like Jamnk (whose older brother was also a gang member), Mern acknowledges early exposure to gangs, guns, violence, and drugs that he associated directly with street power dynamics he did not endorse. Additionally, young people viewed the streets through the lens of older siblings, uncles, and friendships, and thereby learned how to

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[461] Jamnk One, K4P crew member, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

[462] Mern One, CHB in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

navigate and negotiate street power relations.

Even young girls carved out their space in the graffiti world. Baby recalls her decision to join a graffiti crew as largely a decision *not* to join a gang:

> Baby: Either you're in gangs or you were in a tagging crew. And I already had friends in the gang, and I knew it wasn't…I seen a lot of [gang] stuff so I didn't want to do that. Besides it was more like…you're in a gang, you are easy target. You're like, like flaming yourself. You're putting yourself out there basically, but if you're a tagger it's just tagging not tag-banging. It was just tagging. And gang-banging was just gang-banging, you would lose your life. Back then you wouldn't lose your life for tagging…less risky, I guess.[463]

Like Baby, Jamnk, and Mern, Mar, and InBloom, most youngsters sought alternative youth groups to survive, even thrive. Either time ruptured cracks open in the carceral social pavement, or youngsters living underneath it chipped at it over time, but out of these cracks South Central would witness the rise of Black and Brown kings and queens.

Gettin' Up: The Kings and Queens All-City

In 1984 Stan Lathan's movie *Beat Street* came to theaters across the United States. On the one hand, the film tried to capture the origins of the hip-hop genre that emerged out of New York. It brought to the center the world of rap, B-boy dancing and breaking, d-jing, and its most visible art form—graffiti writing and murals. The film's main context of the origins of hip-hop was deindustrialization, poverty, and young people struggling to enhance their life chances on the streets: hence, the title *Beat Street*. In the film, Ramoe – graffiti name for Ramón – a well-known Puerto Rican graffiti artist seeks a career in hip-hop's art; strikingly, his art form was also what he enjoyed as a hobby. Given that hip-hop was barely on the rise, Ramoe's career chances are slim. Graffiti spatialized hip-hop scenes and places, but it still did not have teeth to make a profit. Ramoe, nonetheless, continues writing graffiti not just because it was a major part of his hip-hop identity as well as his contribution to the culture.

The film captures Ramoe as leading the graffiti scene in New York from the Bronx. Ramoe, along with other young people as his apprentices, go to New York's subway car-train lots and garages and paint "burners"—huge graffiti murals—on walls and on New York's subway trains. The trains were important because they travelled all over the city of New York, and indirectly promoted and advertised at large both the graffiti writer Ramoe, but the hip-hop genre more generally. Ramoe eventually gets killed in a tragic accident during a fight with someone who disrespects his murals. Basically, Ramoe becomes' hip-hop's martyr. In many ways, the film suggests that graffiti is as salient hip-hop then the other four elements of hip-hop. In many ways,

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[463] Baby One in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

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Ramoe makes graffiti, or his art form, worth defending, but hip-hop receives equally valiant defense. In many ways, young Black and Brown people in South Central LA also related to this aspect of the film.

Young Black and Brown people wanted to reclaim their own existence in a world where they felt that gangs denied it. As Jamnk states:

> AG: so when was is that you first learned or started getting attracted to graffiti?
>
> Jamnk: It was *Beat Street*, the movie. I saw the art, and I loved music. Pretty soon I noticed it was just not me feeling this way about it.[464]

The first graffiti writers in South Central LA all related to the characters in *Beat Street*. It would not be long before the streets of South Central LA teemed with hip-hoppers, d-jays, emcees, b-boys and breakers (dancing), and also graffiti.

Gang graffiti was limited to markings of territories, whereas graffiti writers revealed how youngsters sought to claim or reclaim their existence throughout the entire city. "Gettin' up" meant graffiti writing citywide—or as in the writer vernacular, "All-City"—and as often as possible. It was seen as promoting and advertising one's identity or crew throughout the city. Rather than lingering in local neighborhoods, "Getting' Up" was what attracted most youngsters of the time. As Jamnk elaborates,

> AG: And I was wondering if you could, like, give us an idea of what exactly does "getting up" means? Maybe you can teach us a little bit of what it took to do that.
>
> Jamnk: I mean "Getting Up" was basically, getting your name up as much as possible. To be known! I mean to the 'normal' public eye they'll see that shit [graffiti] up there and would be like "oh, just another fuckin' kid," you know, "writing graffiti" or whatever the fuck.
>
> But, when you were in the tagging graffiti world—crew or whatever—if you were "up" people knew who the fuck you were. A perfect example, back in the 1990s, when Chaka [a graffiti tagger] was around…everybody knew fuckin' Chaka! He was in the news, you know? Fuckin' millions of dollars of damages as far as property and shit like that.
>
> As far as "getting up" for me, dude, I remember "getting up" on the bus. You know, running through RTD [public transportation Rapid Transit District], whatever, just tagging the shit out of it. We used to go on there, maybe like twenty [persons] deep. This was when I was with NTS [Notorious Kings], rolling with them. NTS, NBT [Nothing But Trouble], you know?[465]

With a combination of aesthetic styles, colors, paints, and even scratches, graffiti crews asserted their underside of history on city surfaces and on public transportation. This form of graffiti also encouraged creativity not only in display, but also how and in what

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[464] Jamnk One in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*
[465] *Ibid*.

place graffiti writers chose their names to be displayed. This was very much apparent when graffiti writers or entire crews battled one another for who could demonstrate their existence not only to one another but also to onlookers and spectators. Just like in hip-hop's rap and dance battles (competitive displays of technical and unique dancing and/or poetic skills), graffiti battles, showcasing creativity and technical displays, took place amongst crews across the city—"All City" battles.[466] Graffiti crews not only battled one another in displaying their unique technical writing skills on walls and buses, but the battles often took place in broad daylight (See Fig. 3).

Fig 3. Four Black and Brown youngsters "…gettin up on Broadway and 8th Street in 1987, on a Saturday morning…TEACHING these and many other BUS MOBBERS HOW TO ROCK LETTERS STYLEZ AND CHARACTERS since the early eighties. Rockin RTD's in broad daylight! CENTRAL, EAST AND SOUTHSIDE WRITERS< South Gate, Huntington Park, Vernon, Compton, Paramount, Lennox, South Central, Mid City taggers were involved in these crew meetings and Graff sessions."[467]

Deciphering Graffiti Crew Acronyms

Graffiti crew acronyms reveal a lot of what young Black and Brown people were up against, and the islands they navigated including the developing carceral conditions. As already mentioned above, the graffiti crew US used the United States' acronym across the city not to have pride and dignity in their country. Rather to make a

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[466] For more on Hip Hop Culture and *battles* see A. Frick and C. Ahearn, Eds., *Yes, Yes, Y'All: The Experience Music Project's Oral History of Hip-Hop's First Decade* (De Capo Press, 2002): 43–44; Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation* (St. Martin's Press, 2005): 90; Johan Kugelberg, *Born in the Bronx* (Oxford University Press, 2007): 17; Greg Thomas, "To make the revolution come quicker": For Sex, Hip-Hop & Black Radical Tradition (a riff in three movements)," *Words.Beats.Life: The Global Journal of Hip Hop Culture: The Sex Issue*, Vol. 4, no. 2 (2010): 26.

[467] Quotation from photo caption: http://www.flickr.com/photos/45865680@N05/4556167987/.

social and political critique of how governing bodies as both formal institutions and informal street islands had young people living under siege. Jamnk explains:

> AG: What did K4P stand for?
> Jamnk: It basically stands for "Kill For Pride."
> AG: Did that mean anything to you, or the crew?
> Jamnk: For me it meant, Kill For Pride was like, kill [massively put up graffiti] for walls as far as either tagging or graffiti, or do it for your pride.
> AG: So it's kind of like, in a sense, have pride in displaying let's say…
> Jamnk: …displaying either your artwork, or your tags [signature of identity].[468]

In Jamnk's case, being part of a graffiti crew, or Kill 4 Pride, did not literally mean to cause harm or murder another person. As Jamnk mentions above, he and others like him did not see the point in destroying human beings. On the contrary, crews used their acronyms ingeniously to invert and critique prevailing ideas on the streets and in society. As noted above, Jamnk reminds, "I don't need…gangs. I think about it now, gangs, 'what are you fighting for?' 'For a fuckin' street that doesn't belong to you?"[469] With graffiti crew acronyms young Black and Brown people asked—if not bombarded—society and others how to view young people. In this sense, understanding Kill 4 Pride went beyond the scope of merely writing. With these letters and the number "4," graffiti writers communicated their sense of dignity. They wrote on walls what their crew was about, while at the same time they asked onlookers to engage in similar honorable things worthy of "Pride." In other words, they asked onlookers to exhaust oneself (kill) for something worth being proud of.

Most graffiti crew acronyms worked from very similar notions of existence, resistance, and agency. The graffiti crew acronym CHB, in which both Baby One and Mern One belonged, meant "Cant Hold Back." Given the context in which both of these young Black and Brown people grew up, it is not difficult to grasp how young people grouped and embodied and expressed existence and resistance to what they perceived as structural and social forces attempting to oppress them as in hold them back. Cant Hold Back was in the context power and structures, and these graffiti writers spoke their truth back to it.

The NTS crew's acronyms, the crew that InBloom would come to join, stood for Next To Serve. This crew's acronym did not express itself as a body of young people at the top of a hierarchical structure. The word "Next" in NTS projected future outcomes. NTS embodied a critique of society in that they asked young people and

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[468] Jamnk One in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.
[469] *Ibid.*

onlookers to engage in an indictment of the ways that governing bodies in society prepared or under-prepared young people for the future—or the generation next to serve society. The ways in which NTS embodied their critique of society was also done with their graffiti styles signatures and art forms.

Unlike street gangs, graffiti crew acronyms and their meanings did not remain static. As graffiti crews engaged and disengaged channels of suppression, communication, and transportations, they also quickly evolved. While graffiti crews would display new terms behind their crew's initials, they also never really abandon the original meanings. Either informed by music, structural forces, growth in membership, or in aspiring notions of dignity, meanings behind graffiti crew acronyms were fluid. CHB, for example, went from Cant Hold Back to Cant Hold Back Kings and Queens to California Highway Bombers even up to Caucasians Hispanics and Blacks, once the crew became more ethnoracially diverse. Mern notes:

> Mern: Uh…Mern is my graffiti name. Crew? Known as Cant Hold Back
> [CHB], Counting Hundred Bills [CHB]…
> Ha ha ha! Caucasians Hispanics and Blacks [CHB]! Ha ha ha!
> AG: Woo…! Well, you know, you touched on something right away, which is
> key. Why, why all these differentiations between the Cant Hold Back crew?
> Like you named it this, you named it a couple of other things, what was that
> about? What do you think that was about?
> Mern: Well, as a company, you know, I look at it as a company in a way…he
> he ha!
> ...as the crew expanded, you know, different walks of life came along with it.
> So, originally, we all knew we couldn't hold back [CHB], but once we brought
> the cool white boys involved, and cool Blacks and cool Hispanics…why not?
> CHB, Caucasians Hispanics and Blacks. And that age, you know, all we were
> thinking about was fun and, really, Counting Hundred Bills [CHB], so why
> not? It…
> AG: …counting…Ha ha ha!
> Mern: It was just the art within the name of the company, you know,
> expanding. You know what I mean?[470]

History and context informed the fluidity behind the meanings and changes of graffiti crews' acronyms. As Mern also points to how young people yearned for social and economic growth, the CHB crew reflected this. According to Mern, CHB was a concept applicable to young people engaged in variety (or branches of) of life situations as corporations did. And like all young people from all walks of life – hence, Caucasus, Hispanics, and Blacks (CHB) – they too aspire to be economically "Counting Hundred

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[470] Mern One, CHB, Black male who belonged to multiple graffiti crews. See Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

Bills (CHB)."

NTS went from "Next To Serve" to "Next To Serve Kings and Queens" up to the single term "<u>No</u>toriou<u>s</u> [underscore added]"—"Notorious," given the "super predator" discourse in which Black and Brown youth would later be categorized and criminalized. Young people displayed all this in writing on walls, and it was well understood by young people. It was also displayed on everything that was public, private, and that traveled across the city, as the RTD public transportation system.

RTD Police Response, 1988-1991

Graffiti and graffiti crews were so prevalent that by 1988 the city and the "RTD Board of Directors…battle[d] vandalism and graffiti."[471] Following California Governor George Deukmejian's "habitual criminal" discourse, LA officials pushed for new RTD police forces and policies. They formed an RTD Police Task Force to eliminate graffiti writers. As Jamnk retells:

> Jamnk: It's kind of crazy that RTD [police] was created to solve kind of the problem of taggers and graffiti…[472]
> AG: You mean the RTD police?
> Jamnk: RTD police…to solve the problem of taggers on the bus, you know? Whatever the case. And you think about it now and they [city officials] really needed a whole separate type of police for transit. I mean they have it in New York, right? For the subways, or transit police or whatever, but as far as in LA you never heard of that shit [at that time]. And…I think about it now and I'm like "fuck dude!" Think about the taxpayers that paid all this fuckin' money to pay these guys' salary…[473]

The City and the RTD police agency were determined to make graffiti writers dread the consequences of graffiti writing.

By the fall of 1989, the Southern California Rapid Transit District and Senator Diane Watson of Los Angeles's District 28 from the San Fernando Valley) played key roles in pushing republican Governor of California George Deukmejian to sign anti-graffiti Senate Bills 1073 and 829 into law. These two laws were designed to deter graffiti writers from putting up their marks on RTD buses but also wall.

> Fines as high as $250, plus mandatory community service up to 48 hours await minors found guilty of painting or scratching graffiti, or otherwise damaging

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[471] See *PR Newswire* "RTD board of directors takes action to battle vandalism and graffiti (Southern California Rapid Transit District)" March 13, 1989.

[472] Here I was referring to the RTD to talk about public transportation, but I soon realized that since we were talking about police, Jamnk, like most graffiti writers, used "RTD" to refer to both the public transportation and the RTD police. I realized here he was discussing RTD in reference to the RTD police.

[473] Jamnk One, K4P in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

buses under the provisions of the two new laws which also call for the courts to levy a fine on a minor's parent or guardian if a minor is personally unable to pay the fine.[474]

These laws, as we shall see much later, were also an attempt to contain graffiti writing that spread from LA in general, but from South Central in particular, to the more affluent areas such as the San Fernando Valley (the major anti-bussing, anti-integrationist, and anti-tax area).

As early as 1990, the RTD police organized undercover graffiti operation units known as GHOST squads, or the Graffiti Habitual Offender Suppression Team. The RTD police did have their own patrol vehicles, but GHOST squads were public transit RTD buses converted into a carceral web full of undercover RTD police officers, not public passengers. The undercover police officers watched graffiti writers in action hoping to ensnare them with their carceral GHOST bus. Because graffiti writers were trans-territorial, these GHOST squads had to go throughout Los Angeles tracking down the areas where graffiti writes congregated. A *Los Angeles Times* article offers a glimpse of the 'cat and mouse game' played out between graffiti writers and the RTD police:

..this was the Ghost Bus, a Trojan horse unit that carried eight undercover transit cops working on the Graffiti Habitual Offender Suppression Team—called the Ghost squad. As the bus squealed to a stop, the cops inside waited for the taggers to make the first move.

Unbeknown to the young vandals, an RTD camera hidden in a nearby building was filming the action that day as the kids mobbed each bus, swiftly making the distinctive marks they call "tags."

One tagger even jumped up on the front bumper of a bus and, reaching over the windshield, sprayed his marks on the destination sign.

When the Ghost Bus pulled up, its doors remained closed. That was unusual—and made the kids leery. They milled about, ready to run but not wanting to show fear. One teen-ager slipped off a backpack loaded with extra spray cans and tried to hide it in a doorway.

Just then the bus doors banged open and RTD cops spilled onto the sidewalk, yelling "Police!" and "Freeze!"

The taggers scattered like quail and the chase was on. Nearly half got away, but 15 were captured, wrestled to the sidewalk and frisked, then arrested for vandalism, according to Sgt. Shari Barberic, commander of the transit police's special anti-graffiti unit.

For Barberic and her graffiti-fighters, this episode was a small victory in a

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[474] "Getting tough with the toughs: New anti-graffiti laws hit pocketbook," 16 October 1989, PRN (Copyright, 1989, PR Newswire).

much larger war that they acknowledge they are losing. The arrests were made during the morning rush hour on July 14 [1990], but the action could have taken place any time and any place along RTD routes in Southern California.[475]

As indicated here (and as shown in Figure 3 above, and Figure 4 below), "Bus Mobbing" was a daring and drastic way that youngsters "got up." If the RTD police were only able to apprehend half the bus "mobbers"—fifteen youngsters—then the gathering had to consist of approximately thirty graffiti writers. Conversations with graffiti writers of this time confirm this depiction. As in Figure 5 below, graffiti *roll-calls* usually depicted the name and an idea of the number of graffiti writers present at gatherings or meetings.[476]

Fig. 4. South Central Graffiti writers (center) being arrested and ushered into an RTD Ghost bus by RTD undercover (left) and uniformed RTD police officer (right).[477]

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[475] Ronald B. Taylor, "Ghost Bus Tries to Snare the Taggers", March 26, 1990 *Los Angeles Times*.

[476] Roll-call was a term borrowed from youngsters' early days of schooling, where teachers called on students' names in order to take attendance. Graffiti writers employed the term to describe writing the names of the writers present.

[477] Photo is a video freeze from Fox 11 News, reporting on juvenile graffiti and youth problems of the 1990s.
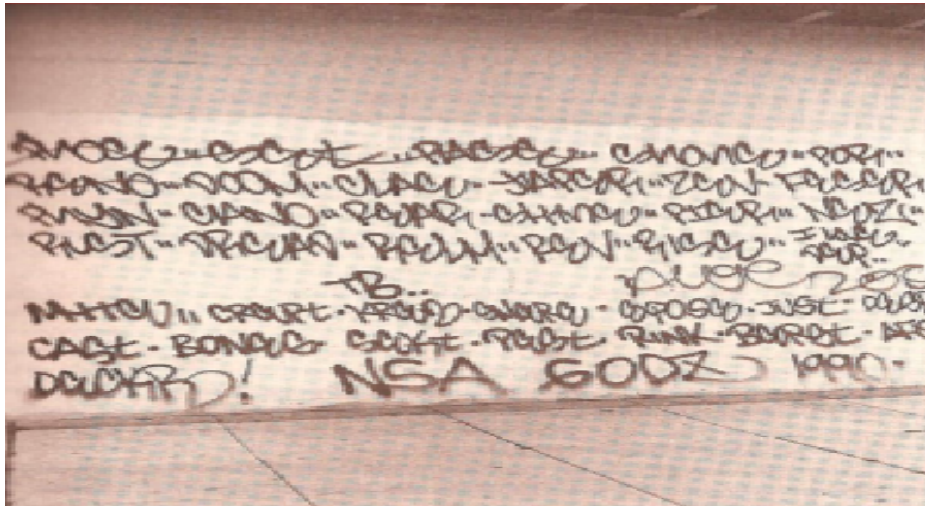
Fig 5. Graffiti roll-call names (about thirty-six names) with year 1990. Roll-calls were usually written on walls by a single individual while everyone else in attendance looked out for police officers or gang members.[478]

South Central Graffiti Crew Expansion

Since the late 1980s, the graffiti writer scene also expanded citywide, as more and more crews were created. LA's inner city graffiti crews, those from South Central in particular, poured twenty-five to thirty miles southeast, west, east, and even northwest into the more affluent suburban areas. To the northwest these areas included cities such as Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Woodland Hills, and even the Santa Clarita Valley area. To the Southeast it involved cities such as Norwalk, Lynwood, Paramount, Huntington Park To the east it was East LA. Youngsters from South Central forged graffiti crew relations with youngsters from these areas. They not only met and networked through the RTD system but also through the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) bussing system, which had been in place since 1977. Originally, this was LAUSD's effort to create equal educational opportunities for students from underrepresented and under-resourced communities. This integrationist effort, however, was also supposed to send white students from these affluent areas to South Central's public schools. "Foes of Bussing" or Anti-integrationist were able to render the system a one-way effort. Only students from communities of color took the "more than 30 minute [bus] trip..."[479] When South Central's graffiti crews emerged, Black and Brown writers also took that long LAUSD bus trip into valley schools, but also to East LA.

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[478] Image from Davis, *City of Quartz*: 317. Although Mike Davis assumes these roll calls are of a new breed of gang members, they are not.

[479] "Students from South Central Los Angeles ride a school bus to Van Nuys," *Los Angeles Times* March 20, 1977. Photograph's news caption.

Both Mern and Mar, for example, chose to be bussed to Woodland Hills for junior high and high school.

By 1990, South Central LA's graffiti crews were already emulated outside their world. Youngsters shipped-out to San Fernando Valley, Norwalk, even to East LA by LAUSD's busing system recruited, created, and recreated South Central LA graffiti crew styles in the Valley, in East LA, and throughout the Southeast LA areas. Young people in these areas also explored and validated identities with youngsters from South Central.

In contrast, Valley graffiti writers were mostly young, of white and of Asian descent with economic privilege. They also were able to afford proper legal representation when arrested. They were also able to avoid juvenile detention centers. Graffiti writers from the "hood," on the other hand, usually were sent back to South Central's carceral landscape from the Valley. These youths' parents were unable to afford proper legal representation, and so youngsters ended up in juvenile halls. When released from detention centers, some were forced to attend their home schools back in South Central. Through the LAUSD's busing system—the mediocre effort that was supposed to promote equal educational opportunities—South Central's graffiti youngsters, nonetheless, did establish and continued trans-regional and interracial friendships with suburban youth. These social and interracial relations were most noticeable in South Central when local valley graffiti writers came to the inner city to intermingle with their "deported" crewmembers.

By 1990, youngsters from areas such as the San Fernando Valley, Woodland Hills, and Sherman Oaks entered South Central. Similar patterns were also happening with relationships between South Central and areas such as East LA, West LA, and the Southeast. It is in this context that InBloom also entered South Central LA. Already leading a graffiti crew in East LA, she was familiar with getting around the city by the age of fourteen. She was familiar with how the LAUSD and the RTD connected and socialized young people together. The more she got around the city, the more she became conscious about segregation in the entire city of LA, including her own East LA home.

> InBloom: And you know, as graffiti writers we do a lot of walking and we see
> a lot of things, and I said "who does that? Who self-segregates?" And I thought
> that was a very weird thing for me to conceptualize at such a young age.
> …And if you did see anyone Browner than you, you had to go the Aliso area,
> into the Primera Flats area. And even there, I was like a freckle in the midst.[480]

InBloom's frequent contact with young Black and Brown graffiti writers in the archipelagos of public transportation was often interracial. These experiences made her, as it made many others, grapple with the city's many forms of segregation. Even in East

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[480] InBloom, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

LA, InBloom noticed that Blacks and darker skin color ethnic Mexicans lived in the poorer Aliso Village Government housing projects, but even that was more the exception than the rule in East LA.

As a member of the NTS crew, InBloom was frequently exposed to South Central interracial graffiti crews. This not only expanded InBloom's graffiti travel experiences but also her ethnoracial frame of references and interracial relations. InBloom tells,

> AG: Where you discouraged, by any chance, because I know you mentioned [that] NTS, and NTS [was] half Black [and] half Latinos or Mexicans, or Chicanos if you want to say that, Was that your initial impression of it? Or was it that it was mixed that [it] attracted you to it?
>
> InBloom: I think that I could very easily [say] my heart grew fonder for being a graffiti writer, I think at that time. I already came with a…I am already an 'Other,' in the graffiti world because I am female. So I am already the odd man out…or woman [out]. So I had already got passed that "poor me!" you know? As if it was an issue. I just didn't think of it that way. And I think that I associated it so much closer to graffiti because it was non-racial, it was non-gendered, non-ethnic...like ethnicity…It was anonymous.[481]

As InBloom frequented South Central's "non-racial," "non-gendered," "non-ethnic" graffiti crews, her growing fondness for the scene meant that she created familial relations with her fellow graffiti writers. Another component was that there was also an element of anonymity to graffiti writing, which confirms the non-racial aspects of crews. These forged familial relationships grew to the extent that InBloom moved in with her two sister, the pregnant girl and her sister.

Familial Relations

South Central graffiti writers hosted graffiti crew gatherings at local parks and other public spaces. Some of these gatherings sometimes took shape in what graffiti writers called "family" barbecues, or conferences, as Mar One and others referred to them. Graffiti crew "family" gatherings were certainly not limited to South Central alone. Valley crewmembers also reciprocated with "family" gatherings in the Valley for their South Central crewmembers.

Some graffiti crew members that never traveled outside the larger South Central area could not believe how influential they were citywide and across towns. As Axis recounts,

> Axis: I never imagined that we belonged to such a crew of many people, Belizean, Blacks, Raza, and even some white dudes. I never really went to the

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[481] InBloom, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

valley to tag, or anything but when they came to the hood I was like "damn! we are that big?" Then we got on buses and went to the beach too.[482]

There was a sense of pride or accomplishment in my narrators' recollection of these interracial graffiti writer "family" gatherings. At least from my narrators' perspectives, graffiti writers forged interracial and trans-area relations that had not been witnessed before in South Central LA or in the Valley. From a historical perspective, however, these were ongoing interracial and intermingling "race mixing" relations that the state and white supremacists have tried to hinder since World War II.

Figure 6. "Weekend Jam" 1990, for the San Fernando Valley. Flier depicts a planned two-day hip-hop and graffiti writer gathering for the Valley between South Central LA and Valley interracial groups. Flier depicts two sketches of map (bottom left) locations where gatherings and parties will take place in the Valley. Graffiti writer signatures signify endorsement. Sponsoring events are young people from "818s" and "213" [Valley area code and South Central area code] interracial crews: CHB, UC, UTP [Cant Hold Back; United Colors, Untouchable Posse].[483]

Differences Between Gangs and Graffiti Crews

The trans-territoriality and interraciality of graffiti crews distinguished them from gangs. Graffiti writers were different from gang members in that they were able to join multiple crews. Unless crews or individuals had "beef" they could not resolve,

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[482] Discussion with Axis One, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

[483] Darkfader, "Weekend Jam" two-day party flier, 1990, Location, San Fernando Valley, Ca., in *DJ JahBluez*, historical catalogue, LA Hip-Hop "818-213 [LA area codes]: UC, UTP, CHB" 1990s;" also in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

most graffiti writers joined multiple crews.[484] Being part of multiple crews was common practice; graffiti writers had various reasons to join them. Some of those reasons included recognition; as Mar One put it, "it felt good to be acknowledged," to be "recognized."[485]

In South Central, spectators, local gangs, police, and even graffiti crew members themselves stood in awe at the large size and diversity of graffiti crew gatherings and membership. For example, at Ross Snyder Park, located at 41st Street and Compton Avenue, ethnoracial gangs seemed displeased at what they perceived as "take over." Large graffiti crew gatherings usually evoked a territorial sentiment amongst ethnoracial gangs. Zoron recalls:

> AG: So did graffiti crews from the Valley ever come to Eastside [of South Central]?
>
> Zoron: Sure did, they came however they could. They came in cars, but mostly by public transportation. But then gangs didn't like that because we were deep [large crowds], probably even threatening to the gangs. Them fools [local ethnoracial gangs] thought we probably were trying to take over their supposed parks. Shit! Those were our parks too...but whatever! We were not thinking like they were…[486]

These tensions did not really hold weight, however. Graffiti writers knew how to navigate street life. They did not engage much in the potential conflicts. Graffiti crews emerged out of a "Hood-Barrio" way of life. Young people such as InBloom did not limit themselves to the islands of streets gangs, but instead became part of a larger writer movement and network of young Black and Brown people that engaged in graffiti. These graffiti writers used public forms of transportation to meet, mingle, and express their condition and resilience in graffiti-writer forms. Their creativity and ingenuity allowed them to navigate the archipelagos across the many islands of street gangs. With defiant yet self-dignifying names and images of Kings and Queens, young Black and Brown people adamantly beat against LA's nascent and increasing oppression.

Conclusion

The graffiti writers' interracial movement singed its mark, stamp, symbol, image, tag, and signature of its history of distress, agency, and resistance throughout the City of Angels during the decade of the 1980s. At every phase and stage of life, these youngsters not only faced these constant carceral bombardments, but they also communicated their conditions and found escape by mobbing, scribing, piecing,

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[484] Having "beef" was the street vernacular for tensions or problems that somehow were deemed irreconcilable.

[485] Mar, in ;" also in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

[486] Zoron, Field notes, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

bombing, and tagging, while asking others to join. And many did join, including their suburban peers. Looking at young Black and Brown people from a street perspective, it is not counter-intuitive that youngsters dabbled in graffiti and graffiti crews while seeking to escape the carceral webs. In a world—namely, the streets—that recognizes power and presence in graffiti, it makes sense that graffiti crews negotiated and navigated the stressful rise of the carceral state with marks, stamps, symbols, scratches, images, letters, and signatures throughout the City of Angels. The world might have noticed this carceral landscapes young Black and Brown people navigated on March 3, 1991, when a George Holliday video are aired throughout popular news media outlets and showcased LAPD officers brutalize a King—twenty-five year old, Rodney G. King.

Chapter Six

Carceral City LA: From Interracial Uprising Solidarity to Black-Brown Interracial
Carceral Violence, 1991—2000

> *They get mad 'cuz they can't fade us..Like my ni**az from South Central Los
> Angeles/ They found out they can't handle us*
> *Bloods, Crips on the same squad,/With the 'Eses'* [Cholos] *helping, ni**ah it's
> time to rob and mob*
> — DR Dre, "The Day The Ni**az Took Over", *The Chronic* (1992)

> *And we gotta' realize the boys on the east side* [of South Central]/ *You call
> them 'Eses,' I call them allies* [scene captures Mexican Flag wavered during
> uprising]
> — ICE-T, "Gotta Lot of Love," in music video (1993)

On April 29, 1992, many small and large business managers and store owners in
South Central LA pulled out a can of spray paint and tagged the walls of their
respective establishments. In hopes that the Black and Brown angels of fire and loot
would pass over their businesses, business owners tagged the words "Black owned,"
"Mexican owned," or the letter "X" on the walls of their establishments. The most
common sign of distress they tagged on their walls was "Black-owned." As an
observer from the *Sentinel* newspaper noted,

> some businesses were spared by the rioters after management placed "Black-
> owned" signs in front windows or other prominent positions. Some businesses
> owned by Anglos, and perhaps by Latinos and Asian Americans, also were
> spared after they were tagged as "Black-owned."[487]

Business owners from many ethnoracial walks of life benefited from spraying the large
letters of paint on their walls. Still, the rebelling Black and Brown Angelinos only
spared a few.

Prompted by the "not guilty" verdict in the trial of the three police officers that
beat 25-year-old Rodney King, on April 29, the world witnessed a mass Black-Brown
interracial solidarity uprising.[488] The uprising was both a mass protest and rebellion
against what the South Central community understood as a miscarriage of criminal
justice and police brutality. For nearly three days, Black and Brown angels together
would take over the streets, disrupt business and labor, and even the police's ability to

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[487] A.S. Young, Doc. "Untold Numbers of Black Businesses Destroyed, Thousands of Jobs
Lost." *Sentinel*, Vol. LVIII, Iss. 5; pg. A-3 May 20, 1992.
[488] Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles, Calif.) and
Warren Christopher. 1991. *Report of the Independent Commission of the Los Angeles Police
Department*: p. 3.

police them. Black and Brown people freely accessed merchandise, products, and the services businesses offered. After that, the angels set businesses aflame.

Black-Brown interracial coexistence and solidarities were nothing new, but this uprising would be the last of its kind for decades to come. Black-Brown interracial solidarities may have ranged across a long history in LA – from the *Zoot Suit* era of the 1940s, to the *rock and roll* era of the 1950s and 1960s, to the collective efforts of the Black Power and Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, to the interracial world Bloods, Crips, Cholos, and hip-hoppers shared during the 1980s and early-1990s. However, in the aftermath of the uprising, their decline would come at the hands of nuanced carceral forces. As a consequence of the state's mass capacity to cage people and prisoners' ability to influence its informal carceral culture apparatus, an informal carceral culture of prisoners would be responsible for shaping social and racial arrangements on the streets of LA. This would rupture the long history of Black-Brown interracial coexistence and life's mundane interracial solidarities in a post-uprising South Central world. The decline of South Central LA's interracial graffiti crews after the uprising reflects the footprints these larger interacting and intersecting carceral forces.

This chapter provides an account on how the long history of typically peaceful Black-Brown coexistence in South Central LA started to deteriorate in the aftermath of the Black-Brown interracial uprising of 1992. The chapter opens with the South Central LA uprising to provide not only a sense of continuity to the long history of Black-Brown interracial relations but also to demonstrate how the Black-Brown interracial rebellion was informed by commonly shared experiences that both groups had with the rising shadow of the carceral state. The chapter then compares formal and informal post-uprising rebuilding efforts for 'peace.' The chapter argues that, while formal efforts were enunciated publicly, they did not materialize much substance since they ran counter to the state's carceral priorities. Informal street efforts, on the other hand, were able to arrange, rearrange, and consolidate peaceful relations as they were also informed by an informal ethnoracial carceral culture that was backed by the same massive carceral institutions that both Black and Brown people had grown too accustomed to. Informal 'peace' efforts initially had an interracial quality to them, but their intimate proximity to the informal carceral culture quickly consolidated peace treaties into intraracial "truces" that mirrored prison-life. As the streets emulated prison-life, so did Black-Brown interracial conflicts. Interracial graffiti crews get entangled and disentangled in all the intraracial and interracial informal carceral tensions, which signaled the decline of coexisting Black-Brown relations in South Central LA.

"Brown Pride, Black Pride:" Black-Brown Interracial Uprising

LA's 1992 rebellion was a Black-Brown interracial uprising. The "Black-Owned," "Mexican-Owned," and other similar signs that businesspeople and others sprayed painted on walls are evidence of the crowd's ethnoracial identities. The 'writing on the wall' during the 1992 uprising not only depicts Black-Brown interracial

qualities, but their simultaneous manifestations are indicative of a Black-Brown interracial solidarity and rebellion. Just like the signaling of LA's graffiti writers, businesspeople's graffiti signaled their contemporary moment of distress. Signs were intentional. Whatever they intended to communicate, the writings' content had to be relevant to its contemporary moment. Indeed, whether directly or indirectly, the immediate writing that went up on the walls during the uprising showcased a consciousness reflective of a Black-Brown interracial solidarity if not a long history of Black-Brown interracial coexistence in South Central.

The specific "Black-Owned," "Mexican-Owned," and other similar signs that businesspeople sprayed painted on their own walls can be understood by considering how the writing's interracial qualities and their simultaneous manifestations made sense during the 1992 LA uprising. The purposes and intentions behind the signs were to save business establishments from getting looted and burned, on the one hand; on the other hand, they were also intended to communicate those messages directly to *Los Black y Brown Angeles* (The Black and Brown Angels, i.e., *Los Angeles*). The signs did in fact help a few Black-owned, Anglo-owned, Korean-owned, and Latino or Mexican-owned businesses. But they did not always. As A.S. Young reported, "Black-owned signs weren't always magical…; the rioters looted and/or burned down some of those businesses anyway."[489] Whether the signs worked or not, however, what they all had in common was that the writing itself spoke to the presence of an infuriated Black-Brown interracial force. The sight of Black and Brown angels was undeniable, as they merged from out of the same interracial communities. All businesses, including the ones that were not spared, wrote their specific tags in recognition of the angels' interracial character, and in the hopes that the Black-Brown hurricane of fire would pass them by.[490]

The "Black-owned" or "Mexican-owned" signs also affirm the fact that the businesses were located, socially and geographically, inside the Black-Brown community-home and body politic. "Black-Owned," "Mexican-Owned" or "X" had less to do with informing the community of the ethnoracial background of ownership but more about the relationships of reciprocity that businesses had. South Central's Black and Brown people knew too well which businesses in their neighborhoods 'belonged' in the neighborhood.

Belonging also meant how businesses and their practices were integrated in their neighborhoods. It is not difficult to imagine this if we consider, for example, how good business practices of a local poolroom in a predominantly white neighborhood might mundanely allow the locals kids to use up its space beyond the business' original intent. Poolhalls may serve young people more of a socializing and hangout place than a place of consumption or purchase. Another, and more obvious, example can be the

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[489]A.S. Young (1992).

[490] One journalist wrote that "while 51 percent of those arrested were Latino, about half the businesses destroyed were also Latino" 'L.A. Is Burning' On `Frontline'. 1993. *New Pittsburgh Courier*, April 17, City Edition. http://www.proquest.com.

shopping malls. Shopping malls intentionally cater space for young people in order to maintain certain levels of activity to attract business; and yet, young people might use up those same spaces beyond what they were already accommodating. Skateboarders may turn parking lot structures as practice-zones. Young people may not necessarily be owners of stores or malls , but it would not stop them from seeing these spaces 'home.' As New York's emcee Biz Markie declares in his 1988 hit song, "*My house is the Albee Square Mall*."[491] Therefore, the graffiti signs businesses put up during the uprising may have also served as a reminder of the "hood's" reciprocal relations.[492]

  If anyone understood the symbolic meaning behind the "Black-Owned," "Mexican-Owned," or "X" tags, it was not ethnic Korean people, or whites, or even Black and Brown people who lived outside these reciprocal relationships. "Black-owned" or "Mexican-owned" business signs that did not have community ties or reciprocal relations with Black-Brown people could not stop the rebelling Angelinos from entering and destroying those premises. Small corporations, for example, such as La Central and La Curacao – who supposedly catered to the Latino community – had its "Mexican owned" sign up, but the Black and Brown angels did not pass it by.[493] The same was true for comparable Black-owned businesses.

Fig. 1. "Black Owned," 1992. On a wall of a business establishment that was not spared during the uprising and looting prompted by the not guilty verdict in the trial of police officers accused of beating motorist Rodney King.[494]

  Conversely, the crowds' fury bypassed some Korean-owned and other non-Mexican and non-Black owned along with Black-owned and Mexican-owned

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[491] Biz Markie, "Albee Square Mall," *Goin' Off* (Cold Chilln' Records, 1988).

[492] This was the consensus amongst all my Oral discussions with the participants of the Uprising.

[493] See 'L.A. Is Burning' *New Pittsburgh Courier* (1993).

[494] For refence to image see 1992 image in Shianne Winton, "Twenty Five Years post LA Riots, Has Fight Against Police Brutality Progressed?", April 21, 2017: https://www.thenewblackera.org/nbe-blog/lariots.

establishments. This may had to do with businesses practices and their ties with the Black-Brown community. Sometimes they employed Black and Brown people and treated them fairly.[495] In turn, these employees advocated for their jobs, and in doing so those local businesses were spared. At times, work or donations were reciprocal. This also extended to the young people. For example, the artwork that depicted the stores' name on its walls (or advertisements) was work that was sometimes contracted out to the local graffiti artist. Various official records show that establishments or buildings that were not looted or burned down to the ground were spared because of their contributions to the South Central community. Schools, public libraries, post-offices, welfare offices, clinics, dental offices, and even the University of Southern California (USC) — with the community's ambivalence toward it — which was right in the center of the rebellion, remained standing. Nonetheless, these were exceptional cases. The Black-Brown angels, in their interracial solidarity, looted and burned to the ground most "swap-meets," small and big corporate businesses, and other business owned by outsiders and some insiders too.

The Black-Brown interracial uprising was spontaneous, but its "Brown Pride, Black Pride" interracial solidarity did not just fall from the sky.[496] No interracial peace treaties had to first formulate to create this solidarity; the Black-Brown solidarity had been forged through a history of commonly shared existentialist experiences that both Black and Brown people shared with each other in LA's interracial world, its long history, but also its interaction with a violent carceral state.

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[495] Debra Lew, "A Time for Healing In Los Angeles." *Asianweek*, August 20 (1993). http://www.proquest.com/ (accessed October 23, 2010). This article discusses Asians' views on how they identified with the neighborhood. Much is said on employment.
[496] See April 1992 spray painted image "Brown Pride, Black Pride" in IMAGE: © Joseph Sohm/Visions of America/Corbis, DATE PHOTOGRAPHED: 1992, LOCATION: Los Angeles, California, USA, PHOTOGRAPHER Joseph Sohm COLLECTION: Documentary Value, JS001241. http://www.corbisimages.com/Enlargement/JS001241.html.

Fig. 2. "Brown Pride – Black Pride," 1992, on a wall in South Central Los Angeles after the rioting and looting prompted by the not guilty verdict in the trial of police officers accused of beating motorist Rodney King.[497]

Black-Brown Interracial Solidarity as Commonly Shared Experience

It is no wonder that West Coast hip-hop reflected a consciousness of fun and of the streets, as it also reflected a carceral consciousness of the world that young Black and Brown people inhabited. That is to say, the carceral content in west coast hip-hop did not happen in a vacuum. Dress codes, lyrics, music and music videos, dj-ing, break-dancing, and graffiti writing are existentialist assertions of the commonly shared experiences of Black and Brown youth culture while under the shadow of the carceral state. It all indicates a strong sense of how young Black and Brown people were conditioned and socialized with one another, and how they built cohesion and a sense of mundane solidarity. That cohesion and mundane solidarity was also in relation with the carceral state. By 1991, commonly shared experiences of culture but also their perceptions of justice and injustice were not any different for Brown people as they were for Black people.

On March 3, 1991, the world outside of South Central LA got a sense of LA's carceral landscapes, when various news media outlets broadcasted the George Holliday video that showcased 25-year old Rodney G. King being brutalized by an informal posse made up of formal uniformed police officers belonging to the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and the Los Angeles

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[497] IMAGE: © Joseph Sohm/Visions of America/Corbis, DATE PHOTOGRAPHED: 1992, LOCATION: Los Angeles, California, USA, PHOTOGRAPHER Joseph Sohm COLLECTION: Documentary Value, JS001241.
http://www.corbisimages.com/Enlargement/JS001241.html.

Unified School District Police.[498] In total, there were about fourteen police officers, while a paramilitary helicopter from high in the air shined its illumnosu light beam at the center stage. At closer proximity to the video recorder, you hear the voice of what seem to be a host of Black and Brown people exchange critiques of the police's use of brutal force on Rodney King. The force was so severe that at one point in the video the voice of a Spanish-speaking bystander tells another onlooker in their crowd, "mira, lo mataron."[499]

While the Spanish-speaking bystander was wrong when he said "*mira, lo mataron*" ("Look, they've killed him"), he was not far from the truth. Rodney King remained motionless, as the LAPD dragged him to the side of the road while they waited for an ambulance to arrive. King was hospitalized. Along with the cuts and swollen purple bruises left on his face, King suffered a "broken cheekbone and broken right ankle," and also required "20 stitches, including five on the inside of his mouth." [500] LAPD Officers Laurance Powell, Timothy Wind, and Theodore Briceno, and Sergeant Stacy Koon were the main assailants that executed their 'to protect and to serve' motto on Rodney King with 56 baton blows, numerous kicks and stomps, and punches. The remaining ten LA police officers exercised their own mottos as well; they all 'pow-wowed' around suspects.[501] Given the violent and racist culture of police forces, this incident would have probably been swept under the rug had it not been for the George Holliday video. Nonetheless, the video did air; and the nation got to witness Chief Daryl Gates' militarized LAPD.

The constant airing of the George Holliday video prompted Los Angeles' first African American Mayor Tom Bradley to create the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department to investigate the LAPD. As the Independent Commission would later acknowledge:

> Our Commission owes its existence to the George Holliday videotape of the
> Rodney King incident. Whether there even would have been a Los Angeles
> Police Department investigation without the video is doubtful, since the efforts
> of King's brother, Paul, to file a complaint were frustrated, and the report of the
> involved officers was falsified. Even if there had been an investigation, our
> case-by-case review of the handling of over 700 complaints indicates that

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[498] Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (Los Angeles, Calif.), and Warren Christopher. 1991. Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department, p. 4. (hereafter, Independent Commission on LAPD).
[499] George Holliday, "Rodney King Beating Video, 1991-03-03" (University of Southern California Digital Library (USC.DL), 2017: at approximately 00:00:41;12.
[500] Independent Commission on LAPD, 3, 8.
[501] The Independent Commission on the LAPD found that "pow-wow" was a termed LAPD officers used when enough units surrounded suspects. See Independent Commission on LAPD, 50.

> without the Holliday videotape the complaint might have been adjudged to be 'not sustained,' because the officers' version conflicted with the account by King and his two passengers, who typically would have been viewed as not 'independent.'[502]

The public had filed many complaints against the LAPD but the LAPD's own investigation of itself almost never held anyone accountable. Plus, Paul King, Rodney King's brother, had already also filed a complaint that fell on deaf ears. The George Holiday video was significant because through it the Black and Brown community inserted themselves in a critique of LA's brutal carceral force. The Holliday video was also aired every day (and it would do so for almost every day of the entire year of 1991).

While images of the George Holliday video remained in the public's mind, the Independent Commission immediately went to work on investigating the LAPD on April 1, 1991. The Independent Commission embarked on a huge task, but because the LAPD was not used to such scrutiny, much of the data would be readily available. The Independent Commission accessed records and reports from 1986 through 1991. As their research unfolded, their data would also reveal the carceral world that Black and Brown people inhabited in LA during this time. The data would also show it from the perspective of the LAPD.

The LAPD championed their motto 'to protect and to serve'; and LAPD's own Mobile Digital Terminals (MDTs) – "computer messages sent to and from patrol cars throughout the City" – left no doubt about how the motto was put to practice on Black and Brown people.[503] From November 1989 through March 1991, for example, LAPD officers' interaction with the Black and Brown public were able to be read by everyone connected to the MDT network. LAPD messaged each other with anticipated plans to serve the public:

- "Capture him, beat him and treat him like dirt…"
  "Sounds like a job for the dynamic duo…after I beat him what doo [sic] I book him for and do I have to do a use of force [report]"
- "I hope there is enough units to set up a pow-wow around the susp so he can get a good spanking and nobody c it…"
  "U mean susps…cut to pieces…"
- "We're sitting on a C37 that was dropped off by two Mexicans…going to sit on it for a while."
  "R U going to beat em up like U did the last one"
- "[Name omitted] wanna go over to Delano later and hand out some street justice …"

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[502] Independent Commission on LAPD, ii.
[503] Independent Commission on LAPD, x-xi, 49-45, 72-73.

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- "This is the only job I've ever had where U don't have freedom of speech. As U can tell I'm aggravated but still smiling and glad to *serve and protect* [my emphasis added]. The last sentence was put in just in case they're monitoring. Ha ha"
- "Well…find me a pursuit…make this an exciting nite…jjezz I req to work here cuz it's busy…and nothing happens"
- "Standby we feel pretty good, we may have another pursuit here soon,, ha ha ha ha."[504]

Before even interacting with the public or knowing the legal nature of situations, LAPD officers anticipated executing violence on whomever they came in contact with. LAPD officers may have asserted that LA's Black-Brown communities made them 'fear for their life,' but the record shows that LAPD officers at times joyfully anticipated inflicting violence on the public. As one officer's rhyme indicates: "They give me a stick they give me a gun they pay me 59G:s to have some fun."[505]

 Those 'suspects' more often than not were both Black and Brown people. LAPD officers not only anticipated engaging violence, but when they did, it was often times rationalized with racist tropes.

- "Well…I'm back over here in the projects, pissing off the natives"
 "I would love to drive down Slauson with a flame thrower … we would have a barbeque."
- "Sounds like monkey slapping time."
 "A fem named [C]…I will be careful…we are out to get 211 susp that have been hitting almost twice a night. 2 m/blks…are you busy…"
 "I was for a while. But now I am going to slow it down. If you encounter these negros shoot first and ask questions later."
- "Hi….Just got mexercised for the night"
- "Lt says learn Spanish bone head…Sgt. [A] says tell them to go back to Mexico…"[506]
- "Don't cry Buckwheat, or is it Willie Lunch Meat"

The LAPD matter-of-factly communicated with each other in racist language when engaging Black and Brown people. The language ranged from animalizing people to negating their citizenship, if not their very humanity. Even Black and Brown grandmothers and grandfathers (senior citizens) were not exempt from LAPD's protect-and-to-serve services.

- "Did U arrest the 85yr old lady of [sic] just beat her up."

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[504] Ibid., 49-54.
[505] Ibid., 52.
[506] Ibid., 72-73.

"We just slapped her around a bit…she/s getting m/t [medical treatment] right now."[507]

Black and Brown youngsters, parents and grandparents, and entire families – were not safe from the LAPD's violence. The Black and Brown witnesses captured in the George Holliday video recording provided the Black-Brown community with commonly shared understandings experienced within the carceral city of LA. The Independent Commission would have benefitted from paying attention to the popular discourses and the larger culture that already informed the LAPD and also the larger carceral state.

The public had been saturated with anti-Black and anti-Brown discourses and policy leading up to the 1990s. There was no escaping the racialization and criminalization. Racial concepts such "hoodlums" and "habitual criminals" had given material weight to policing. For young Black and Brown people, living under those racial tropes was mundane. LAPD Chief Daryl Gates already had his militarized task forces tainted with racism. Alongside his SWAT teams, Daryl Gates also had his Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums (CRASH) units active in South Central since his appointment as Chief of LAPD in 1978. Since 1979, CRASH units harassed and heaped violent on whom the LAPD deemed 'hoodlums.'

Carceral violence against Black and Brown people was reinforced and romanticized in films, especially the "hoodlums" in Dennis Hopper's 1988 Hollywood blockbuster *Colors*.[508] *Colors* depicts racist assumptions about young Black and Brown people involved in LA's gang life. Immediately after the MGM and Orion Picture Release credits, *Colors* opens up by contextualizing the film's narrative with a fantastic ascending discourse as it relates to CRASH.

> The Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department each has a gang crime division. The Police Department's is called C.R.A.S.H. (Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums) and the Sheriff's division is called O.S.S (Operation Safe Streets). The combined anti-gang force numbers 250 men and women.
> …In the greater Los Angeles area there are over 600 street gangs with almost 70,000 members.
> …Last year there were 387 gang-related killings.[509]

Such narratives throughout the film speak to deep-rooted social and racial constructions about young Black and Brown people that had existed since the 1970s and materialized in the 1980s. Although the film debuts Cholos and Cholas (Brown)

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[507] Ibid., 49.

[508] Dennis Hopper, Michael Schiffer, Richard DiLello, Robert H. Solo, Sean Penn, Robert Duvall, Maria Conchita Alonso, and Herbie Hancock. 1988. *Colors* (Santa Monica, CA: MGM Home Entertainment, 1988).

[509] *Colors* (1988). See minute after film credits.

along with the Bloods and Crips (Blacks), *Colors* is less a film about young Black and Brown people than about how officials tell society how to view, racialize, and interpret Black and Brown youth culture.
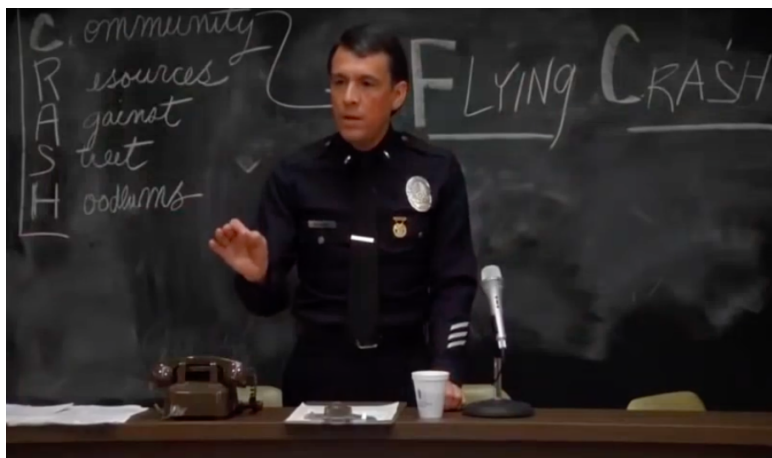

Fig. 3; Video freeze of *Colors* at approximately 1:55 min

As the film depicts a CRASH sergeant say at approximately minute 1:55, "We want a uniformed presence out in the streets. They're flying their colors, we're flying ours."[510] *Colors* reinforces the notion that the LAPD should deal with young Black and Brown people in the same violent way that gangs do with each other and society—or gangbangin'. This is what is implied by "they're flying [bangin'] their colors [gang], and we are flying [bangin'] ours [gang]." As we have seen, this is exactly how the LAPD engaged Black and Brown people.

Even social scientist had their foot in the discourse, especially James Q. Wilson's and George L. Kelling's popular "Broken Windows Theory."[511] Broken Windows Theory seriously advocated for policing the most miniscule signs of crime, such as broken windows or graffiti. The theory worked under the assumption that deteriorating (or broken) windows of buildings had nothing to do with deindustrialization. Deterioration, according to Wilson and Kelling, was a result of crime, and if not repaired (policed), it would tempt others (criminals) to break the remaining unbroken windows. The theory did not advocate for looking at the social constriction of race. It also failed to account for the economic conditions of society's poor. The theory's solution only calls for more policing.

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[510] *Colors* (1988): See minute 1:55.
[511] James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic*, (March 1982). retrieved 2017-30-1 from Manhattan Institute.

When the George Holliday's video of the "Rodney King Beating" aired in March of 1991, LA's Black and Brown people thought they might finally catch a break from police brutality. Justice would be slim, however, as more of LAPD's anti-Black and anti-Brown MTDs communicated throughout their system city were exposed. In two-week's time after the George Holiday video aired, hope for justice would dimmish further with the killing of a Black 15-year old Latasha Harlins.[512]

Not even a month had gone by, and another video recording surfaces that depicts anti-Blackness. The video captures the morning of March 16, where young Latasha Harlins enters a local coinvent store – "Empire Liquor" – to purchase a bottle of orange juice worth about a dollar and 79 cents. In the video, Latasha Harling can be seen placing the bottle in her bag prior to paying for it, but she can also be seen holding the money she intends to exchange for the juice as she walks to the cashier. Korean-business owner of "Empire Liquor," Soon Ja Du, can be seen being more attentive to the bottle going inside Latasha Harlins' bag than to the money Latasha has in her hand. Before Latasha Harlins can pay, Soon Ja Du accuses Latasha of theft. The video shows that both of them argue over the miscommunication, and then a scuffle ensues. Thereafter, the video recording shows, Soon Ja Du pulls a gun out and shoots Latasha Harlins in the back of the head as Harlins was getting ready to leave the store. Immediately, Latasha Harlins dies. The video also lends context to the insider-outsider business practices discussed earlier. Latasha Harlins was comfortable in her neighbor, while Soon Ja Du did not afford Latasha the benefit of the doubt. The Latasha Harlins video recording and the George Holliday's "Rodney King Beating" recording air almost every day throughout LA.

Assailants in both cases would go to court, and the eyes of the Black and Brown community gazed not just at the assailants but also upon the whole criminal justice system. Soon Ja Du's case would go to trial first, thereafter LAPD Officers Laurance Powell, Timothy Wind, and Theodore Briceno, and Sergeant Stacy Koon would have their days in court.

On November 15, Soon Ja Du was found guilty of killing Latasha Harlins. Ja Du's sentence could have ranged anywhere from ten to sixteen years in prison for manslaughter; however, Judge Joyce Karlin explained, "I know a criminal when I see one," and reduced Soon Ja Du's conviction to five year probation with a ten-year prison suspended sentence. This enraged the South Central Black (but also Brown) community for various reasons. Judge Joyce Karlin's decision showed no sympathy whatsoever for Latasha Harlins, her family and friends, and her community. Likewise, it showed racist disrespect for 'other Latashas' and other 'Rodney Kings.'

On November 26, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Stanly M. Weisberg granted the motion for LAPD Officers Laurance Powell, Timothy Wind, and Theodore

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Briceno, and Sergeant Stacy Koon to have their trial moved to a bordering town north of the San Fernando Valley, Semi Valley. Technically, Semi Valley was in Ventura County, in a predominantly white neighborhood. The LAPD officers requested this change, as they looked to Semi Valley's white residents and a white jury from valley peers to rescue them. Their strategy succeeded.

The trail went on from March 5, through April 29 of 1992. Along with the trial, newspapers and the broadcasting television stations continued to air both video recordings of the killing of Latasha Harlings and the Rodney King beating. Then, on April 29, Semi Valley's all-white jury finds all LAPD officers "not guilty." From everything that Black and Brown communities endured at the hands of carceral forces throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, this verdict was interpreted by the Black and Brown communities as adding insult to injury.

Within an hour of the verdict, the Black and Brown angels took to the streets. Based on their experiences with the LAPD and the criminal justice system, Black and Brown people in South Central, Watts, Compton, and places in Long Beach collectively interpreted these cases as miscarriages of justice. Angry protest quickly escalated to violence everywhere. No clear evidence points to who or where the rebellion began. Collective Black-Brown protest proliferated; some protestors mounted demonstrations at police stations and even at their headquarters. However, television coverage and other news media outlets caught some of the uprisings' early violent beginnings at the intersections of Normandy Avenue and Florence Avenue in South Central. The coverage mostly caught Black people harassing various non-Black motorists in the area. The coverage was live.

Dominating the airwaves were images of Black people inflicting physical violence on non-Black peoples, this included violence on Brown people. Another was the infamous image of the beating of the white motorist Reginald Denny, who was pulled from his truck and hit with brick in the head. A Black man was also shown pushing and discouraging youngsters from hitting Reginald Denny. At one point, this Black Samaritan picks Reginald Denny up and carries him to safety. These images saturated the television airwaves. They might have served as fodder for conversations about Black-Brown interracial conflicts on the streets, but they did not hinder Black-Brown interracial solidarity from forming.

Brown people joined in solidarity and rebelled against what they, too, perceived as the unjust acquittal of the LAPD police officers accused of beating Rodney King. As we have seen from LAPD's MDTs communication, CRASH forces, and the larger anti-Black and anti-Brown hegemony that pervaded society, Brown people had been subjected to the same state violence. Brown people marched with their Black peers down the streets and disrupted business-as-usual, but also set the city aflame. The Black-Brown uprising would last for three days.

The realities of Black-Brown coexistence helped build an interracial solidarity, and it was strong enough to pause Black intra-racial violence and pause Brown intra-racial violence. Blood-Crip rivalries and Cholo-Cholo rivalries were suspended indeterminably. As d-jay and emcee Dr. Dre recalls in his song immediately after the uprising,

> when ni**az get together they get mad cuz they can't fade us/Like my ni**az
> from South Central Los Angeles, they found out they can't handle us
> Bloods, Crips on the same squad/With the 'Ese's [Cholos] helping, ni***a it's
> time to rob and mob
> And break the white man off something 'lovely' [sarcasm for violence against
> structural white supremacy]/Me don't love them cuz they don't love we…[513]

Intraracial and Interracial solidarity was quickly forged because of the commonly shared experiences that all currently shared within the same interracial world of Black-Brown South Central, including racist police violence. As emcee Ice T also recalls in his song and music video that surfaced immediately after the uprising,

> And we gotta' realize the boys on the east side [of South Central]/You call them
> Eses,' I call them allies [music video scene contains brown people waiving the
> Mexican Flag during uprising..]
> Because the day that we all unite/Watch the pigs [police] get real polite
> Motherfuckers gotta' learn quick/ That we ain't taking no more shit![514]

Indeed, Black-Brown coexistence in South Central was under sieged by violent police. The Black-Brown interracial uprising was not just in response to the injustice of Latasha Harlins' case or Rodney King's case. The outcome of these two cases was only the catalyst. Any dignity left in "Brown Pride and Black Pride" was not going to let go.

While the burning and looting took place, the rebellion against the state violence was also showing up on the walls. In the second day of the rebellion, Black, Brown, and even some white folks could be seen throughout the larger East Side areas of South Central and in Watts, and in Compton, including bordering areas of Long Beach running through the streets with the merchandise they had pilfered. As a Brown woman from Compton recalls when stepping outside her home during the second day of the uprising,

> …countless neighbors unloaded appliances, furniture, shoes, and clothing from
> the nearest plaza and into their homes…it was like a celebratory event to
> witness in the neighborhood.[515]

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[513] Dr Dre, "The Day The Ni**az Took Over" *The Chronic*, 1992.
[514] ICE-T, "Gotta Lot of Love," song and music video (1993).
[515] Field notes: Kency Cornejo, graduate student at Duke University during interview, in Graff Narratives.

Many Black and Brown people arrived with large furniture and other smaller items such as shoes, diapers, and groceries, and there was no shame in it. It was seen as a "celebratory" rebellion because it was also in relation to the state's failure to secure Black and Brown people's safety from the police. The origins of the tension revolved around general police violence on Black and Brown communities. The Nig**az With Attitude (NWA) rap group had already offered a searing critique of the entire criminal justice system in their 1988 hit song "Fuck Tha Police." In the lyrics and in their music video, they invert the carceral imaginary and make themselves the judges and district attorneys to execute justice – or injustice – on the police.

> Right about now, NWA court is in full effect
> Judge Dre presiding… in the case of the NWA versus the police department,
> Prosecuting attorneys are MC Ren, Ice Cube and Eazy motherfuckin' E.
> Order, Order, Order.
> Ice Cube take the motherfuckin' Stand.[516]

During the second day of the uprising, the celebratory sentiment behind the Black-Brown uprising was not just saying "Fuck the Police" anymore. This time, the writing on the wall indicated that Black and Brown people advocated the abolition of the police.

Various buildings throughout South Central LA were burned, and in the aftermath, amid the debris, Black and Brown people put graffiti signs up on the walls. While some signs read "Rodney King Lives", "Rodney King Was Here," many other graffiti signs read "LAPD 187" (with the "LAPD" letters crossed out) and "Police 187" (with word "police" crossed out).
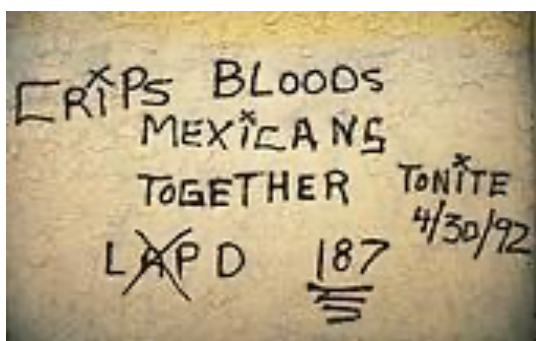

Fig. 4. "Crips, Bloods, Mexicans Together," "187 [California Penal Code for Murder] LAPD [Los Angeles Police Department]," "Tonight April 30, 1992."

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[516] N.W.A. "Fuck Tha Police," *Straight out of Compton* (Priority Records LLCR, 1988); See also Music video.

Graffiti on a wall in South Central Los Angeles encourages Black and Brown unity against the LAPD.[517]

Mostly law enforcement and other penal agencies were more than familiar with the number "187": California's penal code number for murder. Given their constant interaction with the carceral state, Black and Brown people on the streets were also familiar with California's penal code 187. By the second day of the uprising, Black and Brown people appropriated California's penal code 187 to signal abolition – or murder – of the police.

People of the streets, and the music from the streets, had grown accustomed to appropriating California's penal codes in street and poetic ways. As emcees from the Brown music rap group Cypress Hill made similar assertions months after the George Holliday video aired:

Comin' out the alley/ See the Chief's son, pig Officer O'Malley (oink [mocking sound of a pig]*)*

In the black and white [police patrol car]*, thinking he's going to check'm, right? Wrong!/ It's gonna be, on! That pig better saca* [pull out] *la chrome* [gun]*! ...PD* [Police Department] *187* [penal code].[518]

On streets and in hip-hop, California's penal code were not rare. People on the streets mundanely referenced penal codes to converse with one another; at other times, they directly critiqued police departments. As Dr. Dre and Snoop Dog enunciated in their hit single "Deep Cover" weeks prior to uprising,

Yeah! And you don't stop.../'Cuz it's One Eight Seven [penal code 187] *on an undercover cop!*

Yeah! And you don't stop.../'Cuz' it's One Eight Seven [penal code 187] *on an undercover cop*![519]

Penal code 187 was in Black and Brown people's everyday talk, music, and vernacular. Also as important, the understanding of penal code 187 was not just a limited to Black and Brown people.

Various street groups from other ethnoracial backgrounds were not any different. They also made reference to the same 187 penal code and used it in the same manner as their Black and Brown peers. As emcee and punk rock singer Bradly Nowell recounts in *Sublime*'s "April 29, 1992" song,

They said it was for the black man, they said it was for the Mexican/And not for the white man

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[517] Image: © Joseph Sohm/Visions of America/Corbis, Date Photographed 1992, Location Los Angeles, California, USA, Photographer Joseph Sohm, Collection: Terra, JS001243. http://www.corbisimages.com/Enlargement/JS001243.html.

[518] Cypress Hill, "A Hole in the Head," *Cypress Hill* (Colombia, Rouffhouse, 1991).

[519] Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg, "Deep Cover," *Deep Cover*, Soundtrack (Epic Records, 1992).

*But if you looked at the streets, it wasn't about Rodney King/It was 'bout these
fucked up situation and these fucked up police
It's about coming up and stayin' on top/And screamn' "one, eight, seven"*
[penal code 187] *on a mathafucken' cop…*[520]

Notions of California's penal codes were consumed throughout various street people, and they appropriated the notion behind penal codes to interpret, give meaning, and communicate with each other in manners they understood.

As for the "LAPD 187" and "Police 187" signs that manifested during the uprising, Black and Brown people did not advocate for the literal murder of individual police officers. Both Black and Brown people had many opportunities to do so, but no record exists that they attempted to assassinate or murder police officers. Black and Brown people only lacked formal platforms or the language to clearly articulate the politics of the abolition of the police, but their appropriation of California's 187 penal code for murder clearly enunciated its elimination. This was the larger Black-Brown proposition on the streets, and it was more than enough reason to forge intraracial peace among Black and Brown people. This would serve as the basis for local conversations and gatherings for the days to come.

On the final day of the Black-Brown uprising, most Black and Brown residents had been admonished that the National Guard would arrive to put down the rebellion. Mayor Tom Bradly had already called for a state of emergency but for unknown reasons Republican Governor Pete Wilson had hesitated. By the end of the third day of the uprising, Pete Wilson finally threatened South Central LA not only with curfews, and violence, but also barricades. Afraid that they would not be allowed outside of the affected "rioting" areas, Black and Brown parents and elders, and children stepped out for the loot too.

Mothers with children, fathers with children, whole families strode triumphantly
down the street, with their "goodies" stuffed in every pocket and waistband.[521]

While the celebratory sprit still hovered over the Black and Brown communities, entire families scrambled for groceries and other basic living essentials, primarily because by this time the National Guard was already locking down the city. Many mothers could also be seen walking or running through the streets with milk and with bags of diapers for their children. Toward the evening of May 1, 1992, the National Guard patrolled the city in full military uniform and military vehicles. As this took place, the violence, fire, and rebelling also began to diminish. What did not diminish on the streets, however, was still the yearning for and the notion of life without police.

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[520] Sublime, "April 29, 1992," *Sublime* (MCA, 1996).
[521] Thomas, Kenneth, "A Sight to Behold." *Sentinel*, May 13, 1992, http://www.proquest.com/ (accessed October 23, 2010).

"Peace" and Black-Brown Interracial Fragmentation

The celebratory sprit of the rebellion persisted during the presence of the National Guard. The on-the-ground arguments about the need to abolish the police likewise persisted. While media coverage privileged the platforms and press conferences of LA's formal Black and Brown leaders, on the street, talk of 'peace' and about the abolition of the police were taking place. Only the first proposition for 'peace' would gain traction; unfortunately, this emphasis on 'peace' would quickly drown-out any notion of abolition of the police. Unfortunately, this moment would also rupture LA's history of peaceful relations between Brown and Black people.

All groups realized that intraracial peace among gangs had to first be guaranteed if the second proposition was to even gain momentum. However, as the intricacies that helped intraracial "peace treaties" be imaginable on the streets eclipsed the intraracial 'peace' possibilities of prison life, the struggle for intraracial unity would also foment Black-Brown interracial separation, racial segregation, and interracial violence on the streets of South Central. Abolition of the police never stood a chance. It quickly evaporated, but with it would also go LA's long history of Black-Brown relations of coexistence.

Before the news media noticed, small intraracial and interracial gatherings continued throughout South Central after the uprising. These interactions took place in local parks that both Blacks and Browns shared. Curfew were still in place, and the National Guard and police remained vigilant. The people attending meetings proceeded with caution as well with curiosity for many reasons. Caution had much to do with the National Guard and police but also with distrust that stemmed from pre-exiting intraracial gang rivalries on the streets. This limited interactions, especially interracial ones. The National Guard made sure to prevent large groups from forming and pushed residents back in their homes by dusk. Such conditions limited interracial exchanges. These conditions mostly made possible intraracial interactions at people's homes, with immediate families, and within local ethnoracial street organizations. With limited time, space, and interactions, Black and Brown people worked with what they could. As such, initial calls for trans-neighborhood street alliances had to and could only start off in intraracial ways.

Intraracial peace treaties, however, made sense. Intraracial violence was an everyday occurrence between Blood and Crip gangs, which were predominately Black; Cholo (Ese's) gangs only rivaled other Cholo gangs, which were predominately Brown. Furthermore, and as we have seen throughout, Black-Brown interracial violence was rare. Originally, street alliances were never intended to be ethnoracially-centric. The necessity for trans-hood-barrio alliances, nonetheless, had to begin at home and with their own. This is where conversations and interactions about peace seemed most feasible and readily accessible.

Various efforts at gang peace treaties had been explored prior to the uprising, but as mass intraracial and interracial alliances were forged during the uprising, peace treaties made for encouraging conversations and goals. Some of the early peace treaties were coming out of Watts. As Ice T recalls, receiving news and video footage of the truce,

> I was out on tour, representing this lifestyle, and I got a call that there's a gang peace. I thought it was BS. I thought it was impossible. As long as I had been begging brothers to cool out, because even at the end of the movie *Colors* I was like, "Please stop, 'cause I want y'all to live."
> The gang peace was real, and they literally sent me video footage from Watts. So I wrote the record "Gotta Lot of Love." When I saw that video of the gang peace with thousands of brothers coming together, kickin' it, I wrote.[522]

Intraracial peace treaties caught the hearts and minds of many people that yearned to be free of gang violence. Much music and a number of rap songs would come out of it. As Ice T notes, his "Gotta Lot of Love" song stemmed directly from hearing the positive news happening in Watts.

Although they did not call them 'intraracial' peace treaties, that is what they were; and the intraracial peace treaties that gained publicity were the ones being forged by Black people. News outlets paid attention to these intraracial peace treaties, As The *Sacramento Observer* noted a week after the rebellion,

> The different races and diverse gang family members' participation in the recent riot and looting revealed to the Bloods and Crips that when there is a common cause or focus, even waring [sic] factions can join together. [523]

Peace treaties were becoming popular. They caught the public's attention and revealed a common cause. The common cause, however, originally was to fight state violence if not abolish the police. Peace treaties were only a means to that end. As a news broadcasting network captures a Black man speak during the peace treaties,

> The riots helped because we realized we now have a common enemy, our common enemy. So, for those brothers and sisters that could not see a common enemy, now they do.[524]

The common cause, or common enemy, did not reference Bloods, Crips, or Cholo gangs; instead, their common enemy was racist state violence. This was the reason for

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[522] Ice T, in Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja, *Uprising: Crips and Bloods Tell the Story of America's Youth in the Crossfire* ([First Published by New York: Scribner 1995.] New York: Touchstone Edition, 1997), 10.

[523] Fred Clark, "The Gang Mergers." *Sacramento Observer*, May 14, 1992, Vol. 29, Iss. 25; pg. A1, http://www.proquest.com.

[524] Footage of 1992 "Peace Treaties" in South Central LA, News network unidentifiable due copyright privileges, for view of the reference see 1992 Special Report: "Gang Truce", https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPVx5mQ3myc&t=35s.

alliances in the first place. The end-goal, however, was quickly getting drowned out as the media and various other efforts supported intraracial peace treaties as the actual reason for peace itself. As the year went by, newspapers and various news media outlets would continue stating peace as the ultimate goal of these peace treaties. For example, The *New Pittsburgh Courier* reported,

> There is good news from the "Hood." Gang-related violence is beginning to somewhat decrease. The initiative taken by young gang members in Los Angeles to declare a "truce" is one of the most significant acts of the 20th century. Now that the "truce" has held for more than one year in Los Angeles, there are other "truce" movements evolving in other large cities in the United States.[525]

Indeed, intraracial peace between the Bloods and Crips was something to celebrate. It demonstrated how peace was not just possible but also probable. Intraracial Blood and Crip truces made for positive hope. During the first year of the post-1992 rebuilding efforts, Black gangs took center stage, and in a positive light.[526] Even the "Newly elected President Bill Clinton," Kamran Afary notes, "…invited Los Angeles gang truce leaders to the White House for his inauguration ceremony in January 1993."[527] The Black vote had helped usher President Bill Clinton into the oval office, and he wanted to pay homage to what seemed to be at the time a most remarkable outcome in the Black community. To reiterate: the media and the community focused on gangs because they wanted to see an end to gang violence. Since peace treaties appeared to ameliorate gang violence, some community leaders and public officials applauded the efforts.

There is no doubt that Black gang truce leaders had the best intentions for gang peace in general, but intraracial Black peace treaties only took center stage. As the fight for the common enemy – the state – was abandoned, so were Brown people left behind in all efforts for peace. Brown gang leaders did not receive an invitation to the White House, nor were mass efforts made to mobilize them alongside Black gang leaders. Few interracial invitations were enunciated throughout the neighborhoods, even though the news media presented whispers of such invitations. Unfortunately, no concerted efforts materialized. Chicano film director and actor Edward James Olmos made random appearances in South Central's rebuilding efforts. Much of his time, however, was consumed on tour for his recently release carceral film *American Me*, which would

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[525] Benjamin Chavis F., Jr. "Reflections From Los Angeles" New Pittsburgh Courier, May 12, 1993 City Edition. http://www.proquest.com.

[526] Kamran Afary, *Performance and Activism: Grassroots Discourse After The Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992* (Lexington Books, 2009).

[527] Kamran Afary, *Performance and Activism*, 4.

only feed into the larger prison imaginary involving carceral Black-Brown interracial violence and intraracial prison sanctions (intraracial peace included).[528]

From the perspective of LA's interracial graffiti crews, however, interracial alliances were insufficiently supported, if not discouraged. While the police did not harass Black gangs or Brown gangs during the intraracial peace celebrated, police continued their violence against Black-Brown interracial gatherings and groups. During the rebuilding of the city, graffiti crew meetings declined, primarily because their usual hangouts were temporarily frozen since public schools and parks, including public transportation, were closed. They still made efforts to meet. Unfortunately, individuals might be subject to police violence if caught alone. As Ekoks recalls,

> I recall coming from playing basketball with the homies, both blacks [he] and us [the interracial group], at the school; and we were being watched by the patrolling police cars. Once we were done, we all headed home but when we separated the 'CRASH units' would catch us individually and jump [assault] us to the degree that they would leave us for dead…I was one of them. I don't think gangs even got such harassment. They were even viewed by the local police as community builders. We were viewed as the problems.[529]

From the perspective of Ekoks, interracial groups seemed to pose more significant threats to the police. Ekoks' recollection speaks to a more common pattern of police harassment of interracial groups. Perhaps in the minds of the police interracial groupings resembled the interracial mobs that participated in the uprising. Regardless, graffiti writers were not protected under the same mantra of peace treaties that afforded gangs a relative hands-off practice from the police.

Graffiti writers, fortunately, did not need intraracial peace. Nor did they need interracial peace treaties. They were already interracial. They did rival each other, and sometimes that resulted in fights, but it was not comparable to gang violence. The non-violent aspect of graffiti crews was a key reason Black and Brown people joined graffiti crews in the first place.

Few graffiti writers attended intraracial peace treaties too. They thought it was a safe space to voice opinions about the ongoing police violence that was inflicted on them. Gangs and gang leaders minimized graffiti writers' role at peace treaties, however. Sometimes gangs even silenced them or threatened them with violence. From the perspective of graffiti writers, both Black and Brown intraracial peace treaties did not make 'peace' safe for them. Gang leaders clearly prioritized intraracial gang peace. This was especially because the OGs [or, original gangsters] had experience with it in prison life. In other words, Ogs knew how to get it done.

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[528] Edward James Olmos, *American Me* (Universal Pictures, 1992)
[529] Field note, phone conversation recording with Ekoks One, Black male who belonged to multiple graffiti crews.

What made gang leaders OGs was neither simply age nor formal training in graduate schools or with grassroot organizations; they had neither of the latter. While age enhanced their OG status, most gang leaders owed their OG status in this particular context to the fact that they had training with intraracial peace treaties in the penitentiary, a prerequisite for ethnoracial group survival in prisons (see Chapter Two). Among many things, that is also what certified gang leaders' OGs status. On the streets of South Central – and in any gang neighborhood throughout LA – an OG was an informal veteran with considerable clout within their specific gang and neighborhood. Reflecting South Central's interracial culture, both Black and Brown people understood and exchanged the term "OG" in the same way. An OG was not just someone of a certain age, he mostly was one who attained that status from their lived experience in prison life. In other words, experience is what made OGs; and, this carceral experience was also critical to enabling gang leaders to consolidate intraracial peace treaties with gangs.

Conversely, the same experience could not necessarily inform viable, community-based interracial peace efforts or alliances. Fortunately, given the culture of South Central, interracial peace was still unwarranted. This helps explain why gang leaders so often did not actually interact interracially at peace treaties. On the one hand, they did not know how because prison trained them otherwise. On the other hand, Black-Brown coexistence was still the rule in the streets. As we have seen throughout, interracial tension and violence were relatively rare. Several gang leaders gave very revealing interviews regarding their peace treaty efforts. The *Sacramento Observer* concluded:

> The merger of the Crips and Bloods is not a new phenomenon, because every
> California adult and youth penal institution that houses both gangs has
> witnessed them coming together to fight another common incarcerated, enemy
> gang family: Aryan Brotherhood, Mexican Mafia, teenage Sorenos [sic,
> Sureños] or White-Power groups, etc.[530]

As gang leaders gave interviews regarding their peace treaty possibilities throughout 1993, prisons life served as a crucial reference point for pre-existing intraracial solidarity. News broadcasting, newspapers, and even radio shows made mention of this critical fact, but the focus remained on "peace."

Prison gang leaders, or OGs, only intended to use prison life's intraracial solidarities to prove that gang peace treaties – or intraracial peace – were more than possible. OGs wanted younger people see that intraracial peace thrived in prison. In addition, they also wanted current gang members to see its intraracial contradiction. This was the goal. In his interview, OG Crip Big Phil states,

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[530] Fred Clark, "The Gang Mergers" (1992)

By being in the system and seeing how all the brothers are on one side [segregated], and the white boys and Mexicans are over on the other side [segregation], I was like, "Man, what is this? Is this how it is? And we're [blacks] up in here [in the streets] killing each other? We're out in the streets killing each other like this?" When I got out, I put together a few gang meetings, four hundred to five hundred guys at the gang meetings, you know, getting ready to rally it up again.[531]

Segregation and the interracial violence of prison culture surprised but also informed Big Phil's understanding of the irony of intraracial gang violence. The intraracial crime that could send feuding Crips or Bloods to prison would also turn out to lead them to hold hands with each other in prison for survival.

Interviewers also wanted to document the contradictions in gang violence to promote reasons for peace (intraracial peace). OGs' responses often referenced intraracial truces in prison, seeking to alleviate the high probability of interracial warfare. As OG Blood Bruno recalls his time in prison,

Q: How did that make you feel being in the streets all the time and feeling the crips were your enemies, and you when you get there to the level-4 pen [penitentiary], you realize that's your brother?

B: I had a reputation for doing whatever needed to be done, as far as in the [gang] banging field, so it was first brought to me as soon as I hit the line [prison main line]. My homeboy immediately pulled me, we walked the track, and they said, "Bruno, it's like that here, we're [bloods and crips] not tripping [beefing] up here. It's off-and-on war with these Mexicans and white boys; we don't have time to be fighting each other.

…damn, it [gang bangin'] really doesn't make any sense now.[532]

Bruno was probably more remorseful about his own gang related actions that landed him in prison, but his growing understanding of the complexities of gang bangin' came in relation to his concurrent growing understanding of the contradictions in prison life. That contradiction, which obliterated the possibility of interracial solidarity with Brown and white prisoners, meant that Blacks had to forge intraracial alliances against Brown people and white peoples in prison. And vice versa: White and Brown prisoners identifying and acting separately, had to forge alliances in opposition to outside ethnoracial groups. From prison life, then, gang leaders had learned how to establish rules and regulations for intraracial peace, even the absence of such peace in prisons. Nonetheless, this complicated understanding informed their intraracial peace efforts on the streets, upon their release from prison.

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[531] Big Phil, in Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja, *Uprising*, 28.
[532] Bruno, in Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja, *Uprising*, 165.

Brown people's intraracial peace treaties and OG's role in them followed the same patterns in the immediate aftermath of the uprising. Because much attention was given to Black people's intraracial peace treaties, Brown people's intraracial peace treaties were hardly recorded following the uprising. Toward the end of 1993 and through the early months of 1994, however, Brown people's intraracial carceral perspective would show up clearer. Unfortunately, this time around, it reflected an anti-Black politics.

From the start of the peace treaties' moment, Brown gangs made a temporary peace with other Cholo gangs, but at the same time they did not pursue interracial peace with Black gangs. As we have seen for both groups, previously, interracial peace efforts were not warranted as relatively peaceful Black-Brown coexistence was the rule. As with Black intraracial peace in prisons, Brown people also saw intraracial solidarity in prisons. Throughout various South Central neighborhoods, Cholo gang intraracial peace formations were taking place at the same parks that were interracially shared. They had a similar tone. They referenced tensions with Blacks in prisons, as they looked to materialize intraracial peace.

At Brown intraracial gatherings, however, talk of possible interracial peace treaties floundered, as those conversations were increasingly shaped by formerly imprisoned Brown OGs whose commitment to interracialism was suspect at best. Between mid-1993 and early-1994, perceptions of intensifying Black-Brown tensions dominated the street atmosphere. As emcee Ice T tells it,

> What's going on right now is that we have a Black-gang truce in Los Angeles,
> which has gotten really powerful since the Uprisings. I believe that the cops
> and the people who feel that they can't let this unity jump off, they pushing the
> Black gangs toward the Mexicans. The Black and the Latinos have never had
> any beef with each other in L.A. If you go to prison, everybody sides up
> because that's prison, prison is another whole game. But on the streets of L.A.
> there has never been Black vs Latino warfare. What's going on now is the cops
> are telling the kids that the Mexican have the dope, so again what they doing is
> throwing us poison and telling us to fight over it.
> The Mexica kids hang out with the black brothers. There's not much difference
> at all. We low-ride, we say "homeboy," we kick it.[533]

Ice T's concern for the Black-Brown streets allows us to see significant carceral aspects in South Central. On the one hand, Ice T acknowledges the history of Black-Brown coexistence, but in the same breath he recognizes prison-life as its exception. Although Ice T's outlook is hopeful, he clearly highlights the dynamic interaction between street life and prisons. The interracial groups that, according to Ice T, "kick it [hangout together]" knew too well the inherent limitations of these alleged peace treaties

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[533] Ice T, in Yusuf Jah and Shah'Keyah Ja, *Uprising*, 15.

precisely because up to this point they themselves had not found a safe place at any of these intraracial peace treaty gatherings. As graffiti crews in particular exemplified Black-Brown street interracialism, their exclusion from intraracial peace treaty efforts led by the formerly incarcerated, revealed not only the carceral ties between street life and prison life. That exclusion also mirrored the serious drawbacks of the growing impact of prison life on street life being spearheaded by recently released formerly incarcerated people of color.

In fact, graffiti crews attended intraracial peace treaty meetings, but their contributions were stifled. Peace treaties were gang intraracial peace treaties, and graffiti crews were not gangs. Graffiti crews also did not have interracial or intraracial challenges. What gangs and graffiti crews had in common was that they shared the streets, and they were also subjected to similar forms of state-police violence. Attending made sense, especially since meetings first appeared to be about street treaties. However, gang leaders led intraracial peace treaties that prioritized gangs. This excluded much of the graffiti writers' input. In addition, individual graffiti crew members that belonged to the opposite ethnoracial group from the ones hosting intra-racial gatherings were ignored, indeed alienated. They had nothing to say to those from another racial group. To recap: graffiti crews were excluded from treaties, especially as conversations promising intraracial peace mostly referenced Black-Brown interracial violence in prisons. Therefore, those conversations had little relevance for actual on-the-ground relations between Black and Brown folks.

As undefined rumors about Black-Brown interracial tensions become real, however, interracial graffiti crews are the first to get caught in all the intraracial and interracial crossfire. As news media and newspaper outlets publicized possibilities and probabilities of Black-Brown tension, Black gangs realized that they had to call for interracial alliances. The call, however, was a little too late. Brown prison gang leaders did not condone this. Instead, they sanctioned Black-Brown interracial violence at Brown intraracial peace treaties. As Cholo leader Boxer recounts his orders, "…stop all drive-by shootings against members of their own race, La Raza. Black gangsters were still fair game."[534] Brown prison leaders were clear on their anti-interracial stance, as interracial gang truces or alliances had the potential to threaten their markets of power.

Graffiti writers were being pushed to choose a side. When graffiti writers attended peace treaty gatherings, they were now admonished that the interraciality of the crews was both counter to the peace treaties and of a looming Black-Brown interracial beef. Black graffiti writer Mercy recalls,

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[534] Chris Blatchford, *The Black Hand: The Bloody Rise and Redemption of "Boxer" Enriquez, A Mexican Mob Killer* (Harper Press, 2008), 122.

> The local gangs wanted to have meetings with us too…concerning how our
> crew was both of Blacks and Hispanic mixed. They started indicating how we
> needed to pick the side of our own race.[535]

Gang members wanted graffiti writers to attend intraracial peace treaties, and the purpose was clear: to discipline them. Brown gangs and gang leaders wanted to put graffiti writers on notice that interracial street solidarities or alliances were now to be shunned. Once admonished, graffiti writers abandoned these meetings. They knew that they were targeted because of their interracial ways and identity.

As Black-Brown tension was shaping up in both Black and Brown intraracial meetings, Brown gang leaders first explained this new carceral street code to graffiti crews and that they were expected to conform. Brown gangs then put a ceasefire on intraracial violence. They not only stated that "Black gangsters were still fair game," but also that fair game now included graffiti crews. Brown gang leaders thus declared a "green light," or fair game, on graffiti writers too.[536] While gang violence declined among some gangs, their violence toward graffiti crews accelerated.

Graffiti writers were never passive, and some did defend themselves. Some eventually responded to gangs in similarly violent ways, but these were still isolated events. Defending oneself in South Central was a common act of survival; violence was sometimes the last means of resort. The difference with graffiti crews, however, was that they engaged in violence but quickly sought to disengage from it to avoid its downward, often tragic spiral. Given the complexities of how now race, incarceration, peace treaties, and gangs intersected, graffiti crews found it difficult to disengage without exacerbating interracial violence.

When graffiti crews retaliated against gang violence, it was in response to gang aggression; but because gangs were defined along ethnoracial lines, gangs chose to interpret graffiti crew's reactions as targeting the race. There was no Black-Brown interracial tension or war yet, but ethnoracial gangs used graffiti writers' reluctance to pick sides to further validate the coming of the Black versus Brown interracial wars. Interracial graffiti crews saw gangs as instigators of interracial discord. GillsOne recalls the rivalry between gangs and graffiti writers.

> It was like, if a Raza gangbanger got killed or seriously injured by 'tag-
> bangers,' the story was painted in the 'hood' as if it was racially motivated; us
> Raza graffiti writers were caught in-between for many reasons: 1) we were
> Raza and the 'hood' questioned our loyalty to our people, 2) the homie-ship

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[535] Mern One, CHB, Black male, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

[536] Roger Getsman, and Caleb Neelon, *The History of American Graffiti* (Harper Design: New York, 2010), pp. 208-220. Although Getsman and Neelon only give us a snapshot of this tensions, they describe how graffiti writers were targeted by gangs, and how this was called the "green light."

[friendships] of Blacks and Brown could be in conflict, and 3) some of our family members, like our cousins, belong to either gangs or graffiti crews, if not both…It was crazy.[537]

Graffiti crew reactions were interpreted as targeting race when it was mere rivalry. Graffiti crew's defense against gangs even gave birth to a new street term, "tag-bangin'" or "tag-bangers." Although the streets and the media started interpreting this rivaling segment of graffiti writers as gangs, they were not simultaneously both graffiti crews and gangs. From the perspective of gangs, graffiti crews still did not fit within the racial arrangements of gang life and prison life. From the perspective of graffiti crews, they only did not want to get bullied or harmed by gangs.

The complexities of race, incarceration, peace treaties, and gangs and now "tag-bangin'" made for popular news coverage, and Fox news anchorman Chris Blatchford did not let it pass him by. During 1993 and 1994, Chris Blatchford was carving out his career from sensationalized 'Blacksploitation' and 'Brownsploitation' reporting. When tag-bangin' came under his radar, Blatchford went to chase down these young people.[538] He knew that these young people would not mind appearing on television, so

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[537] Oral conversation with GillsOne, Brown male from a multiracial graffiti crew. Gills had family members that belonged to gangs or graffiti crews, but he also had individual family members that belong to part of both simultaneously. See Garcia, A.'s

[538] For short survey on Chris Blatchford's award winning role with gangs, "Tag Bangers" and the Mexican Mafia see United Press International, "'48 Hours,' 'thirtysomething,' KCBA Among Peabo Winners" *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 15, 1989, LAT Home Collections. (Accessed Feb, 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/1989-04-15/news/mn-1685_1_george-foster-peabody-awards-peabody-judges-suzi-s-story; Blatchford, Fox 11 News on leading role in L.A. City Attorney's Office ("Revolving Door Justice"), the L.A. County Rapid Transit Authority ("Tagger Wars"), L.A. Archdiocese Obscenity & Pornography Commission (L.A., the Mafia, and "Pornography") and the California Correctional Peace Officers Association ("Prison Gangs") see (Accessed April 19, 2013) http://www.myfoxla.com/story/18574191/chris-blatchford#ixzz2QrttMm8L; Note: On September 14, 2016, Blatchford eventually sues FOX News for age discrimination. Thereafter, Fox 11 News disabled all of Blatchford related content from their page. Critics of Blatchford's exploitative career of gangs and young people, however, quoted Fox 11 News' biographical sketch of Blatchford's biography before it was disabled. For Fox 11 News' of Blatchford's biography see AVAGOFFV, blog response June 5, 2012, at 8:35pm, "Deliver Us From The Vagos" in The Aging Rebel. (Accesses Feb 12, 2019) http://www.agingrebel.com/5847; for Blatchford's plaintiff petition against Fox 11 News see *Christopher Blatchford, vs Fox US Production 11, Inc., e*t. al. in Scribd. (Accessed Feb 12, 2019) https://www.scribd.com/document/324706073/Chris-Blatchford-Complaint#from_embed. For career, also see Miles Corwin, "Inside the Mexican Mafia" *Los Angeles Times*, Dec 10, 2008, Book Review. LAT Home Collections. (Accessed Feb 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/2008/dec/15/entertainment/et-book15; Fifty Third Southern California Journalism Awards, *Los Angeles Press Club* (June 26, 2011, Los Angeles: Pressclub, 2011). (Accessed Fe, 11, 2018) http://lapressclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2011-SOCAL.pdf: p. 28.

he promised them coverage in exchange for data. Blatchford's "Fox News Undercover" aired what he interpreted tag-bangin' to be. What he captured was only kids protecting themselves from gangs, but Blatchford interpreted these kids as gangs. Few challenged what Blatchford fed society. As Chris Williams notes in his April 1993 "TV Reviews" of Blatchford's "Fox Undercover" show,

> The pitch here is that graffiti tagging crews, who used to want nothing more destructive than to de-beautify your local liquor store and render freeway signs unreadable, are in large numbers setting aside their spray cans and picking up arms.[539]

The opposing views, however, did not gain much momentum. As Chris Williams understood, "'Tag Bangers' is alarmist and sensationalistic."[540] This only intensified society's view of graffiti writers, but it also did the gangs' views of the "tag bangers." As a result, gangs now would move to discipline and punish graffiti writers (tag bangers).

Graffiti crews' complex interracial make-up and their relationship with the streets within the context of increasingly complicated carceral street dynamics forced many members to make certain decisions based on race and informed by the specter of incarceration. If graffiti writers and gangs had another thing in common, it was the state's capacity to cage; and prison gangs in concert with street gangs already influenced the informal carceral culture throughout all the formal carceral channels. As mentioned in the introduction, those carceral channels more than doubled by 1994. From 1984 to 1994, California opened seventeen new prisons next to its existing twelve.[541] This was unprecedented in California's prison building history. From when San Quentin had been built in 1854 up to Civil Rights Era of 1965, California only had twelve prions. Within the span of only ten years (1984-1994), though, California more than doubled its prison capacity. Furthermore, the prisoners who cycled in and out of these institutions mostly were from LA.[542] As graffiti crews began getting acquainted

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[539] Chris Williams, "TV Reviews: Whither L.A.?? 2 Specials Offer Opposing Views: KABC's 'A Tale of Three Cities is guardedly hopeful while KTTV's 'Tag Bangers' is alarmist and sensationalistic," Los Angeles Times, Apr 10, 1993, Entertainment. (Accessed Feb 11, 2019) http://articles.latimes.com/1993-04-10/entertainment/ca-21111_1_specials.
[540] Ibid.
[541] For chronology of prisons see California Department of Corrections "California State Prisons Chronology." (Accessed February 2, 2019). https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/Prisons/docs/CA-State-Prisons-chronology.pdf.
[542] For a survey LA's population see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1987." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1987-archive.pdf: p. 16; for 1990 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1990." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1990-archive.pdf: p. 2:7; for 1991 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1991." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1991-archive.pdf: p. 7:4;

with incarceration and prison life, they understood how the ethnoracial political cards of gangs and prisons life were stacked up against them. Fix One, who would later become a Blood, tells his experience of entering jails.

> That racial shit on the streets came from that racial shit of prison politics, especially when these so called OGs [Original Gangsters] came from doin' time into the 'hood' and started 'calling shots.'[543]

Within every carceral web that graffiti writers navigated, intraracial and interracial conflict awaited them, especially if they found themselves in jails and prisons. As Mercy recounts,

> It did not matter, you could be my best [Brown] friend in the streets, but once you entered the jails you either had to give up being Raza to maintain being my homie, which was like suicide! Because then you had to ride [align] with Blacks for protection, but that also meant that you would have to ride with the Blacks against your own people. So, either way, you became the target of your own. Unless, of course, you stuck to your own race.[544]

Such experiences exemplify how the ethnoracial politics of gangs created perplexing conditions for graffiti crew members. Graffiti writers realized that they were now interacting with what was originally said to be the fruit of the intraracial peace treaties: intraracial unity for protection from Black-Brown interracial rivalries and potential violence. This hope proved misleading; its consequences were too often deadly.

Interracial graffiti crews in the streets and in prison did not stand a chance. Graffiti crews knew they had to make informed decisions determined by these carceral realities. As graffiti writers attempted to avoid race-based internal crew conflict, and interracial conflicts, the difficult carceral ambience often forced them to break with their interracial ties, even if only momentarily. Precariously, graffiti crew members created intraracial graffiti crews while others adopted the intraracial gang life. Indeed, to repeat the carceral cards was stacked up against graffiti writers; they were often damned if they did, and damned if they didn't.

Many Black OGs advanced intraracial peace treaties. In addition, Chris Blatchford documented twenty Brown prison gang leaders on parole in LA. The Cholo gang leaders, however, announced binding orders. These orders would be followed in jails and in prisons. If the formal carceral hand of the state happened to snatch away Black and Brown bodies, so be it.[545]

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for 1992 see "California Prisoners and Parolees, 1992." (Accessed Feb 3, 2019) https://sites.cdcr.ca.gov/research/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/04/1992-archive.pdf: p. 5:8.

[543] Mern One, CHB, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups.*

[544] Mercy One, CHB, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups,* Black male who belonged to multiple graffiti crews

[545] Chris Blatchford, *The Black Hand: The Bloody Rise and Redemption of "Boxer" Enriquez, A Mexican Mob Killer* (Harper Press, 2008), 123.

Fig 7. Graffiti in South Central, 1994: Black dreadlock character (Right) exhaling word "Rhapsody" (center) dated "94" (upper left corner). Graffiti design by Jerry One, Brown male from an interracial graffiti crew. Jerry One joined the US Army right before the South Central uprising. When he came home to visit in mid-1994, he was disappointed with the interracial breakdown of his graffiti crew. He dedicated this graffiti piece to serve as a reminder of (or nostalgia to) Black and Brown interracial harmony he once lived and loved. Artwork by Jerry One, and contributors Reon One, and Migee One, all Mexican graffiti writers that once belonged to an interracial graffiti crew. (Three Photographs taped or "stitched" together)[546]

Conclusion

The interracial graffiti writer generation was short-lived, from roughly 1980 to 1994. Nonetheless, it left its stamp, symbol, image, tag, and signature, and its history of distress, agency, and resistance throughout the entire City of Angels. Graffiti crews were only one aspect of these visual interracial group relations. After 1992, however, the manifestation of mass carceral policies and informal carceral relations brought interracial ruptures and change to South Central. By the end of 1994, interracial graffiti crews declined. Graffiti crews – or young Black and Brown people in general – had to abide by new carceral street rules and regulations. Graffiti crews' interracial decline was also emblematic of larger social and racial rearrangements that disrupted LA's long history of Black-Brown interracial relations of coexistence. This was only the beginning of a host of Black-Brown interracial conflicts and violence to visit South Central LA and its surrounding areas in the years to come. There would be no doubt that future interracial violence would not be without its formal and informal relations of carcerality.

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[546] Jery One, "Rhapsody," 1994, 3-stiched photographs, in Garcia, *From Interracial Graffiti Crews to Ethnoracial Groups*.

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