

Waiting *till the* Midnight Hour

After years of neglect by mainstream American academics, the impact of black radicalism¹ on postwar American and world history has begun to be examined in recent social science scholarship.² Such historical inquiry requires journeying to the “lower frequencies”³ and addressing the substantive intellectual, political, and practical questions posed by African-American radicals. These intellectual pursuits reflect the resurgence of an increasingly radical black public sphere.⁴ Moreover, this new emphasis on the study of black radicalism’s shift from a marginal to a central position within a global political arena provides the potential contextual and historical basis for a counterdiscourse to celebratory pronouncements regarding contemporary historical developments. Amid the rather bleak political landscape proffered by contemporary global political developments,⁵ the dawn of the twenty-first century has provided a much-needed space to reflect on some of the world-historic events that encapsulated the three decades following World War II. As the progenitor for social and political transformation in the postwar era, the Civil Rights Movement provides a historical context for the confusing contemporary political dialectic that oscillates between the erasure and recovery of a modern black radical tradition.

Constructing an Alternative Civil Rights Narrative

Although synonymous with the 1954 *Brown* Supreme Court decision, the modern movement for civil rights preceded this court case by over a decade.⁶ However, the years between the landmark *Brown* case and the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act constitute the *heroic period* of the modern struggle for civil rights. During these years, black liberation struggles received national attention through the efforts of a broad-based network of activists, including rank-and-file African Americans, grassroots organizers, and national political mobilizers. Black America’s revolt against the legacy of antiblack⁷ racism was transmitted to the nation through an increasingly global media apparatus that delivered fantastic images of violent racial confrontation that played out as public theater. In addition to domestic civil rights efforts, international developments in Cuba, Asia, and Africa provided black American radicals with a glimpse of alternative political and world-historic realities. As an oppositional social movement challenging the most nightmarish aspects of race and class oppression, the modern struggle for civil rights reached its zenith with the legalistic and legislative victories that marked an end to state-sanctioned

Reconceptualizing the Heroic Period of the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965

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apartheid and black electoral disfranchisement. Both popular and historical narratives have conceptualized this era literally and figuratively as the "King years."⁸ Undoubtedly, Martin Luther King Jr. is the single individual most identified with the movement; the pervasive image of King in contemporary American popular culture is that of an African-American minister preaching from the steps of the nation's capital, exhorting the disfranchised in attendance to dream of a truly democratic civil society. Yet this historical and political narrative of the "movement" obscures and effaces as much as it reveals and illuminates. King's subsequent leftward political metamorphosis emerged from the hotbed of radicalism within black politics that existed before the era of Black Power. The absence of civil rights radicals from most chronicles of the movement's heroic years avoids discussion of once-powerful discourses that represent a veritable Pandora's box for the U.S. nation-state. Relocating the black political radicalism that has been chronologically situated during the late 1960s in an earlier political landscape dominated by the Southern movement's struggles against Jim Crow reperiodizes civil rights and Black Power historiography by underscoring the fluidity of two historical time periods too of-

ten characterized as mutually exclusive. Moreover, the study of black radical discourses, which traversed a global political expanse problematizing issues of democracy, color, and empire, resituates domestic civil rights struggles within an international arena that witnessed extraordinary events that spanned the world. In the long shadow cast by Cold War political repression, black Americans forged an alternative political philosophy from the ashes of an almost eviscerated black radical public sphere.⁹ Comprised of college students, ex-Communists, military veterans, and an assortment of "organic intellectuals," this collective underground provided the practical and theoretical context for Black Power radicalism. Thus, the tendency to ignore black radicalism's impact on the movement's heroic years coupled with the deification of King as a modern-day Moses leading blacks out of an Egypt-land of racist denials has rendered invisible whole narratives of civil rights history and attendant constructed a parochial view of the era that largely ignores the movement's role within international political struggles.

Although the heroic period of the movement has been strategically appropriated by the state to deliver sanitized images that extol the resilience of democratic liberalism, the

post-civil rights period of Black Power has fallen victim to what Nikhil Singh has described as the "Panther effect."¹⁰ In his fascinating discussion of the uses and abuses of the Black Panthers by both the conservative right and the soulless American left, Singh argues that although the party was popularly utilized as a metaphor for the exigencies of 1960s political radicalism, its incisive and transformative political praxis provides the context for the Panthers' continued haunting of the American intellectual and political imagination today.

The manifold and decontextualized appropriations of the Black Panthers (as well as a variety of 1960s-based radical icons) are part of a larger political and intellectual tendency that marginalizes, silences, and obscures the concrete histories of what the historian Cedric Robinson has referred to as the "Black Radical Tradition."¹¹ In her remarkable study of the historical roots of radical black intellectualism, Joy James illustrates how the conspicuous absence of black radicals (especially black women) from mainstream civil rights narratives is emblematic of larger conceptual and ideological biases within American historiographies.¹² The erasure and silencing of black radicalism within historical narratives of the Civil Rights Movement has produced a false dichotomy between the heroic period of black liberation struggles and the subsequent Black Power decade. Moreover, the perpetuation of this dichotomy has reduced the rich and multilayered ideological tendencies within African-American political discourse to a series of clichés and false binaries that completely ignore the international dimension of black political thought. The catchphrases are all too familiar to even the unfamiliar student of recent American history: "Violence versus Nonviolence," "Martin versus Malcolm," and "Separation versus Integration." From this shortsighted and ideologically informed reading of history, Black Power (and thus black radical-

ism and issues of force and self-defensive violence) emerged only during the second half of the decade personified by gun-toting militants reciting partially read Marxist slogans.¹³

Locating the roots of late-1960s black radicalism within the internationalism of the black left of the late 1950s constitutes what I describe as an "alternative narrative"¹⁴ or history that challenges the "silencing"¹⁵ that permeates all sites of historical production.

Therefore, the rest of this essay represents a truncated examination of missing parts: an alternative history that challenges the erasure of historical voices, actors, and debates that have been silenced or circumscribed in previous narratives of civil rights and Black Power history. In a limited space, this essay seeks to contribute to the reperiodization of African-American liberation struggles in the post-World War II era by illustrating the confluence of radical political activity preceding and contextualizing the Black Power Movement. In doing so, scholars and activists take heed of Frantz Fanon's judicious warning of the difficulty inherent in attempting to "state" social and political reality¹⁶ by traversing through muddy historical waters while rejecting a Manichaeian historical overview.

Robert Williams and African-American Political Thought

In 1959, during the height of what historian Manning Marable has described as a reform period,¹⁷ Robert Williams, head of the Monroe, North Carolina, NAACP, advocated the use of self-defense against white terror in the south. A former auto worker, an army and marine veteran, and an itinerant writer, Williams developed a body of political thought and practice that represented a cogent repudiation of black leadership bound by the strictures of Cold War liberalism.¹⁸ A founding member of the left-inspired Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC), Williams

articulated an internationalist political philosophy that sought to recast black America's struggles in global terms. The case of Robert Williams represents more than just an example of the growing restiveness that many poor and working-class blacks felt toward the mainstream civil rights leadership's middle-class political orientation. Williams's attempt to forge a radical internationalist movement at the peak of the modern black movement reveals both the undercurrents of radical political and intellectual activity within the black public sphere and the expansiveness of the black radical discourses that prefigured and influenced the era of Black Power (1965–1975). Williams was an icon of the international left before Stokely Carmichael, Huey Newton, and Angela Davis, and his political philosophy of radical internationalism (an eclectic fusion of black nationalist and Marxist tendencies) would become the benchmark of the new wave of black militancy and radicalism that increasingly conceptualized black liberation struggles in global terms. Drawing inspiration from revolutionary struggles, Williams imagined worlds of color that extended beyond the fictive geographic borders dictated via U.S. foreign policy. Through the periodical he published, *The Crusader*, Williams's political thought both forced and inspired a younger generation of black radicals to expansively reconceptualize black politics in American civil society, explicitly linking national struggles for black citizenship with questions of race, class, and democracy that were taking place in Cuba, Asia, and Africa. With a vision of black liberation that linked events in Bandung, Indonesia, to Birmingham, Alabama, Williams's internationalism provides only a partial example of a small but vibrant black radical public sphere that complicates narratives of civil rights radicalism that begin during the second half of the 1960s.¹⁹ This tendency reflects what historian Charles Payne

refers to as the “rough draft of history.”²⁰ In the case of much of civil rights history, this “rough draft” silences and thus renders invisible the profound impact of black radicalism on both black American politics at the height of the Cold War and the subsequent Black Power Movement. At least half a decade before the Third World anti-imperialist internationalism that would characterize the utterances of race-men such as Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, African-American radicals, building on the anti-imperialist legacy of individuals such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, and C.L.R. James and anticolonial organizations such as the Council of African Affairs (CAA),²¹ articulated a broad-based vision of American society that went beyond the narrow parameters of mainstream civil rights philosophy. Entering the national discourse on racism, colonialism, and white supremacy through a backdoor reserved for the disfranchised, black radicals constructed spheres of oppositional activity that overcame inadequate resources, political demonization, and intraracial ideological struggles. Moreover, radical intellectual and political thought during this era critically interrogated and reconstructed the meaning of both “race” and “blackness” in American society through a critical reconceptualization that connected African-American immiseration to the marginalization of people of color globally. In short, at the peak of the Civil Rights Movement's influence in national and international politics and coinciding with the hegemony of black politics bound to the Cold War's ideological sanctions, black radicals reconfigured African-American political discourses by linking antiblack racism to structures of domination rooted in histories of colonialism and slavery that undergirded racial state formation during the modernist project. That Williams, as well as other black radicals, would look “outward” for both answers and attention to black America's domestic diffi-

culties was hardly surprising. Despite the exigencies of the Cold War, decolonization efforts in Cuba and Africa as well as the movement for nonaligned nations highlighted the possibility of political transformation unencumbered by the West's emerging vision of geopolitical domination.

Cuba Libre!

Although the Cold War precipitated a "winter of discontent" for Robeson and Du Bois in particular and radical politics in general, decolonization efforts in Cuba and Africa as well as the movement for nonaligned nations provided a leitmotif for black radicals operating under the exigencies of American empire. Against an international and national political backdrop that included revolutionary movements across the Third World and pockets of black political radicalism and militancy in the United States, both an older and newer generation of black activists looked toward the international horizon for a way forward at home. One of the most important sites on this front was Cuba. Located ninety miles off of the coast of Florida, the island illuminated the contours between race and empire both at home and abroad. The Afro-Cuban connection was solidified with a tour sponsored by the left-inspired FPCC²² that took a cadre of black writers and activists to Cuba in July 1960. The all-star contingent of characters included the writers Julian Mayfield and Harold Cruse, the avant-garde black poet and future Marxist radical Leroi Jones, and the ubiquitous Robert Williams. This historic trip served to deepen the existing ties between the black left and Cuban revolutionaries. The island's large population of black Cubans and their support of the revolution provided further evidence of the global nature of the civil rights struggle. The idea that both African Americans and Cubans occupied central roles in an increasingly diverse constellation of in-

ternational movements against imperialism was underscored through mutual cooperation between radicals and the Cuban government. In addition to a special issue titled "Los Negros en U.S.A." featured in the Cuban literary magazine *Lunes de Revolucion* and FPCC-sponsored rallies in Harlem and elsewhere, the Cuban leader Fidel Castro's legendary weeklong stay at Harlem's Hotel Theresa (and his meeting with Malcolm X) highlighted black-Cuban solidarity amid Cold War anxiety.²³ Robert Williams, by now a global figure owing to the notorious events in Monroe, North Carolina, described his trip to Cuba in the pages of his internationally read *Crusader*: "Yes, I have seen the glorious face of Cuba. Equally as impressive, I have also heard the voice of Cuba. It was the wise and firm voice of great Fidel Castro. I consider it the greatest honor of my life to have heard the greatest humanitarian leader of the age deliver the new sermon on the mount."²⁴

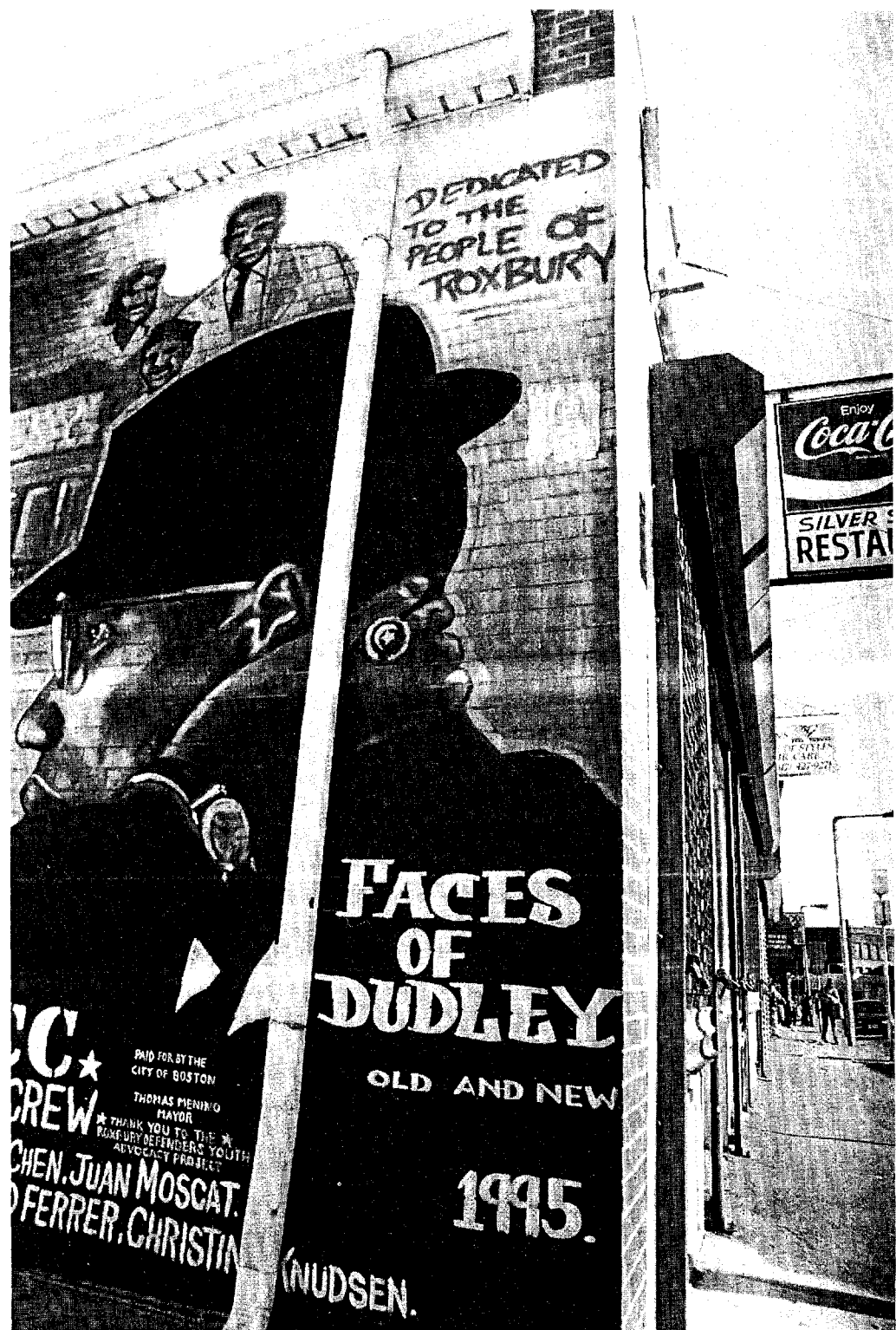
Williams was not the only important figure to be inspired by the Cuban Revolution. The poet Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka), who would of course emerge as one of the leading figures of both the Black Arts and the radical black convention movements, was part of the same group that traveled to Cuba under the auspices of the FPCC. At twenty-five, Jones represented the younger generation of black intellectuals who came of age after the height of Depression-era black internationalism.²⁵ At the time, Jones was best known as part of an eclectic group of Greenwich Village-based, mostly white writers and poets (including Alan Ginsberg) who eschewed formal political engagement. In the aftermath of his Cuban journey, however, Jones published an important essay, titled "Cuba Libre," in the *Evergreen Review* that attempted to exorcise the twin demons of avant-garde cynicism and the American and international political reality that was shaped and contextualized in accordance with the state's morbid vision of national security.²⁶

The writer and novelist Julian Mayfield—part of the cadre of New York-based black writers and activists with a rich history of affiliation with radical politics—was equally impressed with events in Cuba. His essay “The Cuban Challenge” was published in the summer 1961 edition of *Freedomways*. Created in 1961 (and an offshoot of Paul Robeson’s short-lived *Freedom* magazine) under the editorial leadership of Shirley Graham Du Bois, *Freedomways* quickly positioned itself as a leading radical quarterly of Negro affairs. Mayfield’s essay argued that black Harlem’s enthusiastic reception of Fidel Castro the previous fall was predicated on the mistreatment that the Cuban leader had received upon his visit to the UN Assembly that year.²⁷ Writing that white Americans “actively or tacitly” propagated antiblack racism, Mayfield contrasted the overt racialism of the United States with the Cuban government’s attempts to eliminate racial discrimination.²⁸ Not only was Mayfield’s support for Cuba in sharp contrast to the distilled views of representative race-men and -women of the era, his advocacy of radical Afro-Cuban political solidarity placed him squarely in a black radical sphere that included Robert Williams, Conrad Lynn, and Dan Watts. Mayfield’s internationalism would develop further through meetings with W.E.B. Du Bois and Malcolm X and as a presidential advisor to Kwame Nkrumah during the five years Mayfield resided in Ghana. Upon his return to the United States in 1967, Mayfield would emerge as a leading essayist and critic among the black internationalist left.

**Where Blackness Is Bright?
Africa and the Political
Imagination of the Black Left**

Although Cuba provided an important site for the black radical political and intellec-

tual imagination, Africa remained the literal and fictive embodiment undergirding the idea of a “global black revolution.” The belief that decolonization movements in Africa were intrinsically connected with African-American antiracist struggles at home both culturally and politically was manifested in the radical magazine *Liberator*. Founded in 1960 by the architect and writer Dan Watts, *Liberator* provided a forum for “Black Atlantic”²⁹ politics that focused on the international implications of civil rights struggles while not losing sight of local issues. Precipitated by decolonization movements in Africa, the magazine was an outgrowth of the Liberation Committee for Africa that, besides Watts, included the FPCC executive secretary Richard Gibson and the writer John Henrik Clarke. By 1962, the magazine’s focus shifted toward domestic issues while it critically interrogated the global implications of American antiracist struggles. During the first half of the 1960s, Watts’s *Liberator* offered consistent and radical critiques against the movement, its middle-class orientation, and its principal spokesperson, Martin Luther King. Attacked for his harsh editorials against King,³⁰ Watts nonetheless established an all-star cast of advisors and contributors to the magazine, including the radical lawyers Len Holt and Conrad Lynn, the Marxist Bill Epton, the legendary *Baltimore Afro-American* journalist William Worthy, Max Stanford, Larry Neal, and Harold Cruse. The impact that the *Liberator* had on black politics cannot be overstated. The magazine offered a discursive site for radicals of various ideological stripes to confront an array of issues. The radicals and militants who served the magazine as writers and editorialists were a group of intellectuals, activists, and community organizers attempting to articulate an alternative political philosophy for black liberation.



Malcolm X Mural in Roxbury, Massachusetts. Photo by Kristen Clarke.

At The Crossroads: The Underground's March Against Washington

Nowhere was this alternative political philosophy more evident than in the short-lived Freedom Now Party (FNP). The idea of an all-black political party (one that would play a central role in Black Power convention movement politics) originated among an ideologically disparate group of figures that included William Worthy, Paul Boutelle, the future Black Power theologian Rev. Albert Cleage, Bill Epton, Dan Watts, Harold Cruse, Pernelle Watley, and Patricia Robinson. The fact that party organizers were passing out leaflets for an independent black political party during the 1963 March on Washington underscores the complexities of a time period too often viewed as monolithically quiescent in terms of black radicalism. Boldly asserting that "One hundred years of waiting for Democrats and Republicans to correct our grievances is too long," organizers challenged the participants of the march to join with the fraternity of the oppressed all over the world by casting one million votes for the FNP in 1964.³¹ By the 1963 March on Washington, the future of black liberation struggles was, in many ways, at a crossroads. That the march itself took place on August 28, the day after the death of W.E.B. Du Bois in Ghana, infused the event with tragic irony. The march's unequivocal support for American liberalism was a de facto silencing of both Du Bois's anticolonial internationalism and his radical critique of the pervasive inequalities within democratic structures in American society.

Regarded as the most visceral representation of the heroic period's quest for black enfranchisement, the march revealed ideological, class, and gender divisions that belied public pronouncements of unity.³² Moreover, in many ways the event represented the (tem-

porary) end of the hegemony of a sphere of reformist Negro activists and political leaders. Although Martin Luther King would remain forever entrenched as the representative racial spokesperson in the march's aftermath, King presided over a rapidly transforming African-American political landscape that he could neither control nor fully comprehend. The dissatisfaction with ineffectual federal enforcement of civil rights that had galvanized cities such as Birmingham, Alabama, during the long and violent summer of 1963 would provide part of the shift in black politics, and the march itself provided a lightning rod for critics. Most radicals agreed with Malcolm X's quip that the demonstration was in fact a "farce" on Washington. The initial suggestions by civil rights militants to shut down the nation's capital with a human blockade were dismissed in favor of what Malcolm X felt was an antiradical feel-good spectacle, one dominated and controlled by the very presidential administration the march was organized in protest against. Malcolm, of course, was far from alone in both his admonishment of the leaders who participated in the march and his attendant analysis of the theoretical flaws of liberal-integrationism. The guiding principle undergirding this philosophy was that the elimination of federally regulated racism would allow for blacks to be included in previously all-white institutions in American society. As Mack Jones has observed, "There was . . . an unarticulated but widely shared assumption that . . . the end of state-sanctioned segregation and discrimination would set in motion a train of events that would lead to economic parity between white and black Americans."³³ Infused with a middle-class sensibility that dated back to at least the post-Reconstruction era, black leadership held a vision of African-American liberation that was intrinsically shortsighted. In attempting to construct an empowering antiracist black identity, black

tence. See Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1952), p. 439.

4. The Black Radical Congress (BRC), which convened on June 19–21, 1998, at the University of Illinois at Chicago, represents the most recent example of the reemergence of black radicalism. Gathering together an eclectic array of over 1,500 activists, intellectuals, and community organizers of various ideological and political affiliations, BRC attempted to articulate a radical programmatic political agenda for African-American politics in the twenty-first century.

5. Clarence Lusane, *Race in the Global Era* (Boston: South End, 1997).

6. For a discussion of the early period of the Civil Rights Movement, see Robert Korstadt and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75, No. 3 (December 1988); Beth Tompkins Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933–1941," *American Historical Review* 102, No. 2 (April 1997); and Belinda Robnett, *How Long? How Long?: African-American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

7. My usage of the term "antiblack" racism has been inspired by the work of the philosopher Lewis R. Gordon. See Lewis R. Gordon, *Bad Faith and Anti-Black Racism* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1995); *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man*; and *Her Majesty's Other Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

8. The best examples of the tendency to utilize King as a prism for historical analysis are Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–1963* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); David Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Vintage, 1986); and Adam Fairclough, *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

9. Utilizing Jürgen Habermas's notion of a "bourgeois public sphere," the political scientist Michael Dawson has argued for the existence of a "Black Public Sphere" that has existed in certain historical contexts for the advancement and protection of African Americans. See Michael Dawson, "A Black Counterpublic?: Economic Earthquakes, Racial Agenda(s), and Black Politics," in The Black Public Sphere Collective, ed., *The Black Public Sphere* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

10. Nikhil Pal Singh, "The Black Panther and the 'Underdeveloped Country' of the Left," in Charles Jones, ed., *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*, p. 62.

11. C. Robinson, *Black Marxism*.

12. James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth*, p. 83.

13. Even sympathetic readings of Black Power radicalism fails to critically interrogate radicals' cogent cri-

tiques against capitalism, imperialism, and white supremacy. See, for example, William L. Van DeBurg, *New Day in Babylon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

14. Utilizing the work of the anthropologist James Scott, the historian Robin D.G. Kelley has argued that "hidden transcripts" represent the undocumented oppositional strategies utilized by oppressed African Americans. See Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels*, pp. 8–9; and James C. Scott, *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). My use of the term "alternative narrative," although indebted to Scott and Kelley, is broader in scope than the term "hidden transcript." I suggest that an "alternative narrative" encompasses a veritable litany of "hidden histories"—not just acts of resistance by the oppressed—that are documented but have remained marginal within mainstream historical narratives.

15. The work of the historical anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot is instructive here. Trouillot has argued that "silencing" is a constitutive part of the production of history. This is to say that certain actors are privileged over others. In describing this silencing, Trouillot writes, "Silences are inherent in history because any single event enters history with some of its constituting parts missing. Something is always left out while something else is recorded. There is no closure of any event, however one chooses to define the boundaries of an event." For a discussion, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (New York: Beacon Press, 1995), p. 49.

16. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), p. 137.

17. Manning Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion* Second Revised Edition (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990).

18. For the best examination of Williams's importance during this era, see Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*.

19. Van DeBurg, *New Day in Babylon*.

20. Charles Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 391–405.

21. See Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*.

22. From almost its immediate creation, the FPCC was actively supported by a small but prominent group of black writers. Among the thirty individuals signing the group's initial advertisement in the *New York Times* were Robert Williams, John Henrik Clarke, James Baldwin, Julian Mayfield, and John Oliver Killens. See Van Gosse, *Where the Boys Are: Cuba, Cold War America and the Making of a New Left* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 9.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 148–149.

24. Robert Williams, *The Crusader* 2, No. 5 (August 13, 1960), pp. 1–2.

25. A point that social critic Harold Cruse, in a highly idiosyncratic yet hugely influential critique, would argue

The Heroic Period of the Civil Rights Movement

undermined black politics in the post-civil rights period. See Harold Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: William and Morrow, 1967).

26. Leroi Jones, "Cuba Libre," *Evergreen Review* 4, No. 15 (November-December 1960).

27. Julian Mayfield, "The Cuban Challenge," *Freedomways* (Summer 1961), p. 185.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

29. The idea of a "Black Atlantic" that is a collective, simultaneously hybridic, black identity forged through the African diaspora is found in the writings of a diverse and historic group of thinkers that includes W.E.B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, C.L.R. James, and Eric Williams. The "Black Atlantic," then, refers to the dialectical processes that shaped black existence in the modern world. "Blackness" within the "Black Atlantic," although embodying a wide array of discrete and collective communities, histories, and political ideologies, has come to represent a both real and imagined counter-hegemonic consciousness that stands in opposition against notions of empire undergirded by white supremacy. Two useful, although very different, assessments of Pan-Africanism and the shaping of the "Black Atlantic" are Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic, Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993) and Sid Lemelle and Robin D.G. Kelley, eds., *Imagining Home: Class, Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (New York: Verso, 1994).

30. Daniel Watts, Transcript, pp. 5-7, Spingarn Center, Howard University.

31. Paul Boutelle, Transcript, p. 25, Spingarn Center, Howard University.

32. For a discussion of these tensions, see Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter* (New York: William Morrow, 1984); and Robnett, *How Long? How Long?*

33. Mack Jones, "The Black Underclass as Systemic Phenomenon," in James Jennings, ed., *Race, Class, and Economic Development* (London: Verso, 1992), p. 63.

34. Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

35. Robin D.G. Kelley and Betsy Esch, "Black Like Mao: Red China and Black Revolution," *Souls* 1, No. 4 (Fall 1999).

36. Gosse, *Where the Boys Are*, p. 154.

37. James, *Transcending the Talented Tenth*; Kelley, *Race Rebels*; James, *Holding Aloft the Banner of Ethiopia*; Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire*; Gaines, *Uplifting the Race*.

38. For a remarkable discussion of the confluence of discourses emanating from scholars of civil rights, colonial, and subaltern studies, see Kevin Gaines, "Rethinking Race and Class in African American Struggles for Equality, 1885-1941," *American Historical Review* 102, No. 2 (April 1997).