



**Reviving Black radicalism? : The future of Black
community organisations in 21st century Britain**

Shey Fyffe

The school of Business, Law and Social sciences

Birmingham city university

Birmingham, UK.

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Research abstract

Collective community responses to racially unjust societal conditions and treatment, in the form of mobilised protests and uprisings, has been a cornerstone of the Black experience in Britain. A notable period of time of this history is the rise of the British Black power movement during the 1960's and 1970's, led predominantly by the Afro-Caribbean community. Directed by the Black radical political ideals of Black self-determination, self-governance and autonomy, community organisations of the Black power movement strengthened the political consciousness required for the establishment of multiple grassroots Black community organisations, movements and collectives throughout the country. These organisations were tasked with both openly opposing state sanctioned racism, and address the social issues afflicting Black communities locally, nationally, and internationally as a result. The eventual demise of Black community organisations of this era, and the Black power movement, is presented in this work as significantly contributed to by destabilisation by the British state, of which was achieved through the political and economic bartering of Black communities away from Black radical endeavour and objective.

In reflection upon to this history, and of the surge with national engagement with Black radical political thought and social action since the 2010's, this research is concerned with the future of Black community organisations with Black radical objectives in the political, economic, and socio-cultural conditions of contemporary Britain as community-based, counter-publican institutions of Black radical unity. The actualisation of Black radical unity, the conceptual framework of this research, is presented as a pre-requisite for successful collective community-based progression towards Black radical imagined futures.

The findings of an 18 month, engaged ethnography conducted in a present-day 'Bricks and mortar' community organisation that is self-identified as a Black radical organisation, explores the obstacles that arise in progressing towards their objectives. These obstacles are presented through the fragmentations in the key relationships upon which the future of the organisation relies: 1) The interpersonal relationships between members of the governing board; 2) The relationship between the organisation's governing board members and their ongoing commitment to the organisation, and 3) The relationship between the organisation and the wider community. These relationships are considered in relation to contemporary conditions, values and ideals. This research seeks to highlight the necessity for the establishment and preservation of Black community organisations as counter-publican institutions of Black radical unity, as integral in community led journeys to Black autonomy, and the dismantling of oppressive structures and systems.

For instilling the importance of education within me from an early age, alongside an understanding of the importance of never forgetting that my voice and contributions matter,

Firstly, I dedicate this thesis to my dear mother, Josephine.

Rest in eternal peace.

Secondly, I dedicate this thesis to all the people in the struggle.

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Introduction

Jones and Walsh's (2017) summation of politics in contemporary times, is that politics does not function in a way that is intended to fulfil the purpose that it purports, which is to continuously consider the current conditions of society, for the active and continuous improvement of societal conditions, for the good of all citizens. Rather, modern politics functions as a process of management, of which involves keeping those who are influenced by matters that directly impact them, marginalised from the conversations within which they should be presiding. Community based political organisation, on the other hand, "indexes the effort to bridge the rupture of politics, with the endless hard work of instituting and institutionalising this change" (Jones and Walsh, 2017:3). Political organisation as the 'rupture' of the nation-state socio-political order, illuminates current issues for contestation, that would otherwise have remained unchallenged, and thus unchanged. Contemporary state politics is the management of current conditions, whereas community based political organisation is the social response to these conditions, primarily in contention to them. Community organisation begins with an (often marginalised) demographic's self-identification of their unmet needs and rights, and the directing of unite, people led action accordingly towards meeting these needs.

From continental invasions to plantations and presently, city pavements, collective community organisation and protest have been integral in the global history of Black¹ liberation struggle globally against racial subjugation in all of its forms: Imperialism, colonialism, slavery, and racial discrimination (Traoré & Talburt, 2017). When reflecting upon the attempted rupture posed to structure of the mainstream political system by Black collective resistance in response to systemic racial injustice In recent times, is the Black lives matter (BLM) movement and organisation (the two existing separately) comes to mind. The BLM movement sits at the forefront of public consciousness as the response of this generation to the problem of the 21st century, inherited from the century before it, and from the one before that: That of the “colour-line” (Du Bois, 1903:V). Reminiscent of the civil rights movement and Black power movement of the 1950’s and 1960s, chants of “Black lives matter” following instances of a transgression against yet another Black person, typically at the hands of a member of law enforcement, presents only but another page in the long history of the contentious relationship between Black communities, law enforcement and the justice system in American society (Chaney & Robertson, 2013 ; Schwartz, 2020; Barber, 2020). The sight of such uprisings, peeling away at the guise of post-racialism that America has so diligently held close to its world-facing national identity since the latter part of the 20th century.

On the 25th of May 2020 in Minneapolis, A city located in the US state of Minnesota, a 46-year-old African-American man named George Floyd, who was subjected to a traffic stop by the police, under the suspicion that he had

¹ Black’ is in reference to individuals of African ancestry.

paid for a food store purchase with a fraudulent 20-dollar bill. Following an altercation with the police officer in question, Floyd was killed, and it was eventually determined that asphyxiation had been the cause of death (Taylor, 2020). The death of George Floyd sparked national and international outrage, resulting in protests in every single US state and in over 60 countries globally, which (excluding Antarctica), spanned every continent of the world (Haddad, 2020). In the wake of Floyd's death, the death of a 26-year-old African-American woman named Breonna Taylor, killed a few months prior on March 13th, 2020, in her own home during a police raid, was brought to global attention (Jr & Taylor, 2020). Taylor's death too was responded to with mass protests and demands for a review of the power that police officers are permitted to wield on the personal property of American citizens. The death of Breonna Taylor also brought unprecedented attention to the interactions of Black American women with the police. This, a recurrently underdiscussed issue, and a central point of focus in Andrea Ritchie's (2010), *Invisible no more: Police violence against Black women and women of color*.

The display of such an intense, yet fleeting display of transnational political display of unity against the racially unjust interactions with the state, and representatives of it, has sparked what only can be described as a significant point in the history of anti-racist activism; Expressed in very communicative outlet of society; From music, art, television, and social protest, to critical discourse both in academic and non-academic written works, to communicative discourse in both the material social and digital spaces (Pillay, 2020). The surgency of anti-racist mobilisation, unmatched even, by the

similarly 'high-profile' unjust killings of Black men, including that of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, the death that led to the formation of the Black lives matters organisation in the first instance.

What qualified the globality of the BLM protests of summer 2020 as particularly profound to any of that before it, is the global health pandemic that provided the backdrop to their taking place, of which, in joint prominence with the protests, proliferated discussion of the pandemic through a critical race lens in the telling of age-old stories behind the present statistics. Whilst there is an understanding of the intended sentiment, there is refrain here, from referring to racism as a, or the other 'pandemic' (Laurencin & Walker, J. M, 2020; Gray, et al, 2020), as doing so denotes an oversight of the longevity and multiple forms in which racism exists. However, the likening of racism to a global health pandemic communicates that the characteristics that the pandemic and racism do share; Endemic, and a hindrance to both wellbeing and liberty. Viewing the global health crisis of Covid-19 through the lens of anti-racism, has brought forth that it is "not simply as a biological entity, but a biopolitical reality which travels along well-worn patterns of inequity" (Benjamin, 2020:1) . With Black men twice as likely, and Black women 1.4 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than their white counterparts (Public health England, 2020) , referring to racism as a pandemic, highlights that whilst the virus itself is not 'racist', that the contributing factors of the disparities in health outcomes amongst other disproportionate susceptibilities of Black communities exposed by the pandemic that transcend the medical, are deeply entrenched in such a history.

The situating of statistics such as the aforementioned, within narratives constructed through an unabashedly critical lens upon ongoing racial inequality, recognised that the “Covid-19 looking-glass” only magnified pre-existing structural inadequacies of which we were already aware, (Kennedy-Mackafoy,2021:5) and that the “race, as class”, hierarchal societal structure prevails in contemporary society, despite proclamations of the ‘end of race’ (Gans, 2015) . The medical and economic inequities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic are symbolic of the “double disadvantage” that are posed to ethnic minorities when navigating structural oppressions (Coleman & Mullin-McCandlish, 2021:10).

The contrasting mandates of each crisis of the summer of 2020; One calling for physical separation, due to the medical necessity of doing so at that specific time; And one calling for solidarity, that only gathering together physically in the streets could effectively deliver, highlights that the conscious decision of many to take to the streets during this time, is illustrative of the fact that personal sacrifice, and the prioritisation of community over self, will always be imperative for the conducting of effective community-led activism. This research is representative of the extension of the consideration of community-led political unity that is displayed at anti-racism protests as singular events, to the aides and hindrances in sustaining such a unity into the ongoing, organised, and unified mobilisation that is required for the establishment and sustainment of Black community organisations.

Black community organisation in 20th century Britain: A brief history

Black political organisation in Britain reached its height in the mid 1960's to early 1980's. During this time, the British Black power movement, a political and social movement that saw Black people throughout the country collectively challenge racially discriminative laws, practices, and policies both domestically and abroad, gripped the political consciousness of Black Britain (Shukra, 1998). A majority of academic literature concerned with, either in mention of, or solely focused upon Black radical thought and political action in Britain, historiographically depicts the rise and fall of the British Black power movement and some of the most prolific organisations and individuals within it (Bunce & Field, 2011; Fryer, 1984; Sivanandan, 1981; Waters, 2018; Wild, 2008).

Wild's *Black was the colour of our fight* (2008) is one such example, detailing the rise and fall of Black political organisation between the 1950's and 1970's. Wild weaves the specificities of the formation of Black power organisations, including the economic and political conditions that begat their formation, and discusses the political and cultural outlooks that formed the numerous political sects and their intersecting, yet sometimes conflicting objectives. Research providing further insight into the lived experiences of those participating in Black community organisation in Britain, have engaged with the formation of grassroots collectives and organisations led by Black women (Bryan, Dadzie, & Scafe, 1985/2018) and organised community resistance groups in response to police brutality (Elliot-Cooper, 2021).

Some of the research that has provided insight into the efforts of Black community organisation in British history, in response to counteracting the impacts of racial inequality in Britain since the end of the Black power movement, has focused upon the Black community based supplementary schooling movement, or as they are referred to commonly as ‘Saturday schools’ (Reay & Mirza, 1997). The supplementary schooling movement is presented as a space in which the struggles facing Black children in mainstream schooling could be properly address, as what has come to be commonly known as the Black-white attainment gap. This gap, a reality that is rooted in historic experiences of systemic racism in the British education system, and sustained by ongoing racially discriminative, degraded expectations of Black students by white teachers (Rampton,1981; Strand, 2012) , the primacy of a Eurocentric curriculum (Mirza & Reay, 1997) and the ongoing failure of the British education system to effectively address the issue through amendments to current educational policy (Gillborn, Demack et al, 2017).

Black Caribbean communities throughout the UK established Community based supplementary schools in the 1960s, as an alternative educational space to counteract the negative impacts of mainstream education upon Black children, aiming to engage Black children educationally by decentralising the ‘white’ ideals of the mainstream education system; This was achieved through making Black (primarily Afro-Caribbean) culture normative (Mirza & Reay, 2000) . Existing research that explores both the historic and contemporary significance of Black supplementary schools in Britain (Stone,

1981; Carby, 1983; Chevannes & Reeves, 1989 ; Dove, 1993 ; Grosvenor, 1997; Hylton, 1999; Gerrard, 2013; Mirza & Reay, 1997; Issa and Williams, 2009; Andrews, 2014; Simon, 2018), all acknowledge that due to the systemic circumstances that necessitated the establishment of Black supplementary schools in the first instance, that they exist in the present day just as they did in the 1960s; As not only in an additional educational tool, but as a Black community based resistance to structural racism. This, in addition to serving as a space for the strengthening of community cohesion through the celebration of Black cultural identity and ancestral pride.

Whilst situating the Black supplementary schooling movement within the proper political and historical context, external to the concern of educational attainment and cultural enrichment, of the aforementioned research, only Andrews (2013), explores the potential of the Black supplementary schooling movement as a site that bridges the cultural and political centre of past Black grassroots struggle, to community collective grassroots mobilisation in resistance to contemporarily experienced racism(s). Whilst Black supplementary schooling programmes are presented as ideal for administering standardised educational support for Black children who require respite from the mainstream education, the utility of supplementary schools as community-based, counter-publican sites of Black radical education and activism is limited. This is due to the objective of Black supplementary schools being to further incorporate the Black child into the purpose of mainstream education system, which is to conform to the societal constructions of 'success', and the values encased within these constructions

which typically, are those that are oppositional to Black radical visions of liberation (Andrews, 2013).

Hylton's (1999) exploration of the work of Afro-Caribbean community organisational projects in Leeds and London, (one, an educational program and the other a radio project) does not overtly engage in community organisations as sites as political mobilisation. However, Hylton classifies Black community organisations a source of cultural unity, concluding that Black community organisations only fulfil their purpose by begetting unity, that unity of which then begets their longevity. Through the provision of a community space for culturally centred communalism, which aids the formation of both individual and collective identities, Black community organisations can be spaces for the maintenance of community connections to ethnic and cultural identity, whilst also being effective in overcoming the barriers posed by racial discrimination in wider society (Hylton, 1999). The overcoming of internally existing conflicts in Black community organisations, however (E.G., Generational, gender based, and geographical locality) is paramount in the fulfilling of this objective (Hylton, 1999). Andrew's (2013) concern with the ongoing potential of Black community organisations as institutions born from the self-determination of Black grassroots radical politics in responding collectively to contemporary forms of racism, alongside Hylton's emphasis upon the importance of overcoming blockades to community cohesion as crucial for the longevity of Black community organisations, merge in forming a key motivation of this research.

Black political consciousness and social movement in 21st century Britain

The establishment of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in America in 2013, is bookmarked as pivotal to the resurgence of Black political consciousness in the 21st century (Kelley, 2022). BLM as a contemporary liberation movement, has illuminated police brutality as one of the multiple institutional arms of the American nation-state that aid in maintaining societal conditions that rest upon the persistent devaluation of the rights, and thus the lives of the Black American population. BLM was created by three queer Black women named Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi (Lebron, 2023). The three have since used the movement to not only challenge police brutality as a form of violence that all in the Black community are impacted.

Furthermore, the BLM has been purposed to challenge and transcend the hetero-patriarchal visions of Black liberation commonly held by the organisations of the civil rights and Black power movement in the 1960's and 1970's, of which continues to dominate Black revolutionary political consciousness to the present day. The BLM founders have remained transparent regarding the advocacy for Black LGBTQIA+ rights being in the movement's scope of concern. BLM uses queerness as a framework by which to subvert commonly held Black political activist outlooks on valuable Black contributions to Black liberation mobilised action as being patriarchal in nature, which includes the ascension and centralising of Black heterosexual male leadership in Black community advancement, "while our

sisters, queer, trans and disabled folk take up roles in the background or not at all” (Garza, as cited in Cullors, Garza and Tometi, 2014:1).

BLM sparked an international response, bringing to attention the ongoing global presence of anti-Black racism, and ignited mass engagement with anti-racist discourse and political mobilisation in a new generation. The BLM movement shone a spotlight upon Britain’s own ongoing structural racism, pertaining primarily to the justice system. American BLM activist calls to ‘defund the police’, soon reached British shores, as the history of the tense relationship between the British police and the Black community, and the history of police brutality by British police , a conversation, about which had most recently re-arisen in the national conversation with the 2011 police shooting of Mark Duggan (Elliot-Cooper, 2018), continued to place strain upon the lives of Black communities. This reality is reflected in the high numbers of significant injury, or death of multiple Black British people whilst in police custody Joseph–Salisbury, Connelly, & Wangari-Jones, 2020) .

Anti-racist collective organisation in contemporary Britain has extended to the higher education system. A relatively recent example is the student led ‘why is my curriculum white?’ movement, established at university college London (UCL) in 2014. The movement demanded the addressal of the lack of culturally and ethnically diverse course content, and presented a critique on the current curriculum, as being constructed solely upon European knowledge, with an overall absence of Black scholars (Waghid, 2017) . The transnational influence upon Black political collective resistance in recent years is again displayed by the ‘Rhodes must fall’ movement, commencing at

the university of cape town south Africa in 2015 by student protests, against the erection of a statue at the university's campus in honour of Cecil Rhodes; A politician and businessman who was integral to the prosperity of British imperialism in South Africa (Newsinger, 2016). The 'Rhodes must fall' movement soon arrived in Britain, with the call for the removal of the statue of Rhodes as it stood at the university of Oxford, with arguments that to keep it erected, would be tantamount to the institutional condoning of the colonial history of which the statue was representative (Knudsen and Anderson, 2019). It is within the climate of calls to decolonise the university, that the first Black studies undergraduate degree in the UK (and in Europe), would commence in 2017, in the west Midlands city of Birmingham, at Birmingham city university (Andrews, 2020). The aforementioned movements arise from the collective recognition that resistance to the western education system as a component of the Eurocentrism of the superstructure, is vital for any political movement that seeks systemic change. The ethos of eurocentrism is the embrace of European culture, knowledge, and people as superior to all others. Thus, Eurocentrism seeks "to impose European consciousness onto other people's consciousness" (Asante 2012: 38) . In October 2020, the Black Lives Matter UK organisation, established in 2016 was legally registered, which was most marked by a name change to Black liberation movement UK. The Black liberation movement, still holding the politics of the Black lives matter, pledged that, despite the name change, that the organisation would continue to be in political connection with the Black Lives Matter network globally (Gayle, 2020).

Digital activism(s)

An expanding area of interest in the study of contemporary forms of community-led political mobilisation in the 21st century, has been upon the ever-growing significance of the power of the digital world in mobilising the masses in collective response to a social injustice (Joyce, 2010; Mutsvairo, 2016). The contemporary expansion of activist discourse to the digital world in the addressal of ongoing anti-Black racism has seen social media become an effective communicative and organising tool. For activists, the impacted demographic and allies alike, social media platforms (alongside other digital spaces) have facilitated the establishment of politically oriented connectivity and cohesion, for the development of political strategy and the organising of mobilised action that transcend the constraints of time and space (Carney, 2016 ; Mundt, Ross & Burnett, 2018).

The connectivity of social media for mobilised political unity, is significantly indebted to 'Hashtag activism' (Yang, 2016). Hashtag activism can be defined as communicative shortcuts that collate user comments upon a specific topic or issue into a forum, and in doing so, forms a web of interconnected discourse. Examples of political movements that have gained widened publicity as a result of being extensively 'hash-tagged' include, #BlackLivesMatter, #EndSars, and #FreeSudan. Whilst framed within a specific cultural and political context, the narrative created by the plethoric participation through the use of hash-tagging, is constructed predominantly by those of the impacted demographic, in alignment personal experiences and perceptions of the conditions that have brought the cause about(Yang, 2016).

Prior to the rise of social media, dominating narratives surrounding collective Black resistance to racial injustice were controlled predominantly by the discourse framework of mainstream media outlets. The collation of experiences, through social media platforms has provided a ‘narrative agency’ for those who had been directly impacted by the issue, that was not accessible on such a wide scale prior to their existence (Yang, 2016). Despite existing in tandem with, and often bolstering the exposure and reachability of ‘on the ground’ action of social movements, hashtag activism has been critiqued for encouraging a disconnection in the public consciousness between what activism is imagined to be by those who believe that social media input is sufficient contribution to the cause, and what activism actually entails in practice (Cabrera, Mathias & Montoya, 2017). However, the transformative influence of ‘hashtag activism’ in the framing, and re-framing of anti-racist discourse online has facilitated the interrogation of the objectives and practices of contemporary social movements of which is oppositional to the idea that ‘real’ activism and the change that it can affect, is solely limited to that of which takes place in the material world (Jackson, Bailey, and Foucault-Welles).

Scope of the research

This thesis explores the British history of the rise and fall of Black community organisations as political counter-publican spaces of Black political unity and action, purposed with collectively resisting racially unequal conditions and treatment. Counter-publics are defined as “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-

discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs”. Counter-publican spaces often provide the space for the critique of a democratic political system. In the collective pursuit of liberation from racially subjugative systems and structures and their resulting material conditions, counter-publics find their political value in the carving out of exclusive, collective space for “withdrawal and regroupment... as training grounds for agitational activities directed toward the wider public” (Fraser, 1989: 67-68). The rise and fall of Black community-based organisations in Britain, is considered in concurrence with the liberalisation of the political, economic and as a consequence, the socio-cultural landscape of Britain through the passing of time (specifically since the 1980’s onwards). In exploring the challenges as they are faced in Black community organisations in the contemporary societal conditions brought forth by these processes, an 18-month ethnography was conducted in A present-day Black community organisation that self-identifies as a Black radical organisation. In consideration of the role of counter-publicanism in Black political history and in the trajectory of political, economic, and socio-cultural conditions in Britain, the findings are presented as reflective of how current societal conditions specifically challenge the longevity and effectiveness of Black community organisations, and concludes with deliberation upon the feasibility, and thus the future of Black community organisations with Black radical political objectives in contemporary Britain.

Research objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To Map the rise and fall of Black community organisations in the 20th century, through the overall liberalisation of socio-cultural, political and economic landscape of Britain, and explore the impact of this upon Black community organisations in the present day.
2. To explore how engaged, participatory research of Black community organisations can contribute to understandings of structural and systemic racialised experiences in contemporary society, and responses to it.
3. To contribute to the knowledge of Black British community organisational, activism and social movements, through the provision of insight into the lived day to day experiences and challenges facing those who commit to Black community organisations with radical political objectives in contemporary Britain.

Research Questions

In fulfilling the research objectives, the following research questions arise,

- 1) How is Black radicalism carried out in practice?
- 2) What long-term and short-term obstacles must be overcome to secure the future of Black community organisations in contemporary British society?

From these questions, a sub-question arises:

1) How can these Black community organisations overcome these challenges?

Thesis outline

Chapter one outlines the concept of Black radical unity, as the conceptual framework of this research. Chapter two explores the history of Black political grassroots activism in Britain and is concerned with the influence of progressive liberalisation of the political and economic identity of Britain throughout the 1960s and 1970's, through the state addressal of racist conditions and treatment, upon the overall de-radicalisation of Black community organisations of the Black power era, and the diminishing of Black radical tradition in Britain for the latter part of the 20th century. The neo-liberalisation of the economic structure of Britain throughout the 1980's is discussed as a significant turning point in British history, for the relationship between Black collective community engagement with Black radical political thought and action.

The formation of the Black neo-liberal subject is presented as an identity that has resulted in the absorption of ideals that have been historically aligned with the Black radical politics, such as collective self-determination, into the neo-liberal ideals of self-responsibility and individualism. This, resulting in a distortion of the Black radical visions of liberation as a united, politically led effort, and alternatively, achievable as an individual, economically based endeavour that is sought through the accumulation of individualised wealth. This, being antithetical to Black radical values, which deems capitalism to be

the foundation of racism and thus considered liberation only being fully actualised upon the dismantling of capitalism (Andrews, 2018).

Chapter three outlines the Black radical position on conducting research, methodologically. Alongside critiquing traditional sociology for its Eurocentric origins, Black sociology, the epistemological foundation of Black studies which is the discipline that is presented as appropriate for conducting research of political transformative potential is presented. The empirical portion of the research is also outlined and justified. Reflexivity as central to the integrity of the Black studies researcher is presented as an additional ethical consideration. The research space is introduced and further background of how the research space came, in context to the history of Black political mobilisation in Britain, is provided.

Chapter four identifies intra-organisational division as a key, interpersonally situated obstacle that hindered progression in the research space. The points of fragmentation in this relationship are attributed to a misalignment of participatory ideals between the two generations of the governance board of the organisation, which arises from conflicting interpretations of the tenets of Black radical tenets of autonomy and self-determination in application to practical decision-making. Inter-generational tensions are observed to have been directly influenced by the societal norms at the time in which the activist identities of each generation were formed.

In consideration of the political and economic changes in Britain upon which the decline of the Black power movement was solidified (although not wholly or directly caused), as discussed in chapter two; Chapter five explores how

neo-liberal conditions, norms and values posed both a practical, and perceptive hindrance to the sustained commitment of some board members to the work of the research space. The liminality that encapsulates the plight of the individual occupying the identities of both the Black neo-liberal, and radical subject is presented as the central conceptual framework of the chapter. The adoption of neo-liberal visions of liberation by Black people is presented as a symptom of a 'colonial habitus.'

Chapter six explores how neo-liberal conditions, values and ideals can compound a key difficulty that have always afflicted the relationship between Black community organisations the local Black community: The attaining of financial support to action political work. The difficulty in converting community engagement, into paid membership Is presented as being resultant of the organisation being engaged with by the community as a community space of 'casual' as opposed to 'serious leisure' due to having been beheld as a site of politically engaged 'leisure education'. Whilst the aforementioned is acknowledged as the foundational function of Black community organisations, and the avenue through which paid community membership is attained; As a self-funded organisation, the lack of conversion from casual engagement to paid contribution, and a commitment to contribute towards the work of the organisation, hindered the organisation from fulfilling its transformative function.

The thesis concludes with an overview of the key findings, a discussion of the research limitations, and an outlining of further considerations that contribute towards the precarious future of Black community organisations

with Black radical political outlooks in contemporary Britain. An update of the organisation following the end of data collection is provided, and alongside the future of Black community organisations, the feasibility of the effectiveness of Black radical scholar-activism in neo-liberal conditions is contemplated. The concluding section discusses the importance of adaptability, as it pertains to practice, community engagement and governance styles, for Black community spaces in maintaining their relevance in contemporary Black thought and action.

Chapter one

Black radical unity

“Africa will not go forward any faster than we will, and we will not go forward any faster than Africa will. We have one destiny and we’ve had one past”. - Malcolm X .

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with explicating the parameters of Black radical political unity as the conceptual framework within which this research is conducted. The chapter begins with exploration of the European creation of ‘race’, and presentation of the perspective that the original category of social stratification upon which capitalism as an economic system is constructed, was not originally predicated upon one’s relationship to the means of production, or social class, as classical Marxist theorisation puts forth, but rather, upon the social value bestowed upon one’s ethnic/ancestral lineage (Robinson, 1983). The latter, being the foundation upon which the concept of ‘race’ was created, and of which continues to maintain the economics and political structures required to sustain capitalism that uphold racialised social realities until the present day (Robinson, 1983).

The chapter then goes on to explore the characteristics of Black radical unity, particularly as it pertains to the precedence given to the rejection of ‘race’, as a European construction of identity, and the embrace of ‘Blackness’ as a political construction of anti-hegemonic political unity and consciousness,

both of which are safeguarded by a commitment to ancestral exclusivity. The chapter then explores the birth of the Black radical tradition as a direct response to acts against the humanity of people of African descent. Black radicalism (Andrews, 2018) is then introduced as the ideological framework from which the concept of Black radical unity is derived, and both outlined. Understanding of the significance of the political function of ideological framework and objective, in determining the revolutionary potential of any Black collective political organisation (Andrews, 2018), is conveyed through examination of historical examples of Black liberation movements that have engaged with Pan-Africanism, the cornerstone philosophy of collective Black resistance. The chapter concludes with explanation of the formation of the identity of the Black radical subject.

The European creation of 'race'

Despite its ongoing existence, and it's happening marking a historical period that has been prolific in the genealogical journey of a vast demographic of the world's population, slavery is a system so abhorrent and inhumane that for many, particularly in the western context, it's happening has been cast away into the abyss of history, considered nothing more than a humanitarian transgression of a lesser enlightened time (Kapstein, 2006). Much to the contrary, the atrocity that was the transatlantic African slave trade specifically, is of particular significance when exploring the lasting legacies of anti-Black racism that have afflicted the life outcomes of those residing in the continent of Africa, and the African diaspora until the present day. Exploration of the relationship between African chattel slavery, and the

present-day unequal distribution of the world's wealth and resources between the west and the 'rest', affirms that the transatlantic African slave trade served as the foundation of the expansion of western capitalism (Robinson, 1983). Differentiation occurs however, between various theorisations as to the extent of which racialisation is purposed as a tool of economic, (and consequentially), social and political stratification, and thus the significance attributed to anti-Black racism in the overall condition of people of African ancestry. The positions presented in the literature reviewed, identified as being typically determined by whether the perspective presented sits in alignment with, or in critique of Marxism's positioning, and thus significance of race, to capitalism. Marx acknowledges the pivotal role of chattel slavery for the expansion of western capitalism yet reserves no theoretical consideration for the racialised underpinnings of slavery (Robinson, 1983).

“Direct slavery is as much the pivot upon which our present-day industrialism turns, as are machinery, credit, etc. Without slavery there would be no cotton, without cotton there would be no modern industry. It is slavery that has given value to the colonies, it is the colonies that have created world trade, and world trade is the necessary condition for large-scale machine industry. Slavery is therefore an economic category of paramount importance”. (Marx, 1847 as cited in Robinson, 1983: 81) .

The analysis of slavery as the foundation of western capitalist expansion as presented above, begins, and ends at the consideration of the wage free labour of slavery as an institution that allowed for the maximum extraction of surplus value. The omission of racialisation is especially problematic when theorising how racialisation commodified the African through physical difference in skin tone; A vital acknowledgment when articulating how the making of the 'negro', consisting of being stripped of culture, intellect and one's own life, but to labour and be laboured, became a social and moral dissonance clung to, in order to justify the prising of the African away from their own humanity, only to be socio-culturally welded to ferality.

The influence of Marxism, upon theorisations that are concerned with the social pre-conditions of slavery, are most commonly expressed through the assertion that anti-Black racism as a result of European racialisation, was not the process upon which the foundation of the African transatlantic slave trade was built. Contrarily, anti-Black racism became the rationale for the preservation of African chattel slavery as an economic industry, over time (Williams, 1944). Eric William's classic, *slavery and capitalism* (1944/2014) , calls for a de-colonisation of African historiography, of which is argued to have been too loyally aligned with slavery, and claims that the enslavement of Africans by Europeans, was solely a decision of economic calculation, and not premised upon racialisation as a means of social stratification. In concurrence with Williams, Walters (2012), whilst acknowledging that African inferiority has been accredited in every aspect of European knowledge production, utilises the point that other ethnic/racial groups besides African people have

been enslaved throughout history. Both Walter and Williams reject racialisation as a tool of social stratification upon which the enslavement of African people was deemed as just.

The de-centralisation of (anti-)Black racial stratification in the relationship between the enslavement of the African, and the expansion of western capitalism, finds support in the fact that there were groups that were also forced into servitude and/or enslaved prior to the African slave trade, whom did not contrast as starkly in ancestry to that of their enslavers; A fact that validates the logic of the argument that “slavery was not born out of racism, rather racism was a consequence of slavery” (Williams, 1944:7). However, the relegation of racialisation of African people to a peripheral, by-product of slavery, overlooks the very foundations of capitalism as the socio-economic foundation of European civilisation. Slavery based upon racialised difference is steeped first in the western creation of race itself, and subsequently in the application of hierarchy to different ‘races’ (Robinson, 1983).

Since its inception, European civilisation has been furthered upon the forced labour of migrants. Robinson (1983) describes how prior to the 11th and 12th centuries, migrant groups arriving from various parts of Europe in search of paid work, were often captured and enslaved by the empires of the location to which they had migrated, despite also being of European descent. The classification of a specific demographic of migrants as ‘barbarian’ was societally accepted as the justification for their enslavement, a classification based upon these groups having been socialised outside of the ‘civilised’ confines of the lands of their oppressors, and thus fit for nothing but toil.

Racialisation as social stratification that preceded enslavement, was not constructed upon differentiation of skin colour primarily. Those who were considered to be slaves were so, as a result of racialisation. It is only that the skin colour has not always been the central point of this othering.

“The tendency of European civilisation through capitalism was thus not to homogenise but to differentiate - to exaggerate regional, subcultural, and dialectical differences into “racial” ones (Robinson, 1983:25).

Racialisation in Europe as a means of attributing hierarchy, and those deemed as inferior, simply being so because they were ethnically different to those that subjugated them, precedes the development of capitalism. It is upon this foundation however, that the decision of upon whose labour western capitalism would be expanded, was made. According to Robinson, a key part of the process of solidifying the institution of African slavery as just, was the European degradation of African people, as inferior to the European and so, the African was presented as being in possession of no historical or cultural origin prior to their capture. Robinson (1983) states that the erasure of pre-slavery African history, and the replacement of this history with that solely of slavery, aids the reduction of people of African ancestry to merely a labour force. As it pertains to the imposition of ancestral inferiority as a justification for the African slave trade, the creation of the negro was central, and not peripheral. Considering racial stratification solely as a pre-condition to anti-Black racism removes race as an independent variable of analysis of

economic oppression and incorporates it into other facets of disadvantage that exist in the class-based social ordering of the capitalist socio-economic order. Through commodifying those of African ancestry in the capitalist economy, the characteristics of African physicality became those that defined what a slave was deemed to resemble on a global scale.

It is upon this history, that Robinson's concept of racial capitalism is predicated. Due to the racialised origins of capitalist socio-economic organisations, racism and capitalism are inextricable from one another and so to dismantle one, is to dismantle the other (Robinson, 1983). Thus, it is necessary for the analysis of Black community interactions with the capitalist economy to take place within the context of this history. Racialisation, the foundation of the expansion of western capitalism, and thus, those of African descent, as a political and economic category of the global economy, places Black participation in the capitalist labour market within the socio-historical context within which participation of those of African descent in the labour market is presented. The pre-capitalist European creation of race as a means by which to determine one's ability to access social status, places race as a form of social stratification that precedes social class. The objective of Black radical unity is centred upon Black radicalism's assertion that it is upon racism that the expansion of the western capitalism was predicated, and therefore equates the ongoing existence of capitalism, with those that uphold racialised hierarchy and oppression. Thus, Black radical unity is the actioning of this stance, through a transnational collective dedication to the Black radical objective of dismantling capitalism.

Defining 'Blackness'

Conflicting interpretations and theorisations of 'Blackness' have arisen in academic writings of racialised identity and experiences. These meanings are primarily divided into the categories of colour consciousness and race consciousness (Stephens, 2009:27). Providing clarification as to who is considered to be 'Black' is imperative when defining Black radical unity as a political construction of political transnational solidarity in response to racialised oppression. Colour conscious understandings of Blackness, place Blackness exclusively as ancestrally determined, and operationalise the term as one that defines the unifying political identity formed specifically in response to experiences of oppression, as steeped in ancestral genealogy (Stephens, 2009).

Black radical unity is conceptually constricted to a colour conscious understanding of Blackness, upon which the political construction of the resistance of individuals of African ancestry, to racist conditions and treatment is formed. The political significance of the term 'Black' as its unifying purpose for people of African descent. 'Black' was first used when embraced as the chosen racial signifier of African-American people by Black nationalist political organisations in the 1930's, and then became a mainstream term of racial identification in the 1960's following embrace of the term by Black radical organisations both in The British and American context during the Black power movement (Ogbar, 2019). 'Black' served not as a term of unification, not only in its encapsulation of the collective

ancestral genealogy of all of African ancestry but in addition, served as a symbol of ancestral empowerment and pride (Moore, 1992). The embrace of Blackness as a term resulted in the eschewing of terms such as coloured and Negro (meaning 'Black' in the Spanish language) as terms that were utilised widely up until that point, both by the wider population when referring to African American population, and by the African American population when referring to themselves. The aforementioned terms, in present society, are deemed to be offensive when used in reference to people of African descent (Moore, 1992).

Blackness as a term of racial signification, is representative of the rejection of the concept of 'race' as a segment of the capitalist social strata (Andrews, 2018). Whilst in the social world, racial categorisation of an individual is typically identified visually by physical features (skin tone, hair texture and facial features), the concept of race exists, not as scientific fact, but as a socio-political, and cultural construction (Allen, 1975; Robinson, 1983). Blackness, whilst adopted as an organisational and unifying term for those of African descent worldwide that hold physical features as an identifying marker of ancestry, and brought into consciousness by racialisation, is born from the subversion of racialisation as a social categorisation of oppression by, and inferiority comparatively to those of European descent (Andrews, 2018).

Racialisation, originally developed in 11th and 12th century Europe (as aforementioned), underpinned the system of social stratification in the allocating societal status, and with it, a specific position in the 'labour chain'. This would evolve into the economic system of western capitalism as it is

known in the present day. Racialisation was foundationally established upon cultural, national and/or religious difference (Fletcher, 2020).

The racialisation of individuals by these means precedes the formation of social class stratification as it is recognised in the capitalist system as time went on, however It was upon racialisation that social class stratification as it exists in the present day is formed, emerging from the deeming of one ethnic group by another, as being inherently inferior to themselves; The justification for reaching this conclusion, solely attributed to these differences (Robinson, 1983). Racialisation as the cornerstone of the development of the western capitalist class strata system is discussed further in-depth in chapter two, in discussion of racial capitalism, a concept analytically applied to the exploration of how Black communities have been bartered away from Black radical political resistant mobilisation with politico-economic reform. It is upon physical appearance that individuals of African descent have been set apart, racialised and oppressed. Thus, it is the foundation upon which one's 'citizenship' as 'Black' is verified. Race as a social and political construct is now subverted and politicised into Blackness and serves as the membership of political collectivism for liberation. Skin colour, a marker of ancestral appearance, *becomes* one's evidence of national citizenship, "The Black skin is not a badge of shame, but a symbol of national greatness" (Garvey, as cited in Cronon, 1969:4). Ancestral sameness comes to form a sense of uncontested oneness. This shared sense of identity, of which is imperative for the development of nationhood as a unit of solidarity, and ensuring that all of African descent, globally, feel equally united (Santana-Pinto, 2010). Colour

conscious understandings of Blackness that underpin the political and social construction of Black radical unity as an ancestrally exclusive political bond, facilitate the establishment of exclusive political space that prioritises the acknowledgement of Blackness as a state of political, cultural, and social state of being, and therefore as an ontology (More, 2012). A Colour conscious understanding of Blackness position Blackness as a political identity that has been constructed as a specific response to the specific form of oppression experienced in some shape or form by those of African ancestry on an ongoing basis since the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade (Andrews, 2018)

The fluidity of 'race', the fixedness of 'Blackness'

Positions aligned with opposition to the politicisation of colour conscious understandings of Blackness, have typically focused upon the rejection of essentialist theorisations of Black lives and experiences. In presentation of race as a 'floating' signifier, and the declaration that the meaning and/or status applied to any one racial identity is fluid, Hall (1996), deems the lived experiences brought forth by racial stratification and inequality as being the socially constructed reality of any one given time and/or space, and thus subject to change at any time. Racism, preceded by the creation of 'race', is a global system that transcends the nation state, and thus viewing race as having changing meaning that is dependent upon the normative socio-cultural sensibilities of any given time and space, seeks to separate the material realities imposed by the historic and ongoing effects of racialisation upon life outcomes in the present day, as resultant of the fact that the social

stratification that beget such inequalities serve as the key motivation for the creation of 'race' in the first instance.

Thus, race as a 'floating' signifier, with placement of the consequences of racialisation upon life outcomes as existing primarily in the social world and the meaning of race being wholly subject to space and time, redirects addressal of the fact that the societal systems and structures upon which a racially stratified social world has been established, maintained and reproduced, continue to govern the parameters of social, cultural, political and economic material realities until the present day (Andrews, 2018). Thus, it is in the ongoing existence of these systems upon which the original purpose, and thus meaning of race remains. Furthermore, spatial fragmentation of the meaning of race places the nation-state, itself a socially constructed concept, as a central unit of analysis of social and political life (Andrews, 2018). Theorisation of race as having changeable meaning that is, dependent upon time and place, undermines Blackness as a political concept that is required to be fixed in order to fulfil its purpose of accommodating the political unification of all that share a genealogical history, through time and space.

Overall, Hall's presentation of race as a floating signifier examples the separation of race as A socially and culturally constructed concept, from a political and economic reality, and thus the permanence of race as a significant factor of one's life outcomes (Andrews, 2018). Furthermore, Hall's perspective marries with the Black liberal perspective that the entirety of Black betterment can be met through state reformation of any nation-state's

respective political and economic systems and structures. This stance, undermining of Black self-determination and autonomy as a tenet of Black radical political endeavour (Andrews, 2018). Blackness is a political term that is entrenched in the pursuit of retrieving the power of the racialised collective, and is cultivated at a community level, and thus an identity that is bestowed upon self, unlike race, which is an identity of which has been imposed (Andrews, 2018).

Gilroy (2000) deems colour conscious understandings of Blackness to be resultant of the racial stratification upon which the cultural and economic domination of the western world (capitalism) was built. Radical Blackness is the political operationalisation of Blackness as a collective political response to racialised oppression, in response to the hierarchal segmentation that is race, solidified by the outward appearance of ancestral sameness and difference. Gilroy on the other hand, presents that seeing race solely as skin deep overlooks the cultural complexities of transnational Black identities. In alignment with Hall, Gilroy's focus is centred upon the specificity of experience as it pertains to any one given time and space. Whilst the political essentialism that is required for the ideology of Black radicalism, the expectation of political essentialism does not extend to any other realm of identity, regardless of how entwined said facet may be with one's racialised identity, this necessary for realisation of complete egalitarianism as the first requirement for the actualisation of Black radical unity.

An autonomous Black ontology

Black radicalism's commitment to ancestrally exclusive political unity is premised upon the notion that Blackness, when solely engaged as a racial signifier, enforces the hierarchal nature of race as a social and cultural construct, whilst Blackness as a political identity seeks to reclaim and subvert the racialised inferiority that has been bestowed upon those who are racialised as 'Black' (Andrews, 2018). Furthermore, acceptance of Blackness solely as a racial signifier places whiteness as the central route through which Blackness is able to gain ontological autonomy. Due to the normativity, and thus ontological neutrality of whiteness. Ontological autonomy: The state of which the meaning of one's own being exists independently of all related and relative to it, (Graham, Carter et al, 2020) , is stripped from Blackness when in the presence of whiteness, in a racial sense. The ontological nomadism of Blackness, or as Fanon terms it, "a zone of nonbeing" (1952:10), is a social, cultural, and psychological consequence of colonialism that places the value of Blackness as always determined comparatively to whiteness,

"Ontology—once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside—does not permit us to understand the being of the black man. For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man". (Fanon, 1952:1)

W.E.B DuBois' *Souls of Black folk* (1903), depicts the contours of white superiority, as shaping of the Black experience. Presenting that Black identity and the value of Blackness in society is formed through a white gaze, DuBois' 'double consciousness' discusses how Black consciousness is not formed autonomously, but as the darker, less advantaged counterpart of whiteness (Owens, 2007). In a similar fashion, Fanon articulates the hierarchal dichotomy of whiteness to Blackness as arising upon contact; The consciousness of the gaze of whiteness, bringing the Black man into consciousness of self, "As long as the black man is among his own, he will have no occasion, except in minor internal conflicts, to experience his being through others," (1952:109) .

Applying the Black/white dichotomy directly to the master-slave dialectic as originally theorised by Hegel, Fanon puts forth how the consciousness of one's Blackness through the white gaze, induces an inescapable consciousness of one's own inferiority in comparison to whiteness, as it is only in the white gaze, that the Black man becomes a 'negro' (1952). This point, brought forth by the degradation of pre-colonial identity and consciousness during enslavement and colonisation, as posited by Robinson (1983). The social and cultural construction of whiteness as superior to Blackness is normative is reproduced through the gaze of whiteness for the Black colonial subject, as the motivation of Blackness, becomes to convey that the ideals that have been socially and culturally posited by white ontology, as innate to only to whiteness are also true of people who are racialised as Black. The motivation for this, not to be accepted as white, but to be accepted as being 'as good' as

white as a means through which to access one's humanity. This, an inevitable outcome for the inherently hierarchal and comparative nature of race as a concept.

“Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect” (Fanon, 1952:12).

This racialised white/Black dynamic places the pursuit of Black liberation with any consideration given to the white gaze, as upending of the Black ontological autonomy that Black radical politics holds as paramount for the imagining of Black radical futures. Thus, the relocation of ‘occasion’ of Blackness from the white gaze to the subjectivities of Black experiences, is integral in facilitating the spatiality required for the transformative potential of Blackness as an autonomous ontology. This ontology, foundational of a political consciousness that is affirmative of the parameters of a Black revolutionary political unity as an ancestrally exclusive, yet geographically unlimited polity. Furthermore, in rejection of, and thus in elevating above discussions of ‘race’, the concerns of Blackness as a political identity remains unaffected by outlooks and discourses that seek to dictate just how (un)concerned those of African descent should continue to be, by conditions that beget racialised realities of any given time, space, or place.

White ontology and Black exclusivity

Based upon a shared ancestral genealogy and thus entrenched in colour conscious understandings of Blackness, a key objective of Black radical unity is the creation and maintaining of counter-publican political spaces that seek to serve the needs and vision of liberation for those of African descent only. In short, the exclusion of those who are not racialised as 'Black'. The requirement of Black exclusivity for the development of a Black radical political consciousness, unity and action was the central argument of Black power activist, Kwame Turé (née Stokely Carmichael), who referred to the effective coalition of Black liberation movements with white activists as a 'Myth', and stood firm in the belief that ancestral, colour conscious exclusivity was imperative for the actualisation of objectives of Black radical organisation and movement (1967/2008) . One of three myths of Black/white anti-racist political coalition presented by Hamilton and Carmichael in alignment with the rejection of white allyship is that "what is good for America is automatically good for Black people" (1967/2008:172). This myth, reflective of the normative ontology of those who are racialised as white, or white ontology.

White ontology. can be defined as the understanding of the social world that has been constructed within the framework of the belief that people racialised as 'white' are of a cultural superiority to all demographics of people that racialised as non-white (Welcome, 2004) . White ontology is constructed upon the application of meaning to knowledge, experience and understanding of the social world that is categorised as 'white', as normative, and valid, this

being the central values of Euro-centrism. Analysing the plight of Black (and brown people), and consequently the course of action required to strive on towards the betterment of the Black condition within the ontological framework of whiteness, has been highlighted as a key pitfall of mainstream sociological analyses of the racial inequality (Bonilla-silva, 1997; Bonilla-Silva and Balochi, 2001; Welcome, 2004) ; As it is from the vantage point of being 'white', that others are racialised as 'non-white' in the social world, European ancestry is rendered as an 'unracialised' race, and thus is often not theorised, as a racialised identity (Garner, 2007).

When outlining the perils of the presence of those racialised as white, and whiteness as an identity founded upon white ontology in Black political spaces with radical objectives, whiteness must be placed in direct dichotomy to Blackness as a political identity with opposing definitions and objectives. Whiteness is a multifaceted identity, all such facets curated by the societal conditions that have been brought about by the hierarchal dominance that people of European descent have historically reigned all other racialised identities, “ 'white' as a marked racialised identity whose precise meanings derive from national racial regimes” (Garner, 2007:3). Blackness on the other hand, is an identity formed upon the rejection of racialisation, and the politicisation of racialised experiences as a result of the regimes, that have been justified by it, and the commitment to dismantle and deconstruct the systems and structures that exist as a result.

The subduing, or 'liberalising' impact of white presence within Black political movements is indicative of the misalignment of white ontology, and whiteness

as a political identity derived from it, that is inherently motivated by the preservation of the structures and systems upon which the material realities that have been constructed to uphold it. Unlike Black liberal movements such as the civil rights movement in their embrace of white allyship (Stanley, and Schroder, 2022), Carmichael and Hamilton consider white liberal allyship, as well-meaning as it may be, to have a paternalistic and regulatory presence in Black political organisations and movements. Whilst gratified to contest overtly racially discriminative policies and laws, white allyship in Black political movements typically falls short of challenging the ideals upon which societal institutions are built (Hamilton and Carmichael, 1967). These same institutions, the same of which uphold current racial dynamics of power and ultimately uphold the privilege of 'whiteness'. The ontology of whiteness underprops the latent anti-Blackness of white allies, which becomes increasingly evident as the vision of Black liberation comes to be morphed into that of which aligns with a white liberal, rather than Black radical vision of actual systemic transformation.

Akin to the Black radical political leader Malcolm X (1963), who considered white liberals and conservatives as the benevolent and malevolent agents of the maintenance of systemic white supremacy respectively, and eschewed all white allyship Black radical activists; Carmichael held no affinity for white radicals over white liberals, and refused to situate Black liberation politics within the left-right political spectrum and placed no higher political value of the alliance of one white person over another. This was directed by a commitment to guaranteeing the holding of space primarily for Blackness

during the development of, “An African ideology that speaks to our Blackness—nothing else, it’s not a question of left or right, but of Black” (Carmichael, as cited in Carson, 1995:282) . Carmichael’s grouping of all white allyship, from the liberal to the radical; The latter, despite the commitment to anti-capitalist revolutionary intent, was most ardently expressed through Carmichael’s disdain for Marxism and socialism. Carmichael dismissed both as ‘white’ political ideologies, utilised for the political ‘crowbarring’ of both white anti-capitalists, and the white working class into Black political movements (Carson, 1995). Central to Carmichael’s outright rejection of Marxism as an ideologically appropriate political framework for Black liberation, was that Marxism’s core focus is upon class-based, and not racialised struggle and oppression. Carmichael’s departure from the Black panther party in 1969, followed conflict over the panther’s growing affinity towards politically collaborating with white radicals (Johnson, 1990) .

The 1960’s US women’s movement examples an instance in which a lack of shared existential ontology and identity presented a key source of fragmentation between Black and white activists for racial justice. White feminists made the effort to unlearn their Eurocentric ideals in an attempt to understand and become aligned with opposing the structural complexities that differentiate the misogyny experienced by white women, from the combined sexism and racism of the “anti-Black racist misogyny” experienced exclusively by Black women (Breines,2006), termed in contemporary Black feminist discourses as ‘misogynoir’ (Bailey and Trudy, 2018: 762) . Even so, organisational tensions directly located in a disconnection of lived

experiences, and race as the permeating factor of misalignment for the differing life trajectories of Black and white women, served as a key contributing factor to the overall failure of sustained a Black and white alliance in the women's movement, and was a contributing factor to the surgency of the establishment of multiple Black feminist organisations in the 1960's and 1970's (Breines, 2006).

On Marxism

The economic determinism of Marxism provides an objective analysis of class-based oppression in which those who oppress, and those who are oppressed, are of no definitive identity that transcends that of their relation to the means of production (Belkhir, 1994). It is this feature of Marxism, that had laid the foundation of common critique regarding the usefulness as Marxism as an ideological framework of Black liberation movement, specifically as it pertains to dictating the parameters of political unity within these movements. Traditionally, Marxism has been critiqued for its insubstantial analysis of racialised and gendered oppression as subjective experiences that alongside class oppression, are maintained and reproduced for the interests of capitalist system (Belkhir, 1994; Leonardo, 2004). Robinson (1983) poses that traditional Marxism's prioritisation of class-based oppression discards racialisation as foundational to the expansion of western capitalism. Thus, traditional Marxism undermines the significance of the resistance of people of African descent, and consequently the development of the Black radical tradition as retaliative to the racialised stratification upon which western capitalism came to be. Robinson presents that the euro-centricity of Marxist

analyses of capitalist oppression, leads to the oversight that it is racism which begat classism. Thus, first and foremost, before it is classism, capitalism is racism.

The Marxist equalisation of all oppressions under capitalism, would advocate for Black liberation movements as all-inclusive politics of anti-capitalist resistance as a logical organisational strategy. However, this is only so, if the racial dynamics of power as they exist in current conditions are not considered. The integration of white allies into Black liberation organisations and movement, leaves these spaces subject to the conditions of what Charles Mills terms 'The racial contract' (1997). Mills puts forth that whiteness exists as a political system within western societies, upon which racial hegemony is maintained. Within such societies, all of those who are racialised as white contribute towards to the collective upholding of these conditions. According to the racial contract, white people are deemed by each other, as equal to one another, even if in dispute or any nature. All those who are non-white, are deemed as inferior to white people. In this contract, white people exist as 'signatories', and enjoy the privileges that non-white people, who are classified as 'objects' within the contract, are denied. It is upon the racial contract, that the European supranationalism that preceded the colonial carving of the African continent, took place. The racial contract's categorisation of White people as signatories, and Black people as objects is fitting in analogising Malcolm X's (1963) explanation as to how white allyship in Black political spaces only serves in upholding conditions of white supremacy, guised a 'progress'. X referred to Black people as 'tools' that white liberals seek to

appease, through feigned concern for the Black plight, in order to leverage Black political power against white conservatives, when vying for national political leadership.

In rejection of the oppositional symmetry thesis, the idea embraced by a majority of Marxist theorisations, that all forms of oppression, specifically the central three (Race, class, and gender) are equally significant upon life outcomes; Mills highlights traditional Marxism's oversight: That white supremacy is a predeterminant of the capitalist social strata. The isolation of race from class by Mills is intended to safeguard against the "ontological elimination of Black people" from the 'racelessness' of Marxism (Sullivan, 2017:5). Traditional Marxism does little to reconcile whiteness as a political system of racial domination, and places the economic system of capitalism at the centre of the material world, rendering the subjectivity of oppressions as a subset of the objective class-based oppression/privilege as the pre-revolutionary condition (Will, 2018). According to traditional Marxist theorisation, a society in which Marxism has been theoretically actualised through communist revolution, would along with the social class, abolish all hierarchal social and cultural systems (racism, sexism, ableism, ageism homo/trans-phobia), that maintain the categories of social stratification. In this reality, the ending of capitalism, bringing about the abolishment of "the ontological category of ideologist" (Sullivan, 2017:4). Thus, the ideologies that seek to encapsulate the ontologies of, and articulate subjective, intersectional oppressions, would too, through a traditional Marxist lens, in a post-capitalist society, be considered to no longer be of any social or cultural relevance, as

such ontologies of oppression are considered economically determined, and therefore a solely materialist phenomenon (Sullivan, 2017). However, whilst it was upon the creation of race that capitalism owes its expansion, post-capitalism is not to be equated with post-racialism.

Pan-Africanism

Pan-Africanism is a philosophy that calls for the “cooperative movement among peoples of African origin to unite their efforts in the struggle to liberate Africa” (Williams, 2015:175). However, the unificatory mandate of Pan-Africanism has proven far less linear in practice than in theory (Ackah, 1999). The viewpoint that those who have sought to organise in the pursuit of Black liberation under the philosophy of Pan-Africanism, have not been able to do so under any single coherent political ideology, is attributable to the fact that Pan-Africanism has enveloped a range of contrasting and conflicting Black political ideas and outlooks (Andrews, 2017). Pan-Africanism has been commonly referred to as an ideologically ambiguous concept, (Geiss, 1969), one of which lacks a fixed origin or beginning, and a fixed ideology (Ackah, 1999). Ackah (2020) describes Pan-Africanism as an ‘unfinished politics’, presenting it to be so in the specific areas of ‘race, recognition and identity’, ‘return’, ‘liberation’, and ‘unification’. These four categories, four key aspects upon which the positionality of Black political thought and ideology is established. Despite the association with ambiguity, Pan-Africanism’s defining feature is its calling for the transcendence of the political unity of people of African descent beyond the nation-state as a geo-political construct, and for recognition of the significance of ancestral genealogy upon present

experiences. For this reason, it has become a popular philosophy adopted by Black liberation movements with radical objectives.

The political function of ideology

Understanding the importance of the political function of ideology; Ideology Defined by Dawson as a “world view readily found in the population, including a set of ideas and values that cohere, that are used to publicly justify political stances, and that shape, and are shaped by society” (2003:4) is paramount in outlining what makes a Black political unity, radical. All Black political ideologies of the Black radical tradition are purposed with encapsulating an organised and fixed account of anti-hegemonic consciousness, of which begets thought and action as a means by which to politically mobilise against racially oppressive structures and conditions (Dawson, 2003). The political function of Black political ideology is to organise individuals through a set of ideas and values that are to be considered by that outlook, as conducive to bringing about the conditions that will facilitate Black liberation.

What places a stream of Black political thought, or an ideology in concurrence, variance, or opposition to another is the answer to the overarching question, ‘what is Black liberation?’ (Dawson, 2003). All Black political ideology is developed through varying approaches to the same questions centred around what liberation resembles, and how to go about achieving said liberation (Dawson, 2003). This question, overarching of a few questions that order the steps of all Black political ideology. The first question, being: ‘Are current systemic conditions conducive to Black liberation?’ If the answer is no, then ‘what do the conditions of Black liberation

resemble?'. The second question, then being : 'What is required in order to bring about the conditions of Black liberation?'

The Black radical tradition

Black political resistance of the African enslaved against regimes of chattel slavery has a history that dates back to the 15th, 16th century and 17th century. Some notable mentions of the numerous uprisings include the servant's plot in 1663 (Also known as the Gloucester rebellion), which was the first recorded rebellion in the USA of which the African enslaved participated (Breen, 1973) · The Haitian revolution (1791-1804), the most liberatory revolt In Black political history, resulting in the first Black post-colonial self-emancipated republic (C.L.R James, 2001). The Baptist war of 1831 In the Caribbean Island of Jamaica, was a revolt so effective, that it contributed significantly to the eventual abolishment of slavery by the British (Reckord, 1968) , and the Southampton insurrection in the American state of Virginia, USA, also in 1831, which was a revolt that immortalised the leader, Nat Turner as a historical figure of Black radical action for liberation in African American history (Greenberg, 2003). The African American slavery abolitionist movement, beginning in 1830's America, was followed by the first wave of the civil rights movements beginning in the 1860's, during the reconstruction of the American labour market following the abolishment of slavery in America (DuBois,1935). The organised Black political ideologies of Black political thought of the beginning of the 20th century America came from the generation born from the free-born reconstruction era; Figures such as W.E.B DuBois, and Marcus Garvey.

Any act of unified Black resistance, such as the ones detailed above, that has ever taken place in response to collective physical and systemic bondage from the moment that individuals of African descent became enslaved, can be deemed to be a political act (Jones, 1971). Due to the conditions of absolute subjugation of which a majority of the aforementioned acts took place, such acts were all in direct opposition to absolute conditions and thus in and of themselves, all should also be considered as radical acts. However, it is important to note that these acts, could not have been undertaken successfully without a collective subscription to the concept of Black radical unity, which provides the conceptual framework of this research.

Prior to defining the concept of Black radical unity, it is necessary to first outline the definition of Black radicalism as it is understood and accepted in this thesis. Black radicalism has been typically referred to as a tradition, one that is defined as a legacy of resistance of people of African ancestry that has emerged in response to the racialised oppression (Scott 2013). The Black radical tradition consists of the cultural, political, and intellectual efforts put forth into the attempt to dismantle the oppressive systems and structures and the societal conditions beget by them, that have deprived people of African descent from their total liberation (Robinson, 1983). Within these efforts, various Black political ideologies, perspectives, lines of enquiry and thought have sought to contribute to the recording of the global history of anti-Black racism and oppression. This history, aiding the placement of experiences and life outcomes of people of African descent at any given time to be placed in their proper socio-historical context, in addition to aiding the development of

present-day consciousness of the political, economic, and socio-cultural systems and structures that have been constructed in order to create, maintain and reproduce racialised realities over the course of centuries. Some Black political ideologies of the Black radical tradition include Black (cultural) nationalism (A paradigm which envelops numerous ideologies that whilst differing from one another, hold similar notions of Black nationhood), Black Marxism, Black liberalism, and Black feminism. Black radicalism, as theorised by Andrews (2018), is another addition to the ideological facet of the tradition. No one Black political ideology exists in isolation of one another; All intersecting at the concern of the Black experience, in their concurrent pursuits of subverting conditions of oppression that hinder the full potentiality of Black lives. Even in instances when said pursuit poses direct opposition to another, all political ideologies of the Black radical tradition are bound by their specific conviction to transform the stronghold that the realities of systemic racial marginalisation have inflicted upon the genealogical trajectories of those of African descent globally.

Black radicalism

The ideological framework for this research is the political ideology of Black radicalism as it is presented by Andrews' *Back to Black: Black radicalism for the 21st century* (2018). As argued, Black radicalism is a political ideology that is predicated upon the assertion that the conditions that have produced and maintained European supremacy over people of African descent on a global scale over centuries, has been facilitated by a collective interest by all European nations of the world to participate in doing so. "The hallmark of

western imperialism is a system of cooperation between so-called nation states in the service of white domination” (Andrews, 2018:71). The pivotal historical moment of this coalition was the Berlin conference of 1884, which would come to be dubbed as the ‘scramble for Africa’; An event purposed with discussion as to furthering the collective European objective to colonise the continent of Africa (Pakenham, 2015) . This collectivism, an extension of European nation’s collective participation in the African transatlantic slave trade.

It is upon European transitional unity, or supra-nationalism, that the domination of people of African descent would be propelled into a new age; The era of slavery and the slave trade having ended by this time, having been abolished by a majority of western nations (Robinson, 1983). In response to the European supranationalism required in order to achieve the global domination of people of African descent, Andrews presents the concept of global Blackness; A proposal of the transcendence of analysis and addressal of structural conditions that maintain and reproduce systemic conditions of racialised oppression beyond the confines of national borders, with the concept of the nation-state itself being a colonial creation, and tool of domination. Global Blackness is derived from the recognition, analysis, and response to such conditions not as solely a national, but global undertaking, and is central to the actualisation of the Black radical vision of liberation.

This vision is characterised by the dismantling of capitalist conditions, and the building of a Black transnational independent polity, within which all of African descent are able to independently govern their political and economic

destinies. Contextualised by the European creation of race, and racial capitalism as instrumental to the expansion of western capitalism and thus the drawing to the conclusion that capitalism is an inherently racist system, (as discussed in the previous section of this chapter), Black radicalism is a staunchly anti-capitalist ideology and call for it's dismantling (Andrews, 2018).

The route to the fulfilment of this objective is the building of an independent Black counter-publican nation. Global Blackness is conceptually drawn from Pan-Africanism, the foundational philosophy of Black radicalism, as is true for multiple ideologies within the Black radical tradition. Pan-Africanism, as aforementioned, advocates for the global unification of people of African descent which is determined as necessary for betterment of the Black condition (Adi, 2018). Other theorisations derived from Pan-Africanism include Black transnationalism (Marable, 2008) and Black internationalism (Bush, 2009). It has been put forth by Andrews (2018), that Black radicalism as a political ideology came into existence in the very moment that the African enslaved, held in the bondage of the European slave ships, collectively comprehended that the grounds for their capture, and the anguish, anger and fear conjured by such an experience had been determined overall, by the colour of their skin. Black radical consciousness underpins an organisational model of solidarity and resistance that begets Black radical unity, upon which Black radicalism as a political ideology came to be founded upon.

The consciousness that underpinned such collective mass uprisings, placed any individual differences of identity that may have held significance prior to

that point in time, (E.G. Tribal, hierarchal, regional) were no longer considered as such. To be liberated from the conditions of bondage, now the only concern of any relevance, and the means of achieving this end, being collective action. It is the disregard of any previous forms of difference or division between those held captive, and the embrace of a shared oppressed state based upon ancestral and circumstantial sameness by which Black radical unity is truly defined. Black political acts predicated upon Black radical unity, be they mass collective uprisings, or smaller co-ordinated acts of day-to-day resistance, are done so upon the total dichotomy to which human liberty had been determined primarily by ancestral origin. This shared experience of oppression based upon this fact, being what connects the mobilised resistance of those in the Caribbean and Latin America, with those on the plantations in the deep American South; That Black oppression is at the foundation of the economic and political reality of inequality on a global scale.

[Black radical unity](#)

Black radical unity is a political unity that seeks to facilitate the inclusive unification of all people of African descent in alignment of the Black radical concept of global Blackness and seeks this unity as a prerequisite to the actualisation of a Black radical vision of liberation. Black radical unity is directed through two main tenets, 1) A commitment to Black social, cultural, and economic egalitarianism, and 2) A commitment to contribute towards collective action in meeting the overarching objective of actualising Black radical visions of liberation. The first tenet seeks to cast out hegemonic systems of social stratification, as unacceptable and counterproductive to

Black radical nation building, and recognises these systems as derivative of capitalist oppression (E.G., Patriarchy, hetero-sexism, classism, and misogynoir). The entwining of these ideals into any one Black political vision of Black liberation is to avoid the impact of socio-cultural hierarchies upon the development of Black collective anti-hegemonic consciousness in Black political spaces. The second tenet places all in the same political pursuit of Black independent transnational nation-building.

Black liberal unity

In further illustrating the political function of ideology in directing the objectives and visions of Black political unity, it is necessary to provide an example of Black political organisation that has been enacted from the vantage point of a differing ideological standpoint. Black liberalism, an ideology existing at the opposite end of the political spectrum, will be discussed. Black radicalism presents the dismantling of capitalism and the political systems that protect capitalist interest, as the only route to Black liberation (Andrews, 2018). Conversely, Black liberalism is predicated upon the belief that existing economic and political systems and structures can be redeemed, and thus Black liberation is achievable through the application of collective political pressure upon the national elite, for substantial reformation of the political and economic conditions; This, resulting in racially egalitarian societies (Dawson, 2001). Black liberalism is concerned with controlling systems of behaviour, in that it aims to mitigate how racial oppression is experienced in society both socially and culturally, however does

not seek to dismantle the systems and structures, that maintain and reproduce racial inequality as normative (Dawson, 2001).

A historic example of Black liberal political unity was the first Pan-African Congress. Henry Sylvester-Williams, a Caribbean barrister and activist, formed the African Association in Britain in 1897, which would be renamed the Pan-African congress in 1900 (Sherwood, 2012). The objective of the Pan-African association was to politically unite all African countries, and all residing in the African diaspora, in collectively opposing European colonial rule of a majority of African nations during that time, alongside seeking legal addressal of the discrimination faced by Black people in America (Abdul-Raheem, 1996). Sociologist and activist, W.E.B Du Bois become increasingly politically involved in the endeavours of the association. So much so, that Du Bois co-arranged and chaired the first pan-African congress, taking place in Paris in 1900 (Contee, 1972), with attending delegates representing a total of 15 countries worldwide (Painter, 2011). It is in Du Bois' 'To the nations of the world' speech at the first pan-African congress, that the Black liberalised objective that would bring the otherwise radical objective of achieving global unity was highlighted,

“Let the nations of the world respect the integrity and independence of the free Negro states of Abyssinia, Liberia, Haiti, and the rest, and let the inhabitants of these states, the independent tribes of Africa, the Negroes of the West Indies and America, and the black subjects of all nations take courage, strive ceaselessly, and fight bravely, that they

may prove to the world their incontestable right to be counted among the great brotherhood of mankind. Thus, we appeal with boldness and confidence to the great powers of the civilized world, trusting in the wide spirit of humanity, and the deep sense of justice and of our age, for a generous recognition of the righteousness of our cause”.

The above excerpt conveys that the congress meeting its objective of Black liberation, was subject to the co-operation of western nations. This one key aspect of the congress’ outlook, conveys that the ideology that governed the ideology under which political unity was sought by the congress is that of Black liberalism, and thus defines the congress as an example of Black liberal unity. Whilst the pursuit of a Black transnational political unity in the pursuit of the betterment of Black lives on a global scale, and encouraging colonial subjects to resist subjugation through protest, striking and boycotting colonially supported industries, requirement of co-operation of western nations in fulfilling the congresses’ objectives, directly undermined the Black radical tenets of Black self-determination and autonomy. The pan-African congress remained on this trajectory until it’s fifth convening in the year of 1945, taking place in Manchester, UK. The difference between this congress and the ones that had taken place prior to it, lay in the radical consciousness and vision of a number of the delegates in attendance, who had decided to steer away from attempting to appeal to western nations in the ending of colonialism, and rather engage in collective radical anti-colonial struggle that recognised the inherent racism of the western economic order

of capitalism, and the invested interested of western nations in maintaining conditions as they currently were.

Kwame Nkrumah, a politician and delegate of the 5th Pan-African congress, and a significant figure for the congresses' new radical direction, had politically held an anti-colonial vision for Ghana, the country that he represented at the congress. Critical of the congresses' success being dependent upon fraternisation with the west (M' Buyinga, 1982), Nkrumah explicitly accredited his vision for Ghana specifically to Marcus Garvey's commitment to an anti-colonial, and racially separatist model of solidarity and mobilisation (Nkrumah, 1959). Marcus Garvey, the leader of the United Negro Improvement Association, (UNIA) established in 1914, was an organisation that is remembered most prominently for its advocacy of the unification of all people of African descent worldwide in the pursuit of liberation from western oppression, and an example of transnational Black political organisation that most resembled a Black radical unity as it is theorised in this research. Implementing the forthrightness of Marcus Garvey's proclamation of 'Africa for Africans' (Martin, 1986), Nkrumah went on to become the first prime minister of Ghana and led the country to independence from European colonial rule; The first nation in Africa to do so.

Whilst being inspired by Garvey is reflected upon as a radicalisation of Nkrumah following engagement with the outlooks of Du Bois and the pan-African congress in general; Despite both sharing a commitment to Black transnational unity as necessary for the achievement of Black liberation, explanation as to why Du Bois and Garvey both hold radical aspects within

their visions of liberation, yet neither are deemed to achieve a Black unity that is 'radical', as it is defined in this thesis, is necessary. Garvey's 'race first' approach to unity for Black liberation, is aligned with the commitment to Black exclusivity that is purposed to preserve the autonomy of Black ontologies in political thought and action, as discussed earlier on in this chapter, and is imperative for the calling of any political unity of Black people, to be deemed radical. However, antithetical to Black radicalism, Garvey was a staunch capitalist, and his vision of a free African continent did not include an end to capitalism. Resembling instead, an African replication of the western capitalism (Carter, 2002). Although providing the blueprint of various Black radical models of political unity that followed, Garveyism was not politically revolutionary as the movement had no interest in dismantling capitalism as the central system of Black oppression, but in building Black wealth in order for people of African descent to leverage power globally, within the existing capitalist system. Du Bois, in his commitment to anti-capitalism, was economically radical, yet due to the lack of focus upon ancestral exclusivity, demonstrated in his desire to appeal to western power structures in progressing Black liberation endeavour and in collaborating with white activists in Black political spaces (Andrews, 2017); Du Bois does not meet the political commitment to Black exclusivity that characterises a Black radical unit.

[The Black radical subject: The formation of the Black radical identity](#)

A central bridge between Black radical thought and action is the forming of Black radical identity into the Black radical subject. The Black radical subject

is an individual who has taken up the commitment to contribute toward fulfilling the political objectives of Black radical endeavour(s). The formation of the identity of the Black radical subject is required for the fulfilment of second prerequisite of effective Black radical unity: A commitment to contribute towards collective action in meeting the overarching objective of actualising Black radical visions of liberation, as aforementioned. Black radical subjects are social actors of community-based (and led) political activism(s), that are required to successfully mobilise towards Black radical political objectives.

The Black radical identity is the personalisation of Black radical political ideology and objectives; The insertion of oneself as an agent of radical political struggle. Cross (1971) and Costa Vargas (2006), both provide a vantage point from which to embark upon an exploration of how A commitment to Black communalism in political endeavour, serves as the actualising element of the Black radical identity, and are both implemented here. Cross refers to the negro to Black conversion as the “Afro-American model for self-actualisation under conditions of oppression” (1971:25), and discusses this conversion as a process of Black psychological liberation that takes place in conditions where systemic oppression exists as a lived experience.

“Oppressive conditions remain a constant factor; In fact, oppression is greater today than, say, in 1965; However, we have been liberated, psychologically speaking, despite continued oppression. In a sense less susceptible to psychological and ideological domination by the enemy

and more receptive to thoughts, values and actions that have revolutionary implications". (Cross, 1971:14)

The development of the consciousness required for the formation of a Black radical identity as presented in William. E Cross's *Negro to Black conversion (1971)* in the nigrescence model of racial identity development, was concerned with the development of a Black radical consciousness. The negro to Black conversion included in Crosses' model consists of five stages: Pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/Emersion, Internalisation, and Internalisation-Commitment. Encounter, the second stage, is the stage when an individual becomes aware of how engulfing and pervasiveness the influence of Eurocentricity has been upon their world outlook up until that point. The criticality of a radical consciousness is heightened in the third stage: The Immersion-Emersion stage. It is at this point when all things 'Black': History, cultural, politics, and the condition of Black people, become central to the interests of the individual. It is also at this stage, at which critical awareness and acceptance of the fact that to be of African descent, is to be of an ancestral lineage with a history that is steeped in racial subjugation, is developed. During the immersion-Emersion stage, Blackness becomes shaped through feelings of grievance at the historical and ongoing transgressions towards people of African descent, and it is in this understanding that the sense of linked fate with others of African descent is formed.

Costa Vargas (2006) terms the process of the development of the identity of an individual that becomes committed to Black communalism as the 'Black

radical becoming’, positing that the Black radical identity is formed through an ever-evolving understanding of the current global Black conditions in a shared historical context. An understanding that is continuously and never-endingly expanded through various forms of Black expression (books, art, political education, and action). Ascertained from the culminative theorisations of both Cross, and Costa Vargas (2006), the process of becoming ‘Black’ consists of three elements: Consciousness, imagination, and activity. Following consciousness, it is imagination, the formation of the belief that it is possible to bring about an end to systemic racism, through dismantling the systems and structures that support it through Black political cohesion in the endeavour to do so at a grassroots level, takes place. Black radical activity, following consciousness is the actual partaking in grassroots activism as the process of bringing the vision of the Black radical imagination to fruition. This usually entailing individual involvement in a community organisation and/or protest culture. Each element of Black radical identity is an advancement of the element that precedes it, requiring the presence of all three in this specific order for a fully formed Black radical identity. Whilst the development of racial identity can be achieved in solitude, the active pursuit of the realisation of becoming ‘Black’ can only come about through collective action.

The process of becoming ‘Black’, as being concluded, at the point of commitment to Black communalism is presented by both Cross and Costa Vargas. Cross states that it is only in the fifth, and final stage of the process, (internalisation-commitment), at which point, the individual becomes ‘Black’ by taking on a “deep sense of Black communalism” (1971:23). Contrary to

Cross, Costa Vargas does not categorise the development of Black consciousness into specific stages, and thus does not concede to a definite end point of the formation of Blackness, referring to the process as never ending, hence the term *becoming*. However, Costa Vargas does concur that the individual commitment to “Afrodiasporic transnationalism” (2006:475), is integral to the Black radical becoming, or when transposed: Becoming, Black radical. It is from the point of making a commitment to Black, transnational colour conscious communalism/unity, that the Black radical identity is fully actualised, and that the individual is now considered to be a Black radical subject.

It is necessary at this point, in order to interpret Crosses’ negro to Black conversion in its proper proximity and relevance to the development of the identity of the Black radical subject. Becoming ‘Black’, as with all stages of the conversion is a state of Black radical *consciousness*, and not a radical political *identity*. It is at the fifth and final stage of the conversion, internalisation-commitment, where the differentiation is made between those who actualise becoming ‘Black’. Those who have reached the fifth stage, having come into radical consciousness of their racial identity in the previous four stages, and have then decided to commit to social action to bring about social change. However, this social action is not necessarily radical. Understanding the importance of the Black communalism that accompanies becoming ‘Black’, is not inherently bound to any specific political ideology or outlook. Due to the political function of ideology, whilst the essential elements of the Black radical identity are developed throughout the five stages of the

negro to Black conversion, Black communalism is not inherently radical. This point is illustrated in liberal Black unity and action of the pan-African congress, and during the American civil rights era.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined Black radical unity as the conceptual framework of this research. The European creation of 'race', as it pertains to the role of social stratification by ancestral origin as the foundation upon which western capitalism came to be expanded into what it is in the present day, has been placed in socio-historical context as it pertains to presenting the making of the 'negro', as an economic category of labour through the transatlantic system of chattel slavery. This, preceding explication of capitalism as being inherently racist due to such origins, and thus the recognition, and rejection of the concept of race as an inherently racist concept, and the deeming of capitalism by the ideology of Black radicalism as an economic system within which true Black liberation can never be actualised. Black radical unity as the result of the political construction of Blackness as a political identity of collective resistance upon which a transnational political essentialism can be mobilised towards the building of Black counter-publican nation, was presented. The significance of Black radical unity as a colour conscious, ancestrally exclusive unity was clarified, and examples of Black liberal transitional unity were presented in order to highlight the political function of ideology in directing the objectives of collective anti-hegemonic mobilisation. Lastly, the transformation of political consciousness in the formation of the Black radical identity was put forth.

Negotiating freedom

“When a person places the proper value on freedom, there is nothing under the sun that he will not do to acquire that freedom.”

-Malcolm X .

Introduction

This chapter explores the history of Black community mobilised action, in response to racially unjust conditions and treatment in British society, and the responses of the British nation-state to these mobilisations. It is put forth as an overarching argument, that state efforts in addressing both socio-cultural and structural racism, contributed significantly as an external factor to the destabilisation and dismantling of Black grassroots political organisations and movement and, along with them any politically radical liberating potential that these spaces may have had, as spaces that are capable of facilitating counter-publican Black radical unity . In maintaining of the position presented in the previous chapter, that it was upon racialised stratification that western capitalism expanded into the economic system of global domination (Robinson, 1983), state monetary provision is highlighted as the primary means through which the British state has undermined the progression of Black community organisations as counter publican spaces, purposed for the cultivation of Black radical consciousness, unity and action.

This chapter does not seek to provide a comprehensive history of Black community organisation or collective mobilisation throughout British history. Rather, this chapter analytically reviews this history insofar as it pertains to the gradual subsumption of community-led political action that is focused upon the bettering Black lives and experiences into mainstream political agenda, and as a result, the de-radicalisation of Black community organisation. Informed by Stuart Hall's theorisation of the 'Neo-liberal revolution' as a politically and economically hegemonic process (2011), this chapter presents the neo-liberal societal conditions within which the Black community organisation that the empirical portion of this research is focused, as racially hegemonic, by positioning the political and economic conditions of neo-liberalism as optimal for the ongoing entwinement of Black radical visions of Black liberation, with visions aligned with neo-liberal state, and thus capitalist interest.

Pre WW2-Black political mobilisation in Britain

Whilst a majority of organised resistance to racism By Black communities in Britain has taken place since the mid-20th century, there is an often-overlooked history of Black anti-colonial and anti-racist movements and organisations in Britain that predates Post WW2 mass Black and Asian migration to Britain. The Nigerian progress union (NPU) in 1924, the West African student union (WASU) in 1925 and the league of people of colour, established in 1931; (Adi, 1993 ; Ochiai, 2018) , are all early examples of Black political organisations to European subjugation of the Black condition, both domestically and abroad. Even earlier still, was the sons of Africa; A group

founded in London in the late 18th century, whose members included freed slaves and abolitionists Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cuguano. Equiano, alongside others of African descent residing in London, was also a member of the corresponding society, a political organisation founded by British Abolitionist Thomas Hardy in 1792, which sought to bring an end to African Chattel slavery (Gerzina, 1999) .

As racial discrimination in the British labour market has been central to the experience of Black and Asian communities since the post-WW2 mass migration of these communities to Britain in the 1940's and 1950's, Labour trade union mobilised action has remained a key issue in Black organised movement (Ramdin, 2017) . The first Black workers union that predated World War two, was named the coloured seaman's union and was established in Cardiff, Wales in 1936. The unionising of all non-white seaman was purposed with independently instating organised measures in response to ill-treatment at work, of which despite numerous requests, never resulted in Black seaman receiving any support from the existing seaman's union (Sullivan, 2012). Racially discriminative hiring practices, and the mistreatment of Black workers in the workplace throughout time, is partially attributable to the conspiring of white British workers with employers and trade unions, which institutionally reproduced white working-class racially hegemonic consciousness (Shukra, 1997), stoked by fears through a range of industries that Black labour would undercut white working wages (Fryer, 1984) .

Post WW2 Black political mobilisation in Britain, the early years

The first notable instance of mobilised Black community action in response to racial discrimination in the British workplace following Black and Asian mass migration, yet prior to the rise of the British Black power movement, was the Bristol bus boycott of 1963. The Black and Asian communities of Bristol refused to patron the cities' public transport for four consecutive months, due to the open refusal of the Bristol omnibus company to employ Black and Asian bus drivers (Mansour, 2014). Having significant influence upon the passing of the race relations act of 1965 (Peplow, 2018); The first piece of British legislation that deemed it illegal to engage in racial discrimination in public place, the Bristol bus boycott was also the first instance of mass organised community mobilisation that evidenced the significance of community-led Black unity with political purpose upon the wider British political landscape (Mansour, 2014). The Bristol Bus boycott marked a turning moment in the relationship between the Afro-Caribbean community and the political framework of the British government, as a relationship of negotiation through social policy between the Black community and the, at the time, labour government was born.

Following the race relations act of 1965, was race relations act of 1968, which was also passed by a labour government. The race relations act of 1968 was the first officialised state recognition of racism as an inherent feature of the Black experience in Britain and was instated following the results of research that was collaboratively conducted by the race relations Board and the National Council for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI). The community

relations commission (CRC) as a provision of the act was established in the year of 1968, and sought to address nationalised experiences of racial discrimination.

The study revealed that racial discrimination in Britain placed restrictions upon all areas of life for Black population. The findings of another independently commissioned report depicted how through inaction, the state had sacrificed the quality of Black and Asian communities, to the mercilessness of pervasive British racism; A sentencing to unbounded marginalisation and impoverishment (Community relations commission, 1967). The support of anti-racism by the Labour government appeared to begin and end at the British borders however, as seven months prior, in the March of that same year, the Labour government passed the commonwealth immigrant's act. The 1968 commonwealth immigrant's act tightened the restrictions of the commonwealth immigration act of 1962, which ended automatic British citizenship and freedom to live and work in Britain of any person born in British commonwealth nations (Jones, 1948) . It is noteworthy to add, that support of the commonwealth immigration act of 1968 was not unanimous throughout the Labour party, with some factions of the party connecting with Black and Asian community groups in order to campaign for the overturning of the act of 1968 (Wild, 2008). This show of solidarity of prime significance in the trajectory of Black radical politics, as it was the support of labour outliers that served as the gateway through which Black power activists would become absorbed into the institutionalisation of 'racial equality' politics years later.

The rise of the British Black power movement

There were multiple Black community groups, mobilisations and uprisings, claiming to be 'Black power groups' that were politically active throughout Britain during the mid-1960's to early 1970's. Aside from the British Black panther party, some other notable Black power organisations of the time included: The united coloured people's association (UCPA), established in 1967; The Fasimbas (established in the late 1960's, exact year unknown); The Afro-Caribbean Self-Help Organisation (ASCHO) in 1965, The Black Unity and Freedom Party (BUFP) in 1970 (An offshoot of the UCPA), and the Black liberation front (BLF) in 1971. (Wild, 2015) . The rise of the British Black power movement was a direct response to the experiences of the Black community in Britain, and were hallmarked by racial discrimination that was experienced in a plethora of forms including: A lack of access to housing, the unequal treatment of Black children in schools, and a lack of access to upward social mobility in the labour market due to employment discrimination, in addition to day-to-day unfair and discriminatory treatment by law enforcement. In addition to political mobilisation in response to the domestic Black experience, the Black power movement overall, and namely the British Black panthers were politically influenced by the concept of Black transnationalism, in response to ongoing anti- imperialism and colonial struggle taking place in former nations of empire, and in the continent of Africa (Wild, 2015) .

With specific attention paid to police brutality, the miseducation of Black children in British schools, and unequal access to housing, the Black power

movement sought to work to claim access to rights the Black community in Britain, had overall been denied (Bryan, 2018). Taking place concurrently with the rise of the Black power movement, was the establishment of both governmental and non-governmental boards and bodies, purposed with addressing racism in British society as an ongoing issue. The race relations board was established in 1965 (Schaffer, 2014) and the commission for race equality (CRE) of 1976, which was re-structured into the equality and human rights commission in 2007 following the passing of the 2006 equality act (Spencer, 2008).

[The Black self-help movement and the Urban programme](#)

The Black self-help movement arose during the late 1960's, during the Black power movement, and was a movement that self-explanatorily, was premised upon the Black radical tenet of self-help. Underpinned by the Black radical tenets of self-determination and autonomy, the Black self-help movement was home to the Black supplementary schooling movement (Andrews, 2014). The supplementary schooling movement sought to provide community-based education, in order to address the lack of educational value being extracted from the Black child school experience (Andrews, 2014). Due to the prevalence of the challenges commonly faced by Black children in the mainstream schooling system, the Black supplementary school movement became the most successful and widely engaged aspect of the Black self-help movement, gaining popularity amongst the Caribbean community throughout the country during this time (Andrews, 2014). The expansion of the Black self-help movement throughout the country is credited to (Labour) government

funding, of which was provided to numerous Black political organisations, projects, and initiatives to support the establishment of much needed public services. The funding was provided under what was named the 'urban programme' (Holman, 1971).

The urban programme (1968-1981) was one of numerous government programmes (although the most extensive of them), launched by the Labour government during the 1960's and 1970's to address conditions of urban deprivation throughout Britain. This attention was limited to areas of the country, with significantly migrant populations, whose social needs had up until that point, been neglected by the state (Holman, 1971). Urban programme funding was to be allocated only to councils that could evidence that there were demographics of an ethnic minority with a 'special need', as it pertained to the attention required to the areas of education, housing, health, employment, and welfare (Holman, 1971). Funding was also made available to voluntary community groups for the running of programs that addressed these areas of concern. Concerned with diffusing racial tensions in day-to-day life, projects that directly addressed the realities of life as an ethnic minority living in Britain, specifically regarding the navigation of cultural expression, handling racism in educational and workplace settings, and interactions with the police were launched (Black history month.org, 2015).

The Black self-help movement and the urban programme brought Black community spaces, and the government into alignment with one another as it pertained to the urgency of providing packages of state support to Black communities nationwide. Although recipients of the funding were subject to

interim reviews and updates at the behest of the local authority, the overall 'laissez faire' nature of the urban programme was compatible with the Black radical tenets of self-determination and autonomy, as community organisations were permitted to independently make decisions regarding the day to day running of their services without state interference (Wild, 2008).

The urban programme was very much required for the fulfilment of immediate social needs of the Black British community, however, due to being governmentally funded, did present challenge to some perceptions of the Black radical tenet of self-determination and thus did contribute to de-radicalising the political potential of these spaces. It is noteworthy to mention at this point, that government funding of public services for Black community organisations, is not deemed inherently 'liberal' here (and can even be thought as a form of reparation). The viewpoint, akin to Huey Newton's, A founder of the US Black panther party, who when speaking of the survival (pending revolution) programs ran by the organisation, of which also benefited from government funding, stated that the programs were "not revolutionary nor reformist, but a tactic and strategy by which we organized people" (Newton, as cited in West, 2010:157).

However, the programs did serve a radical political purpose, "They were designed to help the people survive until their consciousness is raised, which is only the first step in a revolution to produce a new America" (Newton, 1974/2009:322). The mantra of survival pending revolution, understood that whilst insurrectionist activity for which the party had become well-known, was important for furthering its political objectives, there was an African

American population in urgent need of public services that were currently widely inaccessible as a direct result of the material conditions begat from the system that the party were working to dismantle.

The urban programme, inspired by the USA government's '*great society programmes*' of 1964-65 programmes, was purposed to eliminate poverty and crime in the inner cities (Hinton, 2015). One of the programmes obtained by Black organisations were community action plans (CAPS) of which were purposed to provide public services to deprived communities across the nation (Wild, 2008). Following the discovery that some Black power organisations in receipt of CAPS, had reserved a portion of funds to spend upon political activity and the purchasing of weapons; The British government incorporated caveats to funding eligibility in order to avert this outcome. The allocation of urban programme funding was closely monitored, with the renewal of funding eligibility required annually, following council inspection (Wild, 2008). The experience of a recipient organisation during this time, depicts the concern of local councils of the use of programme funds for any activity considered to be even potentially politically 'agitative'. Restrictions on political activity attached to this funding placed these organisations at risk of forfeiting financial support from funders if not adhered to (Wild, 2008).

"When it was decided to teach 'O' level classes at the house, we decided that Black Studies should be on the curriculum. When we approached a local Institute of Further Education for registration to take examinations in future and for financial support of the teachers, they took objection to the title

"Black" studies. Fears of inciting 'revolution' and violence were voiced". (Henry, 1975:65)

The contribution of aid conditionality imposed upon Black power organisations by the Urban programme, to the eventual de-radicalisation of Black community organisations cannot be understated. Despite the fact that the services were community-led and managed, the separation of the revolutionary politics, from the day-to-day provision of public services impeded upon the freedom of these organisations to provide a radical political education to the community, or to continue to engage in activity that posed opposition toward the British state. This in turn, stifled the cultivation of political unity with other organisations and movements, both domestically and internationally. The placement of conditions upon the provision of governmental funds to Black community organisations made the autonomy and political freedom of these spaces that was conducive to nurturing a Black radical unity, untenable, and not worth the 'risk', given the stakes.

Ancestral and cultural pride became the core of Black community spaces; The teaching of Black political history, and of inspirational figures within it being the connection to their politically resistant origins (Wild, 2008). These organisations became the space for engagement with the Black radical tenet of self-determination through the avenue of cultural expression, rather than political action. It seemed that the political scope of Black community organisations, who either previously had been, or had the potential to become spaces of Black radical thought and action, had become restricted to that of

the cultural sphere. This, not unlike Black cultural nationalist organisations (Some of which were also involved in the Black power movement). The distinction between the two, illustrated by a former community activist, when reflecting upon their own time in the grassroots,

“I first got involved in a Black Power organisation after being on the fringes for some time. I’d been involved in one or two cultural groups for a while, but it seemed to me that they’d been talking about ‘Black is Beautiful’ for too long, as if it was the only slogan we should be relating to. I wanted to take my politics a bit further than that – to make immediate contribution. Every day you’d be hearing about assaults on black people, either by the police or by the courts and I wanted to get involved with a group that was serious about taking that on.” (Anonymous, as cited in Bryan, 2018: 61)

The concluding of the Urban programme in 1981 (Originally scheduled to end in 1976, but extended by the Labour government), did not mark the British state’s dialectical relationship with the grievances of the Black community, and the leveraging of social reform and resources, in such a way that successfully politically subdued the Black community altogether. Following nationwide riots at the beginning of the 1980’s, a decade long program following governmental housing policy reform which funded the ‘Black housing movement’, was launched. The funding was provided in addressal of the ongoing issue of unequal accessibility to housing, of which had been an ongoing issue predating the Black power movement, and a significant

contributing factor to community grievances underpinning community uprisings of the late 1950's, and of the early 1980's (Sala Pala, 2006). The funding led to the opening of multiple, Black-led housing associations throughout the country (Sala Pala, 2006). An extension of the Black self-help movement and the Black radical tradition, the Black housing movement was founded upon the Black self-help tenets of independence and empowerment (Salas Pala, 2006). However, Sala Pala questions whether the Black housing movement, and the concept of self-help within the context of government funded community housing projects were conducive to authentic Black empowerment at all.

The second round of urban programme funding, disseminated in 1975, was directed specifically at Black community self-help groups that had once been Black power organisations (Wild, 2008). The following year, the race relations act of 1976, in the tightening of existing laws, outlawed both direct and indirect racial discrimination, and deemed racially discriminative conduct in the workplace as grounds for tribunal action from the employee (UK Parliament, 1976). The coalition of these two happenings, the UK government's efforts to evidence to the non-white British population, that a labour governed Britain, was a Britain that was dedicated to both racial tolerance and equality (Wild, 2008). By the mid 1970's, a majority of the Black power organisations in Britain had disbanded, and of the organisations still active, many were no longer prescribed to the racially exclusive concept of political ideals and ethos for which the movement was recognised (Wild, 2008).

Introducing neo-liberalism

Throughout the decade of the 1980's, Britain became socio-culturally, economically, and politically transformed by the stark changes that were imposed upon British society following the implementation of economic liberalism, more commonly referred to as neo-liberalism. Attributed largely to political alliance between American president Ronald Reagan, who spearheaded the American transition to neo-liberalism, and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, the pursuit to 'liberalise' the British economy began. The introduction of neo-liberalism at the end of the 1970's was a watershed moment in the construction of the British capitalist and political landscape as it is presently recognised (Birch, 2015). Neo-liberalism is both an economic ideology, and approach to political governance that prioritises the "extension and installation of competitive markets into all areas of life, including the economy, politics, and society" (Birch, 2015: 572). The economic recession of 1971-1981, and the implementation of neo-liberalism by the Thatcher government (1979-1990) as a response, collaboratively led to actualisation of an economic reality that would result in a decline in the quality of living for large swaths of the British working class.

Neo-liberalism is A stark departure from Keynesianism, an economic theory with a socialist leaning belief in the necessity for state intervention in stabilising economic markets, during times of economic downturn that had governed Britain from the mid 1930's, up until the introduction of neo-liberalism in the late 1970's (Wier, 2020) . The commitment to the growth of private, unregulated economic markets and the values of individualism, self-

responsibility, and entrepreneurialism upon which neo-liberal political governance is constructed, led to a steady reduction of government funding for public services, and the selling of the countries' publicly owned industries to private companies, who subsequently relocated their workforces abroad. The deindustrialisation of the country's major manufacturing industries (economically disadvantaging the north of the country, especially), and the outsourcing of these forms of employment to various nations of the global south, coupled with the erosion of state welfare support and the undermining of labour trade unions through the introduction of anti-union laws, thwarted the employment prospects of the working class population, and embossed a regional demarcation in socio-economic mobility (the 'north-south' divide), that persists until the present day (Thornett, 1998) .

[The limitations of the nation-state](#)

In a socio-political climate marred by a culmination of high rates of Black unemployment and the resulting poverty, police brutality and over policing of inner-city Black communities, the decades long hostility between the Black community and the British police force, reached a tipping point at the beginning of the 1980s. Black community led uprisings against the police in response to such treatment, erupted throughout the country, taking place in: Brixton, London and the inner-city areas of Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds in 1981. A wave of community uprisings took place again, four years later in Broad Water Farm & Brixton (London), and in Handsworth, Birmingham in 1985 (Jackson, 2015) .

The resentment felt by Black British youth that had precipitated the uprisings, arose from the effect of the criminal intent that had been imposed upon the image of inner-city Black youth throughout the 1970's, during Black interactions with the police on a day-to-day basis (Jefferson, 2012). The attachment of the Black image to a threat to the public safety of the white British population by British media through the production of the image of the ominous 'Black mugger', contributed significantly to the over-policing of Black inner-city youth (Hall et al, 1978) . 'Sus laws', granting police officers the right to stop and search any citizen deemed to be displaying any behaviour conducive to vagrancy, (the potential to beg, take rest, or sleep in a public place) were weaponised by police in order to harass Black youth (Waddington and Stenson, 2004) .

The Scarman report, A report commissioned by the government to analyse the cause of, and steps forward following the uprisings, acknowledged that racially discriminative attitudes existed within the police. Yet, the report absolved the state of any involvement in this reality, concluding that such attitudes were a consequence of a disconnection between community policing forces and local communities and not racism, as "institutional racism' does not exist in Britain." (Scarman, 1981:209) . The decade of the 1980's, saw the Black community remain in stead with the tradition of collective action in response to the day-to-day experiences of systemic oppression. However, the decade did not see a return to community-led, grassroots organised mobilisation akin to that on the scale of that of the British Black power movement. The Black trade union movement, and uprisings of the decade

took place, would not have been possible without a community history of collective, organised response to racist conditions.

The dissolution of the politically agitative agendas of Black community organisations in the late 1960s to mid-1970's, resulted in the collective mobilisations of the 1980's having no established community-based counter-publican spaces of Black radical unity, to aid in marrying said collective action, with Black radical political ideology and thought, and thus taking advantage of the momentum that these uprisings built at the time. Although the Black trade union movement and Black community uprisings of the 1980s were in direct response to the oppressed Black experience, the lack of connection to a politics of global Blackness undermined their longevity. Without wider ideological context, there was no definitive politics to support the addressal of all facets of the Black British plight, in recognition of the shared conditions within which this resistance arose.

Collective mobilisation that is limited to being state-facing, and solely of national concern and focus, is indicative of a political culture of liberal radicalism (Andrews, 2018). Explanation of how liberally radical political activism culture is displayed in Black collective action was clearly articulated by Ture, (nee Carmichael), when drawing the differentiation between community mobilisation, and organisation,

“People will come and rally. ‘So and so got kicked out of school because the teachers unjust.’...They will come to rally at issues. And this is what mobilization does, it mobilizes people around issues. Those of us who are

revolutionary are not concerned with issues, we are concerned with the system. The difference must be properly understood... Mobilization usually leads to reform action, not to revolutionary action” (Ture, 1996: 5.16).

One example of this in the British context is the National Black People Day of Action, which took place on the 2nd of March 1981. The march was a collective response to the killing of 14 teenagers in a house fire in New cross, south London, which was determined to have been deliberation, and racially motivated. The march was the most participated instance of Black collective action of the 20th century in Britain, with an estimated 15,000 people nationwide taking part (Anim-Addo, 1995). Whilst the march marked a significant moment in Black collective political movement in Britain and achieved notable attention by organisers successfully delivering a letter of dissatisfaction to Margaret Thatcher, the British prime minister of the time, and posing significant disruption throughout London for the duration of the day. The national Black people Day of action did little in ways of contributing towards a counter publican politics of collective Black political unity and action that extended beyond the event of the day.

From grassroots to government: The professionalisation of Black community activism

Kalbir Shukra's *The death of Black political movement* (1997) details the incorporation of prominent Black radical activists of the 1960's and 1970's¹¹ into the “state developed race relations machinery” of the British

government in the 1980's and 1990s (1997:233). Whilst providing Black party members the access to "decision making structures" (Shukra, 1997:239), specifically as it pertained to the creation and implementation of social policy concerned with achieving racial equality, Shukra puts forth that the absorption of Black community activists into state politics, significantly contributed to the institutionalisation and professionalisation of Black power politics. It was at this point that what had previously been 'Black' politics, transitioned into 'race' politics. Shukra explains how the incorporation of Black radical activists into the mainstream political agenda, saw activists sacrifice their previously radical politics, and becoming the forerunners of the professionalisation of race relations and racial equality in the British political economy.

In the 1990's, a few Black power activists of the past became members of the labour party and began collaborating with labour MPs in the development of racial equality policies in the years that followed (Shukra, 1997). Their years in grassroots activism, and standings within their local communities were accepted as lived experience that qualified their consultation as valuable for the progression of race relations within the country. The leaning of some Black power activists, towards left-wing visions of change was predicated upon Labour's focus of bettering the conditions of the working-class population; The social class of which Black Britons predominantly occupied, and the addressal of the ongoing racial inequalities within British society being a key issue within this remit (Shukra, 1997). Aside from access to political influence, the steady transition of former Black power activists from the

grassroots to government, was marked by access to upward social mobility. Tony Soares, a member of one of the only active Black power organisations into the 1990's, the Black liberation front (BLF, est. 1971-1991), tells of how the infusion of state funds into Black community projects and programmes during the 1980's and 1990's became the prelude to community activists gradually retreating from the political grassroots activism altogether, and transitioning into paid government positions. Whilst contributing towards improved Black life outcomes, the influx of funding for community-based projects and programs in the 1980's and 1990's, curtailed the ability of those that facilitated and administered them, to engage in any actual political work. This, a continuation of the de-stabilising impact of state intervention upon community based, political work in the 1970's.

“A lot of money was going in [from the state], employing people, channelling them into community work and taking them away from political work. They all got caught up in some kind of project or the other because there was money on a scale they'd never seen before” · (Soares, cited in Wild, 2008:173)

Two factors; The overall socio-economic position of Black people in Britain, and the common struggles of community activism, both of which were key contributors to the exhaustion of prominent Black community activists in meeting their political objectives on sparse funding and depleted morale (Wild, 2008), were central to the ability of the state to ultimately 'poach' Black

power activists from grassroots activity. Any confliction that faced Black community activists who wished to remain connected to the grassroots faced during this time, was only further solidified by the bleak economic conditions facing the British population overall of the early 1980's due to the economic recession. With high unemployment rates, and racism in the workplace having been an ongoing affliction for the Black community since mass migration to Britain began; The prospect of being gainfully employed in a role that one had thus far been fulfilling without monetary gain, was surely an opportunity far too attractive to forgo.

The presence of Black activists within the labour party, placed Black lives and experiences as an issue of ongoing concern on the Labour agenda in the progression of race relations and racial equality within Britain, and highlighted the necessity for the creation of exclusive spaces within the party for such considerations to take place. The lasting impact of the involvement of Black power activists in the labour party, is marked by the establishment of the labour Black sections (LPBS). The LPBS, established in 1983, were created to cater specifically to the political representation of Black and ethnic minority demographics of the country following the growing frustration of Black labour members of the inability of the party to directly address ongoing racial inequalities, despite the parties' decades long reliance upon the ethnic vote (Elmi, 2018).

The purpose of the Labour Black sections was to develop anti-racist legislation for incorporation into the broader political trajectory of the party, whilst holding Labour accountable to an ongoing commitment to improving the lives

of Black and Brown people lives (Jeffers, 1991). BAME labour (Black and ethnic minority labour- formerly the Black and Asian socialist party), was established in 1993. In 1991, Black activists who were also labour party members, established an organisation named the anti-racist alliance (ARA). In believing that, “Black self-organisation, along with support from the Labour party, trade unions and Black community groups, is the only way to combat racism”, (Hazelkamp and Popple, 2013: 21) , the ARA were representative of a Black political culture that is located in community-based autonomous and self-determined organisation; Simultaneously maintaining Black collective participation and engagement with the national political system, in order to have collective Black interests remain prominent in the wider political trajectory of the country. Following the arising of conflict between its founder and another anti-racist organisation, the ARA ultimately lost much needed political support, and was dissolved in 1995 (Hosken, 1998) .

[A re-conceptualisation of Black political unity](#)

Shukra (1997) critiques the Neo-Marxist manifesto of Hall and Jaques, in their call for the reformation of the political left (of which the absorption of Black power activists into state politics is representative), in order to distribute wealth and dismantle classism and as a consequence, racism, as Marxism traditionally presents racism as a subcategory of classism. However, such a proposition can only be deemed conducive to bringing about required change, upon the assumption that the nation-state exists as a politically neutral entity. The western nation state must be recognised as an arm of capitalist oppression, that structurally and institutionally facilitates the racial

subjugation of all non-white people (Shukra, 1997). The integration of Black power activists into the state political agenda, (sans the maintenance of spaces of independent community politically purposed strategy and action), saw Black political endeavours come to be constrained by state interest and permissibility. This positioned the once state-oppositional politics of Black power, in alignment with the racialised social contract of white supremacy that has long-governed global political and economic systems (Mills, 1997).

In tandem with the implementation of racial equality, social policy throughout the decades has been purposed to alleviate the socio-cultural experience of racism. The ability of the state to economically facilitate better living conditions, achieved through the dissemination of funds into culturally specific public services, and the eventual incorporation of many Black community activists into the leftist state political agenda, was predicated upon achieving a society in which “the idea that state economic exploitation and political oppression necessitate macro-change has been replaced by a concern for cultural politics and micro-change, leaving structural matters virtually untouched” (Shukra, 1997: 241). The transition away from the grassroots, and its associated political focus upon ‘bondage’, ‘oppression’, ‘revolution’, and ‘liberation’, and towards the nation-state politics and that of ‘equality’ ‘diversity’, ‘inclusivity’ and ‘progress’, saw the overall abandonment of the pursuit of systematic change, for the socio-cultural. This resulting in the exaltation of ‘survival’, as the ‘pending revolution’ faded into obscurity.

Whilst beneficial to the improvement of the day-to-day quality of Black lives overall, the involvement of Black power activists in state political addressal of

racial inequality, would ideally have been cultivated concurrently with the maintenance of independent community-led political spaces, and not in replacement of them. Of course, the imposition of conditionality upon the acceptance of community-based funding of the 1970's and 1980's, restricted such activity from taking place in Black community organisations that had already been established. The perils of grassroots activists and organisations becoming too closely aligned with, and eventually subsumed into nation-state interests, was foreseen by political leader Malcolm X. X encouraged Black engagement with mainstream politics and mandated that his organisation, the organisation of African American unity (OAAU), would strive to establish itself as a community based organisational representative for interactions with the American government. Yet, in preservation of Black self-determination and self-governance, was clear that any such interaction was not to negotiate Black rights but should be for the purpose of remaining politically informed, and to communicate the role of the government in fulfilling the wants, needs and expectations of the African American community. In any instance, the Black radical agenda was to exist dialectically to the national political agenda, and not be at its behest (Perry, 1991).

[The \(neo-liberal\) re-conceptualisation of Black liberation](#)

The absorption of neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom into Black radical visions of Black liberation, is of specific significance when discussing the confictions existing between the ideals that govern present Britain, and ideals upon which Black radical community organisations are founded and

sustained. The concerns held as significance to the Black community activist with any form of revolutionary outlook: A collectivist, community level approach to the pursuit of social and structural change directed towards the meeting of commonly unmet social, economic, political and cultural needs (Brady, Schoeneman and Sawyer, 2014), are in diametric opposition to the neo-liberal values of individualism, self-responsibility, the embrace of an unregulated capitalist market and the constant pursuit for the attainment of resources and social reform being state, rather than community led.

As it pertains to the concern of protecting individual rights and freedom, the ideology of neo-liberalism retains many values of the democratic philosophy of liberalism, upon which democracy is built. However, the two differ primarily in the role allocation and function of the state in the lives of citizens (Pendazza & Lammatina, 2019: 102). Neo-liberalism considers the freedom of individual citizens to exist in separation from the state, placing this separation as the standard against how liberated a society, and its citizens should be deemed, overall. Thus, neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom reject the responsibility of the state to the individual, and furthermore, of the individual to other citizens; The only state of complete individual autonomy, is one in which the individual is completely responsible for one's own life outcomes. Viewing society as a limitless entrepreneurial landscape, individual freedom within neo-liberal discourse is predicated heavily upon the idea that it is the individual's sole responsibility to attain a favourable lifestyle for oneself, through the endless pursuit of capital (Pendazza & Lammatina, 2019) . The judgement of how liberated a society is, is made by undermining "the

importance of the community for individual development” (Pendazza & Lammatina, 2019:103). Neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom have contributed significantly to the disintegration of the contemporary societal sense of ‘community’ (Maurisia and Cole, 2017) .

According to neo-liberal ideology, it is only by the adjustment of the relationship between the state and the citizen through the receding of state welfare programs and support, that the self-responsible, autonomous individual can come to be (Pendazza & Lammatina, 2019). The focus upon self-responsibility supports neo-liberalism’s prioritisation of unrestricted growth of economic markets, which is considered to be at the heart of societal progression. A focus upon self-responsibility and individualism, aligns with the pursuit of tailoring the structures of societal institutions, and as a prerequisite, the individual lives of citizens in order to accommodate the prosperity of privatised business (Birch, 2015).

[The making of the Black neo-liberal subject](#)

Individuals governed by neo-liberal ideals and adherent to neo-liberal conceptualisations of progress and freedom, are defined as neo-liberal subjects. The liberal subject (otherwise referred to as the pre-neo-liberal subject, or the free labourer) is an individual whose relationship with the labour market is defined by direct exchange; The provision of labour, traded for capital in a non-convoluted, finite fashion that is outlined by a fixed contract, and/or a specific skill. Conversely for the neo-liberal subject, residing in a political and economic perspective that immerses the achievement of individual freedom within the concept of entrepreneurialism;

The relationship between the neo-liberal subject and the labour market is one that is founded upon transformation.

The meeting (or preferably, exceeding) the demands the neo-liberal labour market and/or employer, is only met by the ongoing expansion and innovation of the neo-liberal subject (Ferher, 2009). Neo-liberal subjectification, leading to the commodification of the individual, sees the long-term labour-market value of an individual come to be primarily determined by the value of their human capital garnered by the accumulation of skills, education, and experience. Thus, the neo-liberal subject will always endeavour to increase individual human capital required to command higher earning power (Feher, 2009). A personification of neo-liberal ideals, such as entrepreneurialism, individualism, and a preoccupation with the accumulation of personal wealth; The neo-liberal subject is an “autonomous liberal subject made in the image of the middle class.” (Walkerdine, 2003:239)

The making of the Black neo-liberal subject in proper historical context, as a culmination of a reconfiguration of the relationship between citizen and state, is explored in-depth, in Spence’s *Knocking the hustle: Against the neo-liberal turn in Black politics* (2015). The book discusses the transformative influence of the neo-liberal restructuring of the political and economic framework of American society, upon the de-radicalisation of African American visions of Black betterment, progress and ultimately, liberation. The overarching argument being, that the infiltration of neo-liberal ideals into the entirety of the American population’s lives, termed the ‘neo-liberal turn’, (originally coined by David Harvey, 2007) , collapsed the divergence between liberal and

radical visions of Black liberation. Neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom came to consume Black political imaginations (Spence, 2015)

A 'hustler' is defined as an individual, whom in finding themselves in a precarious financial situation, is forced to take on an entrepreneurial mindset through which they are tasked to financially support themselves and their families, through various forms of employment that are either low-paid, unstable or both, or through illegitimate gains (Wacquant, 1998) . The adoption of the term 'hustler' into the vernacular of hip-hop music, has seen the term come to be culturally associated specifically with African American inner-city experiences (Spence, 2015), with Black success depicted often in media tropes of achieving socio-economic upward mobility, and being able to escape the conditions of poverty, typically referred to as making it 'out of the hood' (Battle, 1999) .

The introduction of neo-liberal policies and structures is argued to be consequential of the re-configuration of Black self-determination; A mutual tenet of the neo-liberal ideology and Black power politics (Barlow, 2010). Black self-determination, a central tenet of the Black power movement of the 1960s-1980's, once focused upon the building of autonomous and self-governed Black community institutions, became co-opted into the neo-liberal capitalist agenda, which in the prioritisation of the individualised concern of increasing one human capital, became translative to maximising one's earning potential, through the acquisition of human capital in the labour market (Spence, 2015).

This, antithetical to the individual commitment to community-led organised action required to facilitate Black communal self-determination. The

dismantling of the American welfare state in the 1970's and 1980's, and the neo-liberal narrative that to attain self-determination through an individualist, entrepreneurial focus upon gaining the skills required to achieve upward social mobility, Black America were reintroduced to the 'hustle', for a new age. The concern of 'hustling' to ensure one's financial security through upward mobility in the neo-liberal age, is presented by Spence (2015) to be the contemporary, de-radicalised evolution of the Black political 'struggle' of the Black power, and Black civil rights movements. In the harsh economic climate where free markets, the decimation of government funded public services and the neo-liberal pre-occupation with attaining wealth reign supreme, adherence to the neo-liberal agenda has become the new age 'survival' politics.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the history of Black community mobilised action in response to racially unjust conditions and treatment in Britain. The responses of the British government to Black community organisation have also been presented, and the influence of these measures upon the destabilisation and de-radicalisation of community-based and led organisations as counter-publican spaces with the potential to facilitate the actualisation of Black radical unity, preceding political action has been presented. Neo-liberalism was introduced and presented as a hegemonic process (Hall, 2011), that through both of its ideals and influence upon material conditions, has maintained societal conditions that continue to undermine the conditions and ideals that support Black community

organisations into the present day. The significance of political and economic liberalisation in culminatively creating the societal conditions that have maintained the entwinement of Black radical ideals of liberation, with the political and economic interests of mainstream society, and in turn, compounded the obstacles that face Black community organisations with Black radical political outlooks and objectives, will be further explored in the empirical chapters of this research.

Chapter three

Methodology

“Revolution is always about truth and justice- that which is just. And of all the people on the face of the earth, we are the most just”.

-Stokely Carmichael

Introduction

Black radical unity has been outlined as a conceptual model of Black political unity that is required for sustaining the future of Black community organisations with radical objectives in contemporary British society. In this chapter, Black Sociology as the epistemological position, and Black studies as the discipline from which the research is conducted, are outlined. The values and philosophical tradition of traditional Sociology are outlined and critiqued for their contribution of the production of academic knowledge that has contributed to the maintenance and reproduction of racially hegemonic societal structures, systems and socio-cultural ideals that have encumbered the development of the Black political consciousness required for the actualisation of a Black radical unity, and the commitment to collective social action that is conditional of its actualisation. This critique prefaces presentation of the necessity for the epistemology of ‘Black’ sociology, and Black studies as the discipline arising from this epistemology, in the production of knowledge that seeks to restore this consciousness. The choice of research method and ethical considerations are outlined and justified. The

research space is introduced, which precede analytical presentation of findings within it in the following chapters.

The origins of traditional Sociology

A key critique of traditional sociology is that its two main tenets, humanism and value neutrality have, historically gone widely unimplemented by sociologists when researching Black lives and experiences (Staples, 1973). Humanism is concerned with human interactions, and the understanding of human beings as human beings only, with the characteristics that determines the social, cultural, political, and economic systems and structures by which individuals are societally stratified, set aside. Humanism is aligned with the democratic value of treating all equally, and as equals. However, until around the 1930's, traditional sociological and scientific writings explicitly deemed people of African descent to be inferior to those of European descent (Jones, 1973). Positivism, the philosophy providing the foundation of scientific racism and anthropological science additionally to sociology, has historically created 'knowledge' that is aligned with belief of the intellectual and cultural inferiority of people of African descent, and has contributed to the maintenance and reproduction of racially hegemonic narratives and conditions when applied to sociological research (Jones, 1973).

The sociological tenet of value-neutrality advises that there are to be no value judgements made in the process of social research. Yet, this is a direct oversight of the centrality of European cultures as a defining feature of the discipline's origins, and thus the inherent value judgement that is embedded into traditional sociological enquiry. Augustus Comte, who developed the

philosophy of positivism, the epistemological framework upon which Sociology was developed, whilst acknowledging that history should be consulted when situating oneself ideologically for the collection and interpretation of data, disregarded African history and considered it to be of little significance. This disregard, based upon the assertion that it only the histories of people who had made cultural 'progress', (of which the African cultures were considered by Comte to not be inclusionary), who were to be considered to have histories worthy of exploration (Staples, 1973).

When exploring how traditional Sociological constructions of race uphold European superiority in the social world; Ideology, Sociological or otherwise serves a political function. Ideology provides the perspective through which individuals view the world and all that takes place within it and influences the way in which these happenings are interpreted (Jones & Norton, 2014). Ideology "links philosophical ideas to the contemporary world, it provides a comprehensive and systematic perspective whereby human society can be understood. It provides a framework of principles through which policies can be developed" (Jones & Norton, 2014:58) . It is difficult to explain how in a society in which "colour, ethnicity and social class are of primary importance", how all can be representatively reflected in social enquiry that claims to be humanist and value-free (Ladner, 1973:19) . The assertion of the inferiority of people of African descent as fact by 18th and 19th century scientists and sociologists, a truth obtained through 'scientific' research is demonstrative of this. Traditional sociology, unacknowledging of its own eurocentrism, produces academic knowledge that is steeped in racial hierarchy, that it

presents as value-free (Staples, 1973). The proclamation of a unanimous truth within the social world overlooks the stratified social organisation of individuals. The result, an existence in parallel realities.

Oppressive pedagogy

Critical analysis of the relationship between the dissemination of knowledge, and the maintenance of hegemonic structures and social systems is presented by the educational philosophy, and socio-political movement of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is aligned with the interpretivist claim that all knowledge is created within a specific context (E.G., historical, social, political, and cultural), and that it is the context that determines how the meaning, and thus understanding of the human experience is produced (Darder, 2003). Paulo Friere's, *the pedagogy of the oppressed* (1970/2000), is the seminal text of critical pedagogical thought. Friere presents the perspective that it is through education, that dominating ideologies and the societal ideals and values upon which unequal power structures are deemed normative, and are upheld maintained, and reproduced. Hegemonic discourse and frameworks within the educational curricula are maintained from the positioning of the teacher as the depositor of knowledge into the minds of students (Friere, 1970/2000). This traditional format of teaching is confined to a pre-approved framework of information and so the teacher-student relationship is a hierarchal one. Students are expected to accept that all knowledge that is provided by the teacher should be accepted as objectively true without question; The students therefore acting as a 'bank' for this knowledge (Friere, 1970).

Stringent following of this format of teaching, fails to equip students with the skills necessary to engage in critical thought and discourse, and therefore to dialectically engage with the information that is being presented to them. In a pedagogically oppressive society, what is encouraged to be accepted as authentic knowledge is determined by societal elites, and it is through this epistemic privilege, that oppressive power structures are maintained, “indeed, the interest of the oppressor is to change the consciousness of the oppressed, not the condition” (De Beauvoir, as quoted in Friere, 1970/2000:74). In acknowledging that traditional sociological knowledge has contributed significantly to the creation of oppressive pedagogies as it pertains to the Black condition, the development of an alternative, or counter sociology that empowers Black communities by aiding understanding of the structural conditions that construct their experiences and outcomes and take command of their own futures upon their own terms, is necessary.

Black studies

Black studies is an interdisciplinary field of social research (Rojas, 2010), of which the birth in the western university, took place in response to demands of African American liberal arts university students due to their frustration with the lack of Black representation in the teaching body, and perspectives in the teaching material (Asante and Mazama, 2004) . The establishment of the first ever Black studies department at San Francisco state university in 1968, was the first instance of an institutionally academised collation of the contributions of Black sociologists, political theorists, political activists, philosophers and authors in their analysis and evaluation of the systemic

conditions, in direction of the enquiry of Black lives and experiences in American society (Rojas, 2010). Steeped in Black resistance: From the student protest to which it owes its existence in the institution of the university, to the civil rights and Black power movements that provided the political backdrop that evoked the widespread consciousness to do so in the first instance (Peters, 2015), and the Afrocentric ethos of the course content; Black studies wholly embodies the ethos of the Black radical tradition. Black studies is differentiated from even the most critical of sociological approaches, such as critical race theory, by centring Blackness as a political lens through which social life is beheld (Andrews, 2020). Black studies seeks not only to create knowledge that will articulate how Black experiences are reflective of the continued oppressed Black conditions, but additionally, exists as a call to social and political action in order to bring these conditions to an end. Thus, it is not solely in the acknowledgement *of*, but also in appropriate reaction *to* unequal power distribution that Black Studies deems the standard by which academic knowledge is judged as either contributing towards the maintenance and support of oppressive systems and structures or advocates for the necessary action(s), to dismantle them.

Black Sociology

The death of white sociology, (1973) is an anthology of essays written by Black social, political, and economic theorists, who collectively present a compelling case for the necessity of the development of a 'Black sociology', for the conducting of social research that is concerned with Black lives and experiences. Black sociology provides the epistemological foundation of Black

studies, and is premised upon the assertion that Black and white people have always resided in adjacent, yet separate social worlds, separated by the racial dominance asserted over Black people as a legacy of the transatlantic slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and the embedding of racial discrimination into every facet of western democratic societies (Ladner, 1973)

Black sociology as an epistemology, asserts that sociological research upon Black lives and experiences has been traditionally dominated by the perspectives of individuals who have little insight into the inner cultural and social parameters of Black life, and hold pre-existing racial biases that shaped the conclusions drawn to by their observations (Staples, 1973). In the staunch belief that traditional sociology has committed itself to “proving Blacks inferior” (Jones, 1973:114), ontologically, Black sociology considers academic knowledge that has been produced by traditional sociological enquiry pertaining to the Black condition, to be framed by Eurocentric ideals, and therefore considered a device of epistemic oppression, purposed with maintaining the ongoing degradation of people of African descent (Staples, 1973). Knowledge of the lives and experiences of Black communities has traditionally been firmly held in the hands of the Eurocentrism of traditional sociology, with the perception of Black condition at its whim (Hunter, 2002) . Black sociology is representative of a reclamation of this epistemic privilege. For this reason, the university as an institution of western knowledge production finds itself as a central target of Black sociological criticism.

The invisibility of whiteness implicitly maintains the dynamic of hegemonic power relations between racial groups (Garner, 2007) , thus it is necessary to

label such knowledge as 'white', in order to categorise sociological knowledge by its political function. "If white sociology is the science of oppression, then Black sociology must be the science of liberation" (Staples, 1973:168). Black sociology seeks to take ownership over what constitutes an accurate representation of the social world as it is experienced by Black people, and the structural characteristics of society that support and enforce such experiences.

Black sociology would concur with the assertion that both historical and contemporary traditional sociological enquiry maintains racially oppressive conditions by minimising the significance of systemic racism in Black life outcomes (Bonilla-silva, 1997; Bonilla-Silva and Balochi, 2001). Traditional sociological analysis misinterprets the Black condition, that through ignorance of racially oppressive structures and systems, produces knowledge that "sustain[s] white racism and the instruments of its implementation" (Staples, 1973:62). This is actioned through the unwillingness to acknowledge the inherently Eurocentric ideals, and racially unequal conditions that the creation of its knowledge are contextualised within. The evasion of acknowledgment of the systemic nature of racism in discussion of social disparities between Black and white communities displayed by a vast amount of sociological research is termed as 'cultural racism' (Bonilla-silva & Embrick, 2006). Cultural racism is displayed through the attribution of ongoing racial inequalities in contemporary society solely, to social and cultural shortcomings of Black communities, rather than to ongoing structural racism. The attribution of Black social issues that pervade Black

communities are attributed to “social class, cognitive ability, lack of work ethic or morality, human capital deficits, spatial mismatch, and family structure” (Thomas, 2000:79) whilst failing to socio-historically contextualise such conditions (Ladner, 1973) . There is accompanied by avoiding addressal of the fact, that the advantage of white communities, populations and nations is economically, culturally and politically dependent upon the simultaneous disadvantage of Black (and other non-white) counterparts, when comparatively analysing the disparities between the demographics (Thomas, 2000). Black sociology opposes the elitist democratic ideals that traditional sociology are based upon (Root, 1993), and seeks to facilitate sociological discourse that finds itself facilitating social action towards revolutionary change, rather than that which aligns with the maintenance of existing oppressive structures. This is achieved primarily through the emphasis placed upon community involvement in knowledge production (Hare, 1973), in order to democratise knowledge.

Black sociology exposes itself to the criticism of relativism, based upon its perception of truth in this respect. However, Black sociology views society as systematically racist from the perspective of its radical political position; It does not claim this condition to be a ‘natural’ truth, but a reality that has been politically, economically and culturally constructed as a reality of the social world. Yes, Black sociological knowledge is subjective, and this so due to its concern with subjective experiences. In response to criticisms of relativism, the experiences of those residing in Britain who have been subject to racial inequality in their lives would unwaveringly state that the society in

which they reside is racially unequal; A conclusion informed by their own experiences. The opposite may be considered to be true by others based upon their own experiences. Attempting to convince those who would prefer to believe the latter, is not time well spent for any scholar engaging with Black sociology. Malcolm X's assertion that "the truth is on the side of the oppressed" serves as a reminder to preserve the focus of Black sociological enquiry from the apathetic and deflective attitude towards the Black condition, by maintaining focus where it belongs: Upon the oppressions experienced by Black populations on A local, national, and global scale.

If what is considered to be true and objective according to traditional sociology is based upon positivism, and upon the democratic values of humanism and value-neutrality, then the truth as presented by Interpretivism, is to be considered subjective, the truth of any particular demographic residing in the critique of the mainstream (Morrow & Brown, 1994) . To remain critical of the public sphere, is to facilitate change. This change, in the case of Black Sociology, being the emancipation of the oppressed through action for liberation (Carson, 1990). In addressal as to why traditional Sociology is referred to explicitly as 'white', It is presented that whiteness, (to be of European ancestry), as the global ethnic and cultural standard, and thus 'invisible' against which all who are racialised as non-white are measured, (Sue, 2006) , into academic knowledge production and the dissemination of such knowledge into society, upholds a presupposition of Black inferiority.

Activism and academia: A necessary union

When discussing the limitations of traditional sociological knowledge production, the university is of central concern (Godin and Gingras, 2000). The western university cannot be separated from critique of the western education system overall, as it too is entwined in the pedagogical processes that sustains hegemonic knowledge production. Barnett (2000), when addressing contemporary sociological reflections upon the regard in which university-produced knowledge is held by various academic perspectives, includes examples that take the position that the university's status as the birthplace of superior knowledge in society is on a rapid downward slope, and that modern society had reached the 'end of knowledge'. Of all of the arguments presented by Barnett, in the varying degrees of this position, particular attention is paid here to the concept of the 'knowledge society' (Sterh, 1994) .

The knowledge society puts forth the position that in modern society, the university is no longer the main producer of knowledge in wider society. This is due to the arising of new forms of knowledge that are valued in wider society and challenge the forms of knowledge traditionally revered by the university and the monopoly that these forms of knowledge have had historically over societal constructions of what is deemed to be 'expert', and thus legitimate knowledge. Due to the performative nature of these new forms of knowledge, they are often created in engagement *with*, rather than in separation from the members of society, as traditional university knowledge often is considered to be (Gibson et al, 1994) . Due to it' increased accessibility and relatability,

wider society finds the value in these new forms of knowledge, placing question on the necessity for traditionally university produced knowledge. Whilst acknowledging that university produced knowledge may no longer be held in the esteem that it once was, Barnett (2000) rejects the argument that the reign of the university as the centre of societal knowledge production has reached its end. Although there are private industries that are producing knowledge through scientific research, this is often undertaken in collaboration, or in consultation with universities, rather than in the absence or replacement of them, and so the university still very much resides at the centre of contemporary knowledge production (Godin & Gingras, 2000). In further response to Sterh's 'knowledge society', one way in which the university has adapted to an ever-changing contemporary society to ensure its longevity as a significant producer of knowledge in contemporary society, is through the commercialisation of academic knowledge (Rasmussen, Moen & Gulbrandsen, 2006). The contemporary university has been successful in establishing relationships with various industries through the commercialisation of academic knowledge for economic gain and scientific advancement (Perkmann & Walsh, 2007), is indicative that the modern university has adapted to the reality that it can no longer produce knowledge in an isolated fashion, whilst simultaneously retaining the position as the primary producer of societal knowledge.

In further elaboration upon the concept of 'new' forms of knowledge, there has been an increased interest in the university's benefit to contemporary society, specifically as it pertains to the civic and scholarly engagement of the

university with local communities (Watson, 2007). Advocacy of civic engagement of the university with local communities, serves as the premise for Michael Burawoy's (2005) renowned concept of 'public sociology'. Public sociology seeks to narrow the gap between the university and wider society, by sociologically engaging with non-academic audiences and introducing communities to the sociological theorisation of topics that directly influence their own lives (E.G. Political and economic trends, social reform, public services and social movements). Public sociology, complimentary and not oppositional to professional sociology, (the addressal of sociologists by other sociologists), invites various publics into academic discussions that have been exclusive to academic audiences in the past, a process involving "taking knowledge back to those from which it came" (Burawoy, 2005:5). It is a necessary step for the discipline of Sociology, to interactively engage with the experiences of the communities that the experts of the field have built their specialist knowledge and academic standing upon. Universities that place focus upon the improvement of public engagement, seek to build the necessary university-community bonds required to create knowledge in the presence, rather than the absence of the communities local to them (Inman & Schütze, 2010). Prioritising the lived experiences of local people and deeming their own narration of these experiences, as knowledge that is equally as valuable to that of those who have traditionally been deemed 'experts', is pivotal in the creation of knowledge that seeks to address and contribute towards the improvement of regional issues.

Black studies: For radical research

In addressal of the very valid point that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (Lorde, 1979/2012: 110) , one may wonder as to why Black studies would attempt to position itself within the university as a societal institution, and what radical objective doing so, would fulfil. Aside from establishing an academic counter-publican space for the dismantling of the dominance of racially hegemonic discourse in traditional sociological knowledge production and its effects upon Black life outcomes, Black studies enables sociological enquiry into the transnationality of Black experiences. This supports the pursuit of collaborative international knowledge production and exchange, and engagement with the Black radical concept of global Blackness (Andrews, 2018). Due to being premised upon its identification of the significant contribution that traditional sociological theory, and research practice has made towards creating knowledge that maintains oppressive societal conditions, and furthermore the commitment to creating knowledge that empowers Black communities to resist both academically and practically in the social world as a political endeavour; Black studies is an inherently counter-publican, Black radical discipline. The inherence of the collaboration of the academy, and the community to the radical political ethos of Black studies research, understands that central to the Black studies as a paradigm of knowledge, is an understanding that the experiences of people of African descent are of a specific cultural and historical context (Kershaw, 1992) . In reclamation of the political function of academic knowledge, Black studies research and academic practice is reliant upon both the civic and scholarly

engagement with local communities; This being a significant aspect of the social responsibility of the modern university overall (Inman & Schütze, 2010).

“Crucial to Black studies, to Black education. Aside from its ideology of liberation, would be the community component of its methodology. This was designed to wed Black communities, heretofore excluded, and the educational process, to transform the Black community, making it more relevant to higher education, at the same time as education is made relevant to the Black community” (Hare, 1972: 34) .

When outlining the obstacles that face Black studies research as reliant upon the cooperation of Black communities with the university, as the mainstream societal institutional of western knowledge production, proper socio-historical context must be provided. The development of working relationships between Black communities and the medical research community in the past has been undermined by unethical research practice involving exclusively Black participants (Corbie-Smith et al, 1999) . Medical racism is most recognisable historically, as the medical experimentation upon people of African descent by European medical professionals, with little regard for the guidelines of ethical research practice, including a lack of informed consent, and/or forced participation (Ramšak, 2020; Nuriddin et all, 2020) . The endangerment, and loss of Black lives through such conduct has resulted in the development of an overall culture of distrust towards institutionally led research that is

requiring of Black community participation (Corbie-smith et al, 2002). One of the most effective combatant for Black studies researchers in the wake of this history, tasked with re-building community trust and instilling that Black studies research is intentioned for the collective good into the collective consciousness, is through utilising approaches to conducting social research that are compatible with the Black studies dedication to dismantling the power structures that traditionally exist between research participants and social researchers.

Black feminism is an epistemology that has brought forth research and activism that has made a significant contribution to Black studies' overarching disciplinary objective of democratising academic knowledge and Black lived experiences. Black feminism is centred upon the experiences, humanity, and liberation of Black women as they exist under oppressive systems. Stuart Hall's 'cultural studies and its theoretical legacies' (2006), presents the idea of critical theory as interruption to dominant ideology, providing the examples of feminism and race theories as having presented theoretical interruption to the wider field of cultural studies, by broadening previously narrow theoretical understandings of the notion of power, and the perceived truths upon which it is established, negotiated and maintained. Feminist theory examples how the centring of gender and sexuality exposes the necessity for expansion of understandings of societal power structures (Hall, 2006). Similarly, Black feminism poses an epistemological interruption to the understanding of the relationship between ideology, structures, and

identity as it is typically presented as gender-neutral (argued by some to actually be patriarchal) in Black studies discourse.

Black feminism, both academically and in politically, in community, has facilitated the construction of space for Black women to convene, and mobilise in response to shared oppressions, whilst honouring that these experiences are a direct result of both in how gender and race collaboratively interact with the political, and economic structure of wider society. The concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), a term once only referred to in academic circles, is now used widely in understanding and articulating the unique position of Black women in our residence at the crossover of numerous socio-cultural systems of oppression. Furthermore, the Black feminist epistemology aids Black women in addressing the effects of patriarchy that are faced intra-communally with Black men in their everyday lives. The uniqueness of the intersection of these experiences to Black women, encapsulated in the well-known Black feminist organisation, Combahee collective's feminist statement, "We struggle together with Black men against racism, while we also struggle with Black men about sexism". (1977: 213), has seen the epistemology produce many significant contributions to the articulation of intracommunal gendered inequality as the final frontier of obstruction in the collective progression towards Black radical visions of liberation. Black feminism is an effective conceptual tool for the navigation of community based intracommunal discussion and debate and strategy, preceding action for the betterment of Black women's life outcomes.

The limitations of community-based research (CBR)

One approach to research that like Black studies research, is built upon the premise of community and university collaboration is community-based research (CBR), Otherwise referred to as community-based participatory research (CBPR). There are various models of CBR, with Strand et al's model (2003) being one of the better-known. According to this model, the three principles of social research are firstly, for academics and communities to work collaboratively in the creation of academic knowledge. Secondly, the valuing of multiple knowledges; This being the mutual ascribing of authority to both researcher and community knowledge, doing so, paramount to an 'epistemology of practice', this the art of knowing through doing, or being (The emphasis upon lived experience). The third principle is to conduct research for the purpose of facilitating social action and bringing about social change. As it pertains to the aforementioned principles, CBR/CPBR is aligned with the epistemological tenets of Black sociology, however it is the ideological, and thus the political positioning of the approach, where it's unsuitability to conduct Black studies research arises. Unlike the inherent radicalism of Black sociology, CBR/CPBR does not seek to ideologically challenge democracy as the political system that governs, maintains and reproduces the conditions that beget the experiences of disadvantage upon which the research is concerned. Rather, CBR/CPBR researchers seek to aid local communities to "leverage new resources and better mobilise the ones they have, develop their capacity, and participate more effectively in our democracy" (Strand et al, 2003:20).

This is not to say that CBR/CPBR is not effective in fulfilling its objectives, as it has been effective in connecting theory to social action, for the bettering of life outcomes (Wilson et al, 2010) and has been a popular approach for those seeking to engage critical epistemologies and pedagogies. An example being feminist researchers, particularly in health research (Iverson and James, 2014; Darroch and Giles, 2014). Furthermore, the centring of feminist ethics in the teaching of community-based research courses, specifically as it pertains to the social construction of gendered hierarchy and oppression as a social and political reality, (As all forms of oppression), has encouraged the criticality of structures, teaching students to recognise “oppressive norms and policies in a community and examine their effects on community members’ lives, from community members’ own standpoints” (Ganote and Longo, 2005:1069) .

Nonetheless, the concentration placed upon facilitating social change within existing societal power structures, and not empowering communities to work towards deconstructing the structures actively and intentionally themselves, results in any social action brought forth, being that which poses no political challenge to current conditions, nor the dominant narratives of academic knowledge that maintain these structures. CBR/CPBR is ideologically bound by mainstream, democratic societal ideals, and is not an approach to research seeking revolutionary outcomes. Calls to de-colonise CBR/CPBR conducted by western researchers in the continent of Africa, cites epistemological power structures within mainstream sociology as the sole point of the ongoing predominance of neo-colonial narratives within trans-cultural research

(Stanton, 2014). Such research drives its efforts towards preserving the importance of the indigenous voice in the research process, all whilst failing to acknowledge (or challenge) the prevailing ideological power structures that underlie the premise of the research in the first instance (Stanton, 2014).

This is not to say that the centring of community voices by CBR are not of the utmost significance in the narration of experiences, or in the framing of research enquiry. However, the commitment solely to an epistemology of practice in the aforementioned instance, is unable to remedy the failure of CBR to acknowledge the current conditions of Africa as a result of western transgressions, the lasting impact of western academic knowledge and practice upon the underdevelopment of the continent, or to socio-historically contextualise this fact within the premise of said research. This point is also true for the African diaspora, pertaining to CBR research that is conducted within Black communities in western nations. Furthermore, the epistemology of practice, whilst democratising the knowledge production process, does little in the way of interacting with, and thus challenging the dominant narratives of university produced knowledge that have been created before, if the objectives of the ideology framework that underpins the research enquiry, does not call for it to do so.

[Ethnography](#)

Ethnography as a research methodology requires the researcher to become immersed in the lives of the research subject(s) for an extended amount of time (Bryman, 2001). Immersion into the lives and environment of the observed group, allows the researcher to observe the social and cultural

processes that shape the behaviours and experiences of those in the space (Whitehead, 2004). Ethnography is referred to as a research approach that can consist of a range of qualitative research methods such as “In-depth unstructured interviews, structured interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, mapping, photography, and video documentation”. Ethnographers can also collect other forms of physical documentation (E.G. Brochures, newspapers, historical archives) and digital information (E.G. Web forum pages and social media posts) in the conducting of ethnographic research (Adams, 2012:339). These methods, centred upon observation, interaction, and the collection of artifacts, allow the researcher to remain flexible in the collection of data, employing the methods that reveal themselves to be most suitable for finding out exactly what is occurring within the space, so as to gather an insight from which meaning can be constructed (Van Hulst, Koster and Vermeulen, 2015).

Ethnography as an approach to research “focuses on methods and techniques that take into consideration a population’s history, culture, interactive activities and emotional lives” (Berg, 2004: 197) , and was a central method in the conducting of anthropological research: The study of the non-western communities by western researchers (Asad, 1973; Adams, 2012). This history calls for acknowledgement of the fact that ethnography as a method descends from a colonial history. The utilisation of traditional ethnography, a research approach emerging from colonial power relations, in order to conduct research that is ideologically committed to the deconstruction of the systemic remnants of said power relations in order to conduct this research, could be deemed

oxymoronic. Particularly, as traditional ethnography typically avoids positioning itself in line with any systemic analysis (Noblit, 1984).

The limitation of ethnography as primarily descriptive in nature, and thus being of little transformative value, is a critique relevant only when the ideological framework within which the research is being conducted (if there is an ideology at all), positions the researcher as separate from the communities that they research. Ethnography has been a significant research method for Black sociological research. Using the review of archival records, exploration of housing distribution in the city, visiting local institutions (churches, schools and social settings), and conducting interviews with the local people, *The Philadelphia Negro* was the first Black studies ethnography ever conducted and was centred upon Black lives and experiences in inner city America, conducted by W.E.B DuBois (1899) and is the earliest example of Black studies research (Stewart, 1984). In exploration of what had been termed the 'negro problem', DuBois concluded, that the high rates of poverty and crime amongst the African American Philadelphian community, were not to be attributed directly to failings of Black people as a collective, but rather, to the limitations that systemic racism was having upon their life outcomes.

Consideration of the relationship between personal experiences and societal structure, and the placement of this relationship into broader historical context, presents the individual and society as entwined with one another. (Mills, 1959). Another well-known example of the connection of personal troubles, with societal structure is Willis, 'learning to labour' (1977). Through a neo-Marxist lens, Willis explored the role of the education system in the

sustainment of social class hierarchal stratification. Willis spent time with working-class boys in a school setting, allowing for the researcher/subject relationship to develop in a collaborative relationship. As a result, the research was able to gather insight into the outlooks and aspirations of participants as a resultant of socialisation into a working-class consciousness (Willis, 1977). The interpretation of findings through a neo-Marxist framework, places 'Learning to labour', alongside the Philadelphia Negro, into the category of 'critical ethnography'.

Critical ethnography

Critical ethnography is specifically concerned with everyday happenings in relation to broader social, cultural and political systems (Anderson, 1989). As it pertains to practical research methods, critical ethnography maintains the tenets of conventional ethnography (May, 1997), yet it is epistemologically, that critical ethnography pivots from conventional ethnography. Originally gaining popularity in educational studies during the 1960's and 1970's, critical ethnography was developed in response to what was considered to be an inadequate acknowledgement by structural theories, of the inner lives and experiences of individuals as they are affected by the concepts that are commonly raised in ethnographic research within educational settings such as "class, racism and patriarchy" (Anderson, 1989:249). Even in the expansion of concern beyond the education system, to other settings beyond that of the education system, critical ethnography focuses specifically upon those in society who are considered to be systemically disadvantaged. The critical ethnographer, concerned with how unequal distributions of power in

society are socio-culturally and politically systematically maintained and reproduced within societal institutions, consults critical theory in analysis of the observations made, in articulating how unequal power dynamics are manifested in everyday experiences. This, preceding an exploration of what can be done to bring about change. Thus, critical ethnography operates as “a conventional ethnography with a political purpose” (Thomas, 1993:4) .

A central defining feature of critical ethnography is positionality. Positionality is highly influenced by “an individual’s world view and the position they adopt about a research task and it’s social and political context” (Holmes, 2020:1). Positionality, informed by the epistemological stance and theoretical framing of the research overall, shapes the research objectives, the viewpoint from which the writings of the observations are presented, and the overall desired impact of the research. Furthermore, positionality dictates the distance that is placed between the researcher as the self, and the participants as the other (Holmes, 2020). Positionality, furthermore, is the means through which power is negotiated between the researcher and the researched. When conducting critical ethnography, there is an ethical responsibility of the researcher to address structural conditions of inequality being faced by the researched. The researcher then aims to “make a contribution toward changing those conditions, toward greater freedom and equity” (Madison, 2011:5) . This, including those presented by the presence of the researcher themselves. Therefore, critical ethnography should not only be concerned with the experiences of those being observed within the research space, but with the experiences of the researcher also, as researcher experiences shape how the

happenings are observed, and thus how data is perceived and recorded. This, calling for researcher reflexivity at all points of the research (Hammersley, 1999).

Reflexivity, described as the “turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference” (Davis, 2012:4), involves the researcher considering oneself as a subject of observation, whilst simultaneously observing all that is taking place in the space. Reflexivity requires that the researcher develop an awareness of the effect that carrying out the research is having upon them (E.G. Practically, perceptively and inter-personally). Furthermore, the influence that their presence as a researcher may be having upon how others conduct themselves in the space, and how this in turn, dictates their interactions with participants should be of concern (Davis, 2012). The simultaneity of remaining reflexive, whilst observing others required for effective critical ethnographic research requires that the relationship between the researcher and the researched, be interchangeable between the researcher maintaining distance analytically between self as researcher and participant as other and viewing themselves as a participant simultaneously. The boundaries, and thus power dynamics between researcher and participant, interchange between non-existent in practice, and clear and enforced during analysis (Powdermaker, 1966, as cited in Davis, 2012).

Conventional ethnography, limiting itself to simply observing what is taking place in the space, primarily takes up the positionality stance of ventriloquy. In a ‘fly on the wall’ fashion, ventriloquy completely distances the researcher from the researched, stating truths as they take place without the application

of social, cultural or political context, and refusing to acknowledge the influence of the researcher in the space. Ventriloquy, the dominant positionality of conventional ethnography, in a commitment to what is deemed researcher neutrality, objectifies participants and tacitly denies acknowledgement of the research space as a site through which meaning is politically constructed, and the research as a political undertaking altogether (Fine, 1994).

Akin to PAR and CBR, critical ethnography is premised upon diverting the relationship between the university and the community from being governed by hierarchy, to one of collaboration. However, despite being committed to actioning change and incorporating reflexivity as a part of the research process, it is still possible for the critical ethnographer to maintain a detachment from the researched, as the researcher is not required to become an active participant in the space. Whilst all critical ethnography aims to produce 'cultural critiques', by exploring and analysing how the power dynamics that underpin inequalities of concern are interwoven into organisational processes, and manifest in the everyday happenings in societal institutions; Not all ethnographers seek to become personally involved in direct and collaborative political action with those in the research space or engage with political activism at a 'grassroots level' (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005). Some critical ethnographers, may rather, opt to contribute to the development of public policy in order to address the issues and action change within the confines of existing power structures (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005). The latter are researchers who likely adopted a 'voices' positionality during

the ethnographic process research. The voices positionality allows participants to communicate their own experiences openly. However, gives the power dynamic between the researcher and the researched, how freely participants are willing to communicate their experiences are subject to a list of caveats that can complicate the validity of what is being communicated.

Furthermore, reliance upon the voices of the researched alone, can raise confusions for the researcher when the narratives provided by participants are in misalignment with the researcher's ideological framework. In these instances, the voices positionality can slip into a "sophisticated ventriloquy", where researchers manipulate what has been said in order to fit the wider cultural critique taking place. The voices positionality, in its reliance solely upon the experiences of others as a depiction of social life, seldom leaves space for the positioning of self within the research space (Scott, 1992, as cited in Fine, 1994), thus missing the dialectical relationship between self and other that is required for a reflexive ethnographic monograph.

Ethnographic researchers who take on an activist positionality, tend to situate themselves as conscious, active participants in the research space. An activist positionality requires one to become fully immersed in the space, to openly identify themselves as a political ally to those in the space, with the clear intention to create knowledge that will further the political interests of the space. The activist positionality, in employment of the reflexivity aforementioned, completely removes the distance between self and other between the researcher and the researched during practice. Whilst speaking of feminist research specifically, Fine states that it is the activist positionality

that enables the researcher to insert themselves, and their personally held political motivations as an active contributor, whilst creating academic knowledge that mirrors this intention, by allowing “researchers to take back our gender, race, and class politics woven through our scholarship” (Fine, as cited in Gitlin, 2014:31). It is at the intersection of a researcher’s invested commitment of oneself as a political actor within the space both methodologically and theoretically; The former through engaged ethnographic practice, and theoretically by the framing of analysis from data gathered, within an ideological, and or conceptual framework that seeks to contribute towards interrogating and disrupting normative political and socio-cultural dynamics of power as they disadvantage those racialised as ‘Black’, that a critical ethnographic praxis becomes Black radical engaged ethnography.

[A Black radical engaged ethnography](#)

The research space is a Black radical community organisation, located in the west midlands, UK. In order to carry out the research, in alignment with the concept of engaged ethnography, I was instated as the organisation’s secretary and was an active member of the organisation’s board of governance. As the organisation’s secretary, I was required to attend all organisational board meetings (these meetings took place bi-weekly and from where a majority of the data presented was gathered), all community facing events, and any additional gatherings of which the governing board members were required to be in attendance. My responsibilities within the space included: The transcription of board meetings into detailed and clear minutes, organisational correspondence and the maintaining of administration and

personal records. There were periods of time (Prior to the commencement of data collection during) however, that the responsibilities did exceed that typically of which are allocated to a secretary (E.G. Management of the organisation's properties, and events promotion). Taking on the role of organisational secretary, provided full access to both the public and private spheres of the organisation and into how the organisation actioned its objectives in alignment with the political tenets of Black radicalism.

Data was collected over a period of 18 months. However, I entered the space in the role of board secretary for a period of 10 months prior to the commencement of data collection. This provided the opportunity to learn organisational processes in the role allocated to a satisfactory standard and adjust myself as a member of the board. This period of time could be considered the 'groundwork' of the ethnography. This extended period of time in the space prior to data collection, allowed for full immersion into the role, and the establishment of organic relationships with board members. In total, I spent 2 years and 8 months in the research space. This length of time in the research space is untypical, as an ethnography exceeding 12 months 'in the field' is considered a rarity in contemporary ethnographic research (Walcott, 1995) . Due to the varied working responsibilities of academic life, and time limitations often implemented into the restrictions placed upon academic research funding guidelines, the doctoral process is often the sole period in one's academic career, that a researcher will be granted the time required to conduct an ethnography of any greater length,

“It is only during the three (or more) years of doctoral research that most people have any chance of being able to free themselves from most other work commitments for the necessary period” (Walcott, 2002:1).

Ethnography has been deemed especially beneficial for cultural studies, for allowing the research to take what has been observed by the researcher, to then be written and described in such a way that the findings can be accessed and understood by those in other social worlds (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2001). Field notes provide the basis of the “ethnographic representation”, through which meaning can be constructed from what at first, may appear to be unrelated happenings (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2001: 352). Thus, the writing up of fieldnotes is integral to the ethnographic research process, for providing a picture of the intricacies of the space’s happenings. In this thesis, excerpts of fieldnotes taken will be presented as a research diary, when deemed relevant and necessary. As fieldnotes are “really our own construction of other people’s constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to”, (Geertz, 1973: 9) , the fieldnotes for this research are presented entirely from my own point of view, and from the role in which I occupied within the space. Whilst interactions with other members by myself, and their interactions with each other in my presence, were central to the collection of data, no direct Block quotes of participants are included within the excerpts. This, in order to avoid falling into the pitfall of attempting to represent the views of others (Back, 2017). All interactions taking place in the space that are presented, are recalled from my own experience of the interaction, so as to maintain the centrality of my own voice. This is central to both the methodological and

epistemological tenets of the research. The objective is for I as the researcher, to interact with the theory in order to interpret practice within the space.

Excerpts from the research diary will be presented using ‘thick description’, of the goings on (Geertz, 1973). “Thick description”, is described as such if “(1) It gives the context of an act; (2) it states the intentions and meanings that organize the actions; (3) it traces the evolution and development of the act; (4) it presents the action as a text that can be interpreted” (Denzin, 1989, as cited in Kharel, 2015:155) As stated, some of the diary excerpts presented will depict conversations held between the researcher and board members during everyday interactions. Some of the conversations were navigated by the researcher, with directed intent as it pertained to the accruing of specific Information (E.G. Reasons for departure from the organisation, and the gathering of organisational history), and thus could be interpreted to be akin to unstructured interviews (Burgess, 1982). However, as ethnography is the study of human agency in any specific setting (Preissle and Grant, 1998), to maintain as naturalistic a research environment as possible, and in turn my relationships with others in the space, interviews were not a selected research method for this research, and thus any conversations were entered into as just that: Conversations. Furthermore, conversations with participants are integrated into the participatory process, and thus undifferentiable from any other form of conversation (Palmer, 1928). Any direct questions posed to participants were appropriate, as it pertained to the role occupied by the researcher within the space.

Ethnography can be conducted inductively, as a tool of discovery, of which entails the researcher entering the space without any preconceived expectations, and being “concerned with the way in which fruitful concepts, hypotheses and theories are discovered”; Or deductively, as a tool of validation, by which a researcher enters the space with a specific theoretical position or hypothesis, and seeks to collect data for ratification of this position (Wilson & Chaddha, 2009:549). Due to a lack of preconceived notions, research carried out inductively is put forth as ideal for the creation of new, and presently relevant knowledge that is not constrained by previous theorisations. It is for this reason, that when conducting an inductive, the researcher is to enter the field without a pre-conceived idea of what is to be discovered, but to interpret the social reality observed during the time in the field, (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2001).

This ethnography is both inductive and deductive in nature. The research space was entered with no preconceived notions of what would take place, and so was deductive in this respect. However, the enquiry of this research is inductive, approached from the vantage point of the demise of Black community organisations in Britain, as institutions of counter publican Black radical unity. This a vantage point focused pre-determined concern, of goings on in the space, as directed by the research question: *What long-term and short-term obstacles must be overcome to secure the future of Black community organisations in contemporary British society?* (Of which the chapters of address as a culminative. The happenings in the space are analysed in their relation to the congruence, or incongruence (as a counter-publican space) to

the interests of dominant power structures and, consequently, the ideals of wider contemporary British society. Therefore, the research space is entered, "Not in the sense of testing prior theoretically driven hypotheses, but in using his or her theoretical knowledge to make sense of the new data uncovered in the field research" (Wilson & Chaddha, 2009:551).

The political ideology of Black radicalism as outlined in chapter two, provides the ideological framework within which this ethnography is conducted. Ideological framing is pivotal when conducting ethnography with political purpose, as it is ideology that directs research enquiry that is consulted during the analysis of the empirical data. In integrating the chapters of analysis into fulfilment of the research objective of *mapping the rise and fall of Black community organisations in the 20th century, through the overall liberalisation of socio-cultural, political and economic landscape of Britain, and exploring the impact of this history upon Black community organisation in the present day*, (although is most directly met by chapter three of the thesis), the empirical data is presented dialectically with Black British political history when relevant. This is to enable the drawing of comparison between points of contention for Black community-led political organisation of the past, with the present-day example presented. Alongside Black political and post-colonial theory and thought, critical sociological theory is engaged in theorisation of the empirical data. The happenings in the space are presented as directly buttressed by dominant power structures and systems, upon which the racial inequalities of contemporary society are constructed, maintained and reproduced. Such conditions are presented to undermine the

individual agency that is conducive to the longevity of the Black community organisation in contemporary Britain.

The research space

The data collection space for this research was a Black community organisation named the Kenyatta Organisation. The Kenyatta organisation is situated in the west midlands, UK and was established in the year of 2017. The establishment of the Kenyatta organisation was a result of the merger of two Black political organisations: Ominara and Igbala. The organisations were local to one another and had been politically affiliated in the past. However, both were separate and independent entities until the time of their official merging. In order to gain the insight required to contextualise the preceding chapters detailing the obstacles to progress of The Kenyatta organisation, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the history of both organisations as it pertains to their establishment, nature of political activity and standing in the local Black community at the time of the commencement of the research.

The Ominara Organisation

The Ominara organisation is recognised locally as a significant contributor to the history of Black grassroots activism in the city in which it was established. The Ominara organisation was a part of the Black grassroots self-help movement, a movement that gained popularity in Britain during the 1970's and 1980's (Ramdin, 2017) , as discussed in chapter two. The state funding required to establish the Ominara organisation's services, had been sought out by a collective of community and social workers, united in their mutual

recognition and concern of the soaring rates of homelessness amongst the youth in the local Afro-Caribbean community in the city. The Ominara organisation began as a housing association, and opened a community ran youth hostel for Black homeless youth in the local area. The organisation went on to purchase numerous properties in the inner city (mortgages were secured with government funds), to serve as permanent housing for those in need. In the year following its establishment, Ominara opened an early year's educational centre, which provided childcare and culturally centred education for pre-school aged children of the Afro-Caribbean community.

In the mid to late 1990's, Ominara began to face financial difficulties precipitated by state funding cuts and the internal mismanagement of funds, of which resulted in mounting debt by the early 2000s. Due to their debts, Ominara were forced to sell their bookshop, to leverage against ongoing service running costs. Ominara then ceased to open up their youth hostel, also instigated by budget cuts; However retained possession of the building, letting it out privately in order to generate residual income to contribute towards the settling of their debts. The early years centre closed temporarily in the mid 2000's for refurbishment, however remained in long-term closure due to a lack of available funds to complete the schedule of required work. During the extended amount of time that the early years building remained unoccupied, it became dilapidated through disuse, and required more extensive refurbishment than it had in the first instance, in order to be considered fit for use once more. The closing of the early years building halted

the provision of all childcare services. The early years centre still remained closed at the time of the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation.

The Igbala organisation

The Igbala organisation was a Black radical organisation, established in 2013, a few years after the conservative and liberal democrat coalition government took power in 2010. The Igbala organisation's overall objective was to unite its own grassroots activist efforts, with those of other Black community organisations, collectives and initiatives geared towards improving the lives of Black communities locally, nationally and internationally in various areas of life (Education, health, legal, economic and political action). The ultimate objective of the organisation was to bring about systemic change through collective political action. Igbala had been successful in establishing a strong community presence in the local area since its establishment, achieved through prioritising community engagement in the form of meetings and political and cultural events, and building an interactive online social media presence through their online blog of which produced content on current issues, both nationally and globally.

The establishment of the Kenyatta organisation

The establishment of the Kenyatta organisation through the merging of the Igbala and Ominara organisations came about through shared geographical proximity and a shared commitment to the independent, grassroots level addressal of conditions of racial inequality. Ominara and Igbala found confirmation of their compatibility to merge through a mutual focus of their activism, (Ominara having done so in the past, and Igbala intending to do so

in the future), in taking practical steps toward providing a community-based education for Black children. Each organisation was positioned well in fulfilling the shortcomings of the other; Shortcomings that jeopardised the longevity of each organisation as separate entities, and so each organisation offered their respective resources to the other.

The remaining active members of Ominara were eager to see the early years centre building in use once again, and wished for the early years building to continue to be exclusively used for educational purposes that served the local Black community. The Igbala organisation fulfilled this desire in their own objective to open a supplementary school for school aged children, study circle sessions for teenagers and adults, and a community-based pupil referral unit for secondary school-aged children from the local Black community who had been excluded from mainstream education. The establishment of the Kenyatta organisation presented a resolution to a practical obstacle facing Igbala, who since their establishment, had been without a physical premises, and had been holding community meetings in various locations since its establishment. Aside from providing an insular self-sufficient community space to be utilised for the standard and political education of Black children and the wider community, Kenyatta held it as an objective, to act as an umbrella organisation that connected members of the wider community to other affiliated Black community organisations, projects and services both locally, nationally and internationally that specialised in providing services exclusively to Black communities.

With no property assets and minute funds, Igbala's primary contributions to the merge were not tangible, however this did not diminish their significance to the Kenyatta vision. Having been inactive in the local community for over a decade, Ominara would benefit from Igbala's strong community presence and rapport with the younger generations of the local Black community. This, a necessity in conjuring community support in the form of the donation of time and finance required to sustain the progression of the organisation. Another valuable resource presented by the Igbala portion of the merge was the time and energy of the young board members, who would be 'passed the baton' from the elder organisation. Being one of few Black community organisations established in the 1970's that were still operational, and in full ownership of its assets, the forming of the Kenyatta organisation facilitated the official handing over of these resources to another Black community organisation; sustaining it as a hallmark organisation of local Black community grassroots activism of one generation, into the next.

At the time of its establishment, Ominara did not explicitly identify as a Black radical organisation, but as a Black self-help organisation, and so were not ideologically or constitutionally averse to accepting state support to fund their work in the community and did so throughout the years of operation. Igbala on the other hand, whilst willing to accept state support for the funding of affiliative projects that would benefit the local Black community, would only do so if such funding did not interfere with the political autonomy of the organisation. It had been agreed prior to the merge that the Kenyatta organisation would adopt the political identity (ideology, objectives,

constitution and funding model) of the Igbala organisation. As per the constitution, the Kenyatta organisation board was to be governed democratically, with the power to make decisions held by all board members through a democratic voting system.

The obstacles identified as constricting to the growth, progress and thus future of the organisation, were categorised as being facilitated by a lack of Black radical unity in one the three relationships identified as paramount to the actualisation of the space operating as intended. These relationships being between, firstly, Individuals within the organisation. Secondly, the organisational (board) members and their commitment to the organisation, and thirdly, the relationship between the organisation and the local Black community. Each chapter presents the obstacles faced in preserving the future of the organisation, in direct alignment with a lack of unity in each of one the aforementioned relationships.

Ethical considerations

Gaining access

I came to know of the Igbala organisation initially, in the year of 2014 through a multi-organisational networking event for Afrocentric community organisations, initiatives and projects that I attended. Shortly after, after receiving an invitation via a mailing list that I had joined during this event, I attended one of Igbala's community events. It was at this event that I was introduced to the organisation's chairman. During our conversation, I mentioned that I had an interest in becoming involved in community

organisation. From this point, I continued to follow the organisation's progress on social media outlets and became an avid reader of the organisation's blog site. Prior to commencing the doctoral research journey, I began attending Igbala events on a regular basis, and became known to some of the board members through doing so. Upon being offered a place to commence my doctoral research, I raised the matter of conducting a 'case study' style of research in the organisation to explore the inner workings of contemporary Black political organisation. In fulfilment of the engaged nature, and activist positionality of the ethnography, it was agreed that I would also occupy a position within the governing board, from which I would have full access to all organisational business. As the successful gaining of access was based primarily upon pre-existing familiarity with those in the space, it would be categorised as personal access, as it was formed upon becoming known and accepted by the gatekeepers of the organisation as a research site (Laurila, 1997).

Prior to the beginning of data collection, a section of the board meeting agenda was set aside for me to explain the premise of the research to the board. Information sheets and consent forms were distributed to the board, (detailing the scope of the research, research questions and objectives, and an overview of the research method of participant observation, the explanation that their names and the name of the organisation would be changed in order to protect anonymity, and the right to withdraw consent at any time,) as pertaining to the essential principles of social research ethics (Houghton, et al, 2010). Two board members communicated that whilst they agreed to being participants

of the research, that as I have a public facing role in the organisation, and therefore am publicly affiliated with the image of the organisation, that despite the changing of names, that they were uncomfortable with providing written consent, and refused to sign any documentation that confirmed that they had in fact been a participant in the research.

Informed consent

Following further group discussion, it was collectively agreed upon that congruence should be maintained in the form of consent given by all board members as participants, and that therefore all agreeing board members would provide verbal, rather than written consent. All board members verbally communicated that they understood all information stated on the sheet provided, and none declined to partake in the research. It was then reiterated, that should any person to decide to opt-out at any time, that they would not be mentioned in any observational fieldnotes from that point on. In reflection upon the importance of informed consent as a tenet of ethical social research, this instance was illustrative of the point that the context of informed consent, is as important as the consent itself (Fujii, 2012). Whilst written informed consent would have been preferred, verbal consent provided a consent format upon which all were agreed and thus, served as a compromise without dissuading participation. The board member's refusal to sign the consent form, was attributed to being uncertain of their feelings regarding being identified as members of the governing board of a Black community organisation with radical political objectives.

Participant Anonymity

The anonymity of participants is a key ethical concern for this research. Anonymity is significant, as it provides protection for individual identities, and assures that participants can be open and honest in the presence of the researcher. All participants were provided with pseudonyms. Given the specific history of the Igbala and Ominara organisations, their proximity to one another and the specific details that led to their merging, it is likely that those who reside locally would be able to decipher the true identities of the organisation. For this reason, the name of the city that the research took place has also been omitted.

The integrity of the Black studies researcher

Aside from the additional ethical considerations that can be presented by ethnographic research as a research methodology, primarily due to the variety of research methods that can exist within such research, the various nuances of any social and cultural issues within the research space must be considered (Hammersley, 2020) . When extended to consideration of the responsibility of the Black studies researcher in upholding the interests and concerns of the epistemological vantage point from which the research is being carried out, and thus the interests of those in the space, ethical considerations can become nuanced, further still. Aside from reflexivity in the research space, there is a reflexivity that is required for the Black studies researcher in upholding the epistemological integrity of Black studies in a broader sense. The research objectives and questions are purposed to ensure that the research enquiry is conducted in such a way that is epistemologically

appropriate; Yet it is the researcher that holds complete control over the integrity of epistemological conduct. This integrity is located directly in the researcher's ongoing epistemological reflexivity at all stages of the research process. Alongside the commitment to the process of opposing the eurocentrism of traditional sociological knowledge production, reflexivity, at the core of proper epistemological conduct, is an individual commitment to remain engaged with in the unravelling of oneself from value judgements rooted within such constructs. It is be accepted by the Black studies researcher, that even though often birthing discourse that sits in direct juxtaposition to the betterment of Black lives and experiences, that traditional sociological ideology, theory and practice has formed the foundation of our academic training. Thus, it has contributed significantly to the development of our sociological understanding, perception and articulation of social and political condition, and the inequalities that have ensued. In the understanding that "all of us are homogenised in our field of knowledge, and understanding is structured by limited exposure to competing socio-definitions of the socio-political world" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2002:93) , the Black studies researcher must embrace the fact that dismantling the dominance of Eurocentric academic knowledge production pertaining to Black lives and experiences involves not only decolonising the western university, but decolonising the interests of ourselves as individuals who have elected to take up the task of creating such knowledge from our research endeavours.

For the Black studies researcher, this means actively remaining conscious of placing the collective Black condition before, and *above* any privilege that our university qualifications and careers, whether established or emerging, have afforded us up until any one point. Putting the collective before the self will order the steps required to fulfil Black studies as praxis. This, a commitment that demands the building of long-term relationships and time, in opposition to the productivity-fuelled culture of the neo-liberal university, and very well may impact the speed of which one's academic career progresses. As not only a scholar, but also as an activist, the motivations and conduct of the Black studies researcher must privilege the progression of the political interests of Black communities. Therefore, the motivations of the community must be where the researcher's allegiance lies. Engaged ethnographic research should be undertaken as an expression of political solidarity in the recognition, interrogation, and deconstruction of current socio-political and economic conditions (Rasch, & van Drunen, 2017) as ethnographic research "entails a commitment to generating the kinds of knowledge that they [the community, or research spaced demographic] ask and need us to produce" (Hale, 2006: 113). Academic favour, award, or recognition exist secondary to this commitment.

Black studies research is clear in its identification and criticism of racially hegemonic ideology, theory, and research practice, however those committing themselves to producing knowledge would do well to remember that they continuously must do more than *just* know this fact, they must devote their academic efforts to, the "commitment to liberation" (Staples, 1973:168). Black

studies research demands that one be personally committed to this commitment, and any required action that ensues. Remaining truly accessible to, and reciprocal with communities during all parts of the research process, and breaking down the false separation between the academy and community (Chattersson, Hodkinson & Pickerill, 2010), in addition to honouring the inherently radical tenets of Black studies research in the presence of *all* audiences, are held as pre-requisites for true solidarity scholarship, alongside maintaining community and scholar-activist relationships required to enable the creation of bodies of academic knowledge through the passing of time, and for transformative potential of Black studies research to be realised.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the parameters of the methodological approach selected to undertake the empirical portion of this research. The epistemological values, research method and the research space have all been outlined and justified as politically aligned with the Black radical enquiry of the research. Ethical considerations, as they exist both in general to undertaking sociological research, and specifically to the epistemology of Black Sociology have also been raised and addressed.

Chapter four

Inter-generational divisions

“A youth that does not cultivate friendship with the elderly is like a tree without roots.”

-African proverb

Introduction

The first relationship that is identified as being significant in preserving the future of Black community organisation specifically with political activist objectives, is the relationship between the members of the organisation's governing board. Intra-organisational fragmentation, or 'in-fighting' has been highlighted as a contributing factor to the dissent and demise of various Black political organisations and movements in Black British political history (Wild,2008). Intra-organisational fragmentation in Black political organisations of the past has typically arisen firstly, due to a lack of unanimity of political outlook or strategy between members, and ensuing disagreement upon the direction and future of the organisation (Wild, 2008). The insertion of identity-based hierarchies into organisational structure and practice has, historically been another common reason for the degradation of relationships between members.

Gender inequality is an identity-based cause of intra-organisational contention and disunity that is more widely documented in Black power

movements in both the US, (Springer, 2013; ; Smith, 2015; Farmer, 2017) and British context. Patriarchal organisational structures and outlooks in community organisations of the British Black power era often resulted in the prohibition of women from obtaining decision-making positions; Instead regulated to roles that were considered secondary to the central political work of the space, and a lack of focus upon issues that specifically impact Black women (Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe, 2018). Patriarchal structures within Black community organisations of the past, contributed significantly to the establishment of many Black women's only organisations established in Britain throughout the 1970's (Wild, 2008). Despite such experiences, Black women played a pivotal role in Black mobilised action in mixed gendered organisations and movements during the Black power era in Britain. Notably is the leadership of the Black Panther Movement by Althea Lecointe-Jones (Bunce and Field, 2011), and the tireless work of the many Black women in the development and administering of Black community programs (Sudbury, 2005). Generational identity was observed as the aspect of identity at the centre of intra-organisational tensions within in the Kenyatta organisation. The Kenyatta organisation's governing board consisted of 12 members in total. Nine of the members were aged between 22 and 32 years old at the time that data collection commenced. These members are referred to as the 'younger members' of the board throughout the proceeding chapters and hailed from the Igbala organisation, the younger organisation.

The remaining three members of the board were between the ages of 65 and 75 years old at the time of data collection commencement. These members

are referred to in proceeding chapters as the ‘elder members’ or ‘elders’ and were, prior to the forming of the Kenyatta organisation, from the Ominara organisation. A key source of tension arising between the two generations in the Kenyatta board was a misalignment of participatory ideals. Participatory ideals are defined as the code of conduct that individuals in any given space adhere to as a condition of participation. In this instance, participatory ideals were directed by the political principles of Black radical politics: Black self-determination and self-governance. The intergenerational misalignment of participatory ideals in the Kenyatta board, were determined as being derived from the changing societal conditions and expectations, spanning the period of time between which each generation had originally become involved in grassroots community organisation.

This was observed specifically, as it pertained to issues concerning the accountability of the organisation as a counter-publican institution, to adhere to rules, regulations, and expectations of a publicly facing space. Specifically, as it pertains to the management of ‘risk’. The elder members adhered to the Black radical participatory ideals of self-determination and governance in such a way that disregarded procedural norms of a public space in present day society. For the elder members, the preservation of organisational funds was the primary concern, to ensure the ongoing progress of the organisation towards its immediate objectives. The younger generation on the other hand, having been socialised into the social expectations of contemporary society, theorised as the age of the ‘risk society’ (Beck,1993) , could not divorce this

socialisation from their organisational conduct, and thus decision-making process.

The younger board members situated the ongoing access of the organisation to its self-determination and self-governance, within the organisation's willingness to adhere to the procedures, rules and regulations of wider society, and prioritised this adherence over the preservation of organisational funds. 'Pre-merger ownership', 'entitlement', and 'trust' are highlighted as central themes through which the quality of inter-generational relationships in the space continued to diminish over time in the Kenyatta board. The chapter concludes with highlighting both the importance of strong inter-generational relationships, and the adaptability of Black community organisations in compromising upon practical aspects of self-governance when necessary and appropriate, in order to preserve political self-determination for the future of Black community organisations.

[An Inter-generational misalignment of Black radical participatory ideals](#)

Decisions pertaining to the progression of the early years centre, a matter of utmost significance for the organisation's progression, was the key topic through which inter-generational tensions were observed.

04/09/17

During today's board meeting, when establishing a schedule of work for the early years building, Maxwell, an elder of the board advised us all of yet another complication hindering our moving forward with the early years

building project. Due to not being fully secured, the building had attracted squatters and was now littered with hazardous drug paraphernalia. The board's original plan of making a call to the community for volunteers to conduct a community clean-up was now out of the question, due to health and safety concerns. Maxwell suggested that the board should still all meet and clean up the building. The one other only other present elder of the board, Desmond agreeing with this motion. Natasha, the building project manager stated that due to the presence of drug paraphernalia, that a professional environmental clean was the only appropriate route to take in having the building deemed safe for anyone; Contractors, board members and community alike. All of the younger members of the board agreed with this point, including myself.

As it relates to the inter-generational variance in conceptualisations of self-determination as a keystone of Black grassroots political organisation, the rationale underpinning the position of each generation in this matter is understood through exploration of the inter-generational discrepancies in what was to be deemed the 'rational' choice, underpinned by an inter-generational misalignment of participatory ideals. The concepts of autonomy and choice as liberal ideals, in the interest in the preservation of personal liberty, validate and reinforce one another, "we value autonomy in part, because of the freedom to choose that it validates, and we value free choice in part because it contributes to our autonomy" (Dan-Cohen 1992:221). The preferentiality undergirding what was considered to be the 'rational choice', in this dispute is significant in understanding that choice and autonomy may not share a symbiotic relationship in the decision-making process in a Black radical space with a collectivist philosophy, as when applied to decision making in the pursuit of individualist self-interest.

When applied to a space with collectivist principles, a choice aligning with individual preferentiality cannot be assumed to be the choice that is in the best interest of maintaining autonomy of the collective. The inter-generational conflict of how self-determination as a tenet of Black radicalism, and a participatory ideal of Black radical organisation should be adhered to in practice to actualise Black radical autonomy, is rooted in the relationship between the autonomy and choice. The actualisation of Black radical autonomy in Black grassroots organisation with a political philosophy of collectivism, requires a process of decision making, resulting in choices that may not necessarily be aligned with individual preference, however, will provide progression toward the broader objectives of the organisation.

In presenting the inter-generational differentiation of participatory ideals, as directly connected to a generationally specific application of the tenets of Black radicalism in the practical decision-making process, reference to the Black radical community organisation as the primary institution of the Black radical counter-public, is of relevance here. A key distinction between the two generations in decision making process, was the prominence placed upon adhering to the organisation's political tenets as participatory ideal: autonomy, and self-determination. As aforementioned in chapter three, the Black self-help movement within which the elder organisation, Ominara was inspired politically by the Black power movement's principle of Black self-determination, was a prerequisite to the actualisation of Black autonomy over the economic, political and cultural spheres over our own lives. To do for self is to govern oneself, and to govern oneself, is to liberate oneself. Thus, the

Black community organisation as an institution of the Black counter-public, seeks to maintain Black autonomy, by upholding a non-invasive relationship with the institutions of the public sphere, and the avoidance of state interference, as paramount.

The US Black Panther party is an example of a Black community grassroots organisation operating as an institution of the Black counter-public dedicated to returning autonomy to the Black community through the provision of multiple social service and community programs (West, 2010). Black autonomy was exemplified by detachment from the concern, input or interference from the authority of the regulations of societal systems and institutions. Akin to the Black panther party, the elder members of the Kenayat board were committed to practicing the interpretation of self-determination that facilitated an insular and community-contained Black autonomy. This, termed here as a Black radical autonomy.

The actualisation of Black radical autonomy would be achieved by renovating and opening the building for community use, with the organisation's available funds. This, requiring that all decisions made be conducive to conserving funds, to make this possible. Therefore, the conceptualisation of self-determination subscribed to by the elder members, deemed the re-direction of a substantial amount of the organisational funds away from the renovation of the early years centre, as undermining to the objective of maintaining the long-term financial autonomy of the organisation. The choice of the elder members of the board to personally clean the building, was presented as a choice that prioritised preserving the actualisation of the immediate, and

long-term objectives and interests of the organisation. The cleaning of the building was perceived as a short-term impediment to the larger, ultimate objective that did not warrant such an expense.

All of the board elders concurred that if we were all ‘very careful’, and committed a full weekend to the clean, then it would save us a great expense. What the elder members were suggesting was not a breach of regulation of the disposal of hazardous waste, as long as we disposed of the syringes in a ‘sharps bin’ and a clinical waste collection was requested.

When viewed neither choice was any more aligned with the organisation’s participatory ideal of the organisation’s political philosophy than the other. Rather, the intergenerational misalignment resides in contrasting socio-cultural norms upon which the participatory ideal of self-determination and autonomy was constructed and applied to practical decision making. The younger members engaged with choice and autonomy as liberal ideals by utilising their access to choose (such a choice afforded by the funds of the elder organisation), in order to negotiate self-determination as a prerequisite to Black radical autonomy. However, the younger members did not contextualise their decision as one inherently oppositional to the preservation of the autonomy of the organisation as an institution of the Black counter public. But rather, as a decision synchronous to it.

The consensus of the younger members of the board was that paying for the cleaning service should still be categorised as ‘doing for self’, as the service was being independently funded by the organisation.

The decision of the younger members to forgo the decision for the board to clean the early years building, and conserve organisational funds, was a decision that aligns with the culturally and socially accepted norms of the social contract (Rousseau, as cited in Baker, 2012) . The social contract is most simply defined as an agreement between citizens in the public, that all individuals in society are to act in accordance with the general, rather than individual will, and thus to conduct oneself in such a way that will benefit all, in the interests of the common good. The social contract is established upon the altruistic sacrifice of individual freedoms. Rousseau presents that freedom in a democratic society can only be beneficial if this freedom is regulated, by being placed in “legitimate chains” (Bluhm, 1984), and thus differentiates between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ freedom. ‘Good’ freedom, is exercised, when it accommodates the wellbeing of all citizens in society.

Whilst having the freedom to independently clean the building, due to the risks that would be posed by doing so, the desire to uphold the social contract, by prioritising the common good, rationalised the choice to opt for a professional clean. Not to do so would be the exercising of ‘bad’ freedom. Being governed by, and engaging with citizens of the public, and legally answerable to the laws of the public polity; The choice(s) required to maintain the fulfilment of the social contract (the common good), can be simultaneously oppositional *and* were juxtapositioned to the choice(s) required to maintain

fulfilment of the tenets of the organisation as a counter publican space, which in this case limited the organisation's financial autonomy. The social and cultural norms by which they had been socialised, influenced the stringent approach taken by the younger members toward upholding the responsibility to effectively mitigate the organisation against 'risk'. The 'Risk society' is a theoretical framework presented by both Beck and Giddens and is concerned with how modern society responds in reaction to risk. Risk society posits that contemporary society is one that is "preoccupied with the future (and also with safety), which generates the notion of risk" (Giddens, 1999:3). A Risk society emerged with the rise of industrial age, in response to the risk that the advancement of technologies of the industrial age present as reaction to modernity; risk society is a result of 'reflexive modernity' (Beck, 1993).

Risk is created by technological advancement, and further understood through scientific enquiry that has continued modernity (Bertilsson, 1990) . If it is the technological advancement brought into fruition by the industrial age is the age of modernity, then Risk society is a 'reflexive' modernity (Beck, 1990). Knowledge discovered and disseminated pertaining to risks presented by the social, cultural, political, and environmental conditions created by (and for), technological and industrial advancement become the guidance from which the measures of risk mitigation are established. Giddens's explanation of the responsibility of risk in modern society (1993), aids in explicating how the choice to opt for a professional standard clean made by the younger members of the Kenyatta board, was demonstrative of adherence to safety preservation as a societal norm of the risk society.

The organisational professionalisation of risk management

Presenting the provision of 'professionalism' as a marketing tactic to command a market value of a service, has been dismissed as a reductive analysis that neglects to interpret the discourse of professionalism as a hegemonic device of organisational operation (Fournier, 1999). Analysing professionalism in conjunction with Foucault's theory of governmentality, Fournier asserts that the discourse of professionalism in occupational organisations serves as a "disciplinary logic", for the facilitation of an "autonomous labour" that behaves in accordance with a framework of conduct that is deemed 'professional' (Fournier, 1999: 283). Governmentality, a 'laissez faire' model of governmental control, is culturally hegemonic in nature, as individuals are not forcefully reigned over but rather, are socialised (in this instance through safety culture), to perceive the constraints of the paradigm of their governance as rational.

"Individuals are governed not through a monolithic and all-powerful state but through systems of 'truth' (Rose, 1993), through the proliferation of expert practical knowledge (E.G. Psychology, medicine, law, accounting) that serves to constitute human beings as autonomous subjects with a responsibility (or even an interest) to conduct their life in appropriate ways" (Fournier, 1999: 283).

Professionalism becomes the organisation's paradigm of conduct and reference point of rationality, resulting in individuals coming to govern themselves in obedience to the non-invasive, yet ever present constraint of the ideals of professionalism.

The discussion of the organisation's reputation then arose as a significant talking point. Natasha reminded the elders that although we are a community organisation, that we must put our 'best foot forward' and conduct ourselves professionally if we ever wanted to be taken seriously by, or trusted by the community. Raymond stated that our image is important, and that he would never work in an organisation that took such a cavalier approach to health and safety, regardless of the wage. So, why would anyone in the community want to be associated with Kenyatta for doing the same, for free?

It is presented here that the professionalisation of behaviour, adherent to individual responsibility to manage risk and consequently the professionalisation of the risk management industry, both fulfil neo-liberal objectives; The former, to control the behaviour of citizens to adhere to risk society as a condition of modernity, despite the illusion of freedom that neo-liberal political and economic ideology purports to be. The latter, to stimulate free market growth through the professionalised marketisation of numerous traditionally public service industries, some of which up until a particular moment in time, had exclusively been provided as government funded public services, (including waste management), that have since becoming wholly

privatised; Having been marketed through the concept of the 'professional standard' in order to inflate the market value of public service provision on the free market.

Both of these realities comprise the internally and externally existing obstacles presented by the conditions of neo-liberal governance upon the practical feasibility of financially independent Black political organisations. The internal obstacle, the 'neo-liberal' stance of the younger generation of the Kenyatta board on this matter, which implored them to deplete the organisation finances to obtain the 'professional standard' ; And the external being the expense of the service in the first instance, which then led to the rejection of this stance and consequent proposed course of action by the elder member's, creating an intergenerational conflict.

Professionalism as a paradigm of appropriate conduct in an organisational setting standardises individual and collective conduct, and serves to safeguard the ongoing maximisation of efficiency, profit, and preservation of a positive organisational reputation in the service-based economy (Larson, 1979) . The utilisation of professionalism as a paradigm of competence, as a means to constrain agency within organisations is applicable when discussing the inter-generational incongruence of indiscriminate adherence to safety culture as a sub-paradigm of professional conduct by the younger members.

There was an inter-generational discrepancy in a subscription to one of the paradoxes that contribute to the rationality of safety culture, that “safety is defined and measured more by its absence than by its presence” (Reason, 2000:4). This paradox is predicated upon the cultural ideal that whilst it is impossible to fully eliminate danger, that all individuals within an organisation have the responsibility to do everything in their power to eliminate danger to the public. Standardisation of conduct and knowledge is a hallmark of professionalism, and the basis upon which a perception of competency is developed (Larson, 1979). Therefore, conduct in accordance with safety culture, directly correlated with professional conduct becomes the basis upon which the overall competency of an individual within the organisation is measured.

“In a safe culture, employees are guided by an organization-wide commitment to safety in which each member upholds their own safety norms and those of their co-workers” (Pronovost and Sexton, 2005: 231).

The decision-making process of the younger members was underpinned by a rationale that prioritised avoiding the possible consequences of failing to mitigate risk resultant of the non-adherence to the public health and safety guidelines, and instilled by a sense obligation of moralism contextualised through a professional lens, or moral professionalism. This adherence was directly informed by the younger generation’s overall identification with

concerns specific to the socio-cultural norms of contemporary (risk) society. Opting to have the building professionally clean, aligned with doing all that one could to ensure the utmost preservation of safety (Glendon, Clarke and McKenna, 2016) , and was resultant of a direct internalisation of the ethos of morality that has become culturally entwined into the politics of managing risk in contemporary society. This, premised upon a direct attachment of personal responsibility, to the collective good (Beck, 1993). The choice made affirmed, despite the perceived non-necessity of paying for a professional service by the elder members, due to a significant expense to the organisation, as one categorised as due diligence to the public, or civic duty.

As human error is an ineradicable obstacle to the mitigation of hazards in modern society (Glendon, Clarke and McKenna, 2016). The younger board members as non-professionals in the matter of cleaning and disposing of hazardous waste, perceived themselves as being more susceptible to incurring error, and rationalised their decision through engaging with the framework of safety culture's direct correlation of professionalism with competency. A cleaning service marketed to be of a professional standard provided a sense of surety that risk would be most effectively mitigated.

Concerns the hazardous nature of the waste was raised by several of the younger members of the board. Arguments for having the building cleaned by a professional environmental cleaning company were numerous. These arguments included but were not limited to 1) The danger that the waste could pose to the board members. 2) The burden of having to ensure that the clean had been thorough carried out, which due to the large size of the building, would be difficult as there would likely be concealed or hidden paraphernalia, and 3)

If failing to correctly dispose of hazardous waste, the organisation would breach a duty of care to public health guidelines and could potentially land the organisation in legal trouble. The risk that cleaning the building independently could pose to the community, (especially children) just did not seem to be worth saving the money.

Furthermore, placing this situation within the wider context of the effect of the neo-liberal capitalist economy in contemporary society is required. The individualisation of risk management responsibility upon which risk society as a modern condition is socially and culturally constructed, takes place in concordance with the privatisation of the environmental and waste service industry; One of the industries responsible for public health risk management. Third sector establishments including charities and non-profit organisations, as both providers and consumers of public services, have been doubly impacted by the steady privatisation of public services, particularly maintenance services and utility resources (gas, electricity, and water). Not only is there less financial state support to cover the practical costs of providing the services that they exist to provide, additionally, the progressive privatisation of public utilities since the end of the 1970's, including water and water waste services, electricity, transport and tele-communications that despite being overseen by independent regulatory bodies to regulate pricing (Clarke and Pitelis, 2005) , are now subject to the market price inflation, have placed impediment upon the ability of these establishments to cover running costs.

Safety culture: The management of 'risk'

In the risk society framework, there is a clear distinguishment between risk and danger. "The idea of risk is bound up with the aspiration to control and particularly with the idea of controlling the future" (Giddens, 1993:3). Though both the younger and elder generations were equally aware of the hazardous nature of the waste in the early years centre, the insistence of the younger members for the building to be cleaned professionally, demonstrates a heightened concern with ensuring that risk would be mitigated to a professional standard. This route believed to significantly lessen the margin for error and provide assurance that the favourable outcome would be achieved. Although distinct from danger, the assessment of risk is "always related to security and safety" (Giddens, 1993:7). The excerpt detailing the rationale of the choice of the younger members to opt for a professional clean is illustrative of this.

The risk society is comprised of two types of risk; External and manufactured. Unlike external risk, which is out of the control of human action, and occurs as randomised events (E.G., natural disasters), manufactured risk is created as a result of human action (pollution, global warming, health issues) and is avoidable (Giddens 1993). The large number of syringes and other hazardous waste in the early years building would be categorised as 'manufactured risk'. The social actors who have control, and therefore bear the responsibility of managing manufactured risks, are those who generate the situation posing the circumstances required for risk be present in the first instance, and those who are responsible for prohibiting the actualisation of the risk through

mitigation or insuring against risk. In the Kenyatta organisation, the former were the individuals who had discarded the hazardous waste in the first instance, and the latter were the board members of the Kenyatta organisation, who were responsible for the management of the space in which the risk existed.

The risk society is governed by a “new moral climate of politics”, in which risk is managed through political decision that implements measures that are a comprised of as a negotiation between the stoking of fears as to the presence of danger, and ethically embossed calls to encourage the personal commitment of all individuals to act in accordance with the measures of risk management, for the benefit of the public good (Giddens, 1993:5). The personalisation/privatisation of risk management in modern society is disseminated into public consciousness through the safety culture of organisational structures of societal institutions, an institutionalised culture that is directly descended from the risk’s society pre-occupation with mitigating risk. Safety culture is most simply defined as the overall attitude of any organisational structure and is typically in reference to a concern with the preservation of safety (Cooper, 2000) . How truly autonomous the choice of the younger members to opt for a professional standard clean was, is called into question when considering the extent to which the rationale for this choice was informed by the influence that safety culture as a device of organisational behavioural control, has had upon them. This, a significant point when considering generational socialisation, as being no older than 35

years old, all the younger members had entered the workforce after the year 2000.

Emerging as a concept of public concern following the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, (Ostrom, Wilhelmsen, & Kaplan, 1993), safety culture in the workplace is the “shared corporate values within an organisation which influences the attitudes and behaviours of it’ s members” (Cooper, 2000:111). Safety culture is modelled upon the privatised and individualised management of risk, as it may be posed to the collective. Safety culture emerged in direct response to recognition that there was a need to mitigate hazards that were created by the conditions of the contemporary workplace. Safety culture is a facet of an organisational culture that is directly shaped by the wider values of the organisation (Ostrom, Wilhelmsen, & Kaplan, 1993). The misalignment of participatory norms intergenerationally, when placed in the overall vision of the organisation’s objectives could be considered a negligible matter, yet is illustrative of a differing extent to which each generation’s entwinement of personal obligation to the norms of safety culture influenced the decision-making process.

Maxwell asserted that we, the younger board members were being too ‘rigid’ in the way that we were willing to go about doing things, and that the emphasis that the board majority were putting upon having the building cleaned professionally was a result of being raised in a society that is ‘overly cautious’ of danger. Maxwell warned that if we, the younger members of the board insisted upon paying others to do what we could do ourselves, that our available funds would not take us very far towards renovating the building.

The key point that deemed whether the avenue to have the waste cleared from the early years building by a professional service as such a contentious issue in comparison to the aforementioned services, is an inter-generational incongruity of value allocated to the necessity for the professional standard of the service. The cleaning and removal of waste were not considered to require specialised skill by the elder members and therefore, could be effectively conducted by a non-professional or 'lay-person'.

The public citizen and the Black counter-publican space

Contemporary discourse constructed around the privatisation, and professionalisation of the responsibility of managing 'risk', particularly that of which is focused specifically upon public health and the prevention of injury, has dissipated the notion of accidental injury as a spontaneous, unforeseen, or unmitigable occurrence. The dissipation of this notion precedes the attribution of fault upon the individual(s) deemed responsible for the failure to effectively manage risk, that then in turn has led to the conditions that brought about the accident, and the injury in the first instance (Green, 1999). Aside from activities deemed illegal and antisocial behaviour, injury mitigation is one key area where the jurisdiction of governing the conditions of a privately owned public space, belonging with the owners of that establishment. The legalisation of the responsibility to manage risk through the mitigation of injury, as a condition of modern society, means that it could not operate in entire autonomy from the regulations of state policy and law.

The dispute taking place within the board over whether the early years building should be professionally cleaned or not, was significant of the intergenerational incongruence of acceptance of the practical implications of this fact. The focus upon injury prevention in risk management law, has supported the emergence of a 'pay now, or pay later' culture, through which the implementation of both legal and financial sanctions as deterrents for neglecting to effectively manage public health risk, is leveraged (Green, 1999). This culture is adjacent to personal injury claim law, A form of tort law that addresses the failure of property and landowners to manage risk to public safety, to "deter unreasonable or negligent conduct and to compensate individuals who have been injured with money for treatment or other means of achieving compensation" (Kane, & Dvoskin, 2011:7) .

As an establishment that would host public citizens, the relationship between the public citizen and the Kenyatta organisation, as it pertains to mitigating risk is negotiated through the public. Members of the local community are at liberty to engage with, and support the organisation as an independent, community space with a counter-publican political identity which includes visiting the organisational premises. Yet, they do so as citizens of the public state. Thus, it would be in the best interest of the organisation to mitigate any circumstance that may lead a member of the community to exercise their rights as a citizen of the public, against the organisation in the instance that they should be negatively impacted as a result of the failure of the organisation to effectively mitigate risk. The intergenerational misalignment of participatory values in the Kenyatta board upon which the dispute over the

cleaning of the building was premised, is extended to an intergenerational differentiation of the perception of the participatory ideals of the members of the wider community.

What happens if someone tries to sue us, if they get hurt, or pricked with a syringe”? Matthew responded to the two elders present. Maxwell responded that we were all ‘far too worried’, and that it was very unlikely that something like that would happen. I then asked Maxwell, what did he think was unlikely to happen exactly? That someone would get hurt, or that they would take legal action if they did get hurt? “Both” Maxwell replied.

The stance of the younger members must also be considered as indicative of the dual identities of the younger members as both activists in a community organisation as a counter publican space, and as private citizens of the public themselves. Even in the interest in protecting the reputation of the organisation, the decision of the younger members was primarily one steeped in individual self-interest. The priority placed upon the long-term consequences of failing to effectively mitigate health and safety risk, above those of depleting the organisation’s funds to do so by the younger members, was inextricably connected with an investment in their individual identities in the public sphere. This investment, interfering with their ability to ensure that their decisions remained congruent with the preservation of financial autonomy of the organisation; This, a key concern of the elder members and a key reason as to why they opposed the professional clean.

Matthew and Raymond (younger board members) both expressed that they were concerned about being members of the governing board of the Kenyatta organisation, if we were going to 'cut corners' on important matters such as this, by not doing things the 'proper' way. Raymond stated that he was particularly concerned as his name is listed as the treasurer of the organisation on company's house. Matthew stated that as he worked in property management and is aware of correct procedure as it pertained to such issues, that he could not abide by the stance of the elder members. After some further discussion on the matter, the decision went to a vote. The outcome of the vote was 9/2 in favour of the professional environmental-standard clean. All of the younger members voting for the environmental clean, whilst the two elder members present, voted in opposition.

The younger member's concern with the organisation's mitigation of risk in this instance, is not only directed by a desire to preserve the organisation's future. It is concurrently translative to concern regarding their personal image being associated with the organisation, in the public sphere in such a way that did not seem to concern the elder members to the same extent. This could be attributable to the elders being at a later stage in their lives, and being less concerned with any impact upon their personal image that being publicly affiliated with the organisation may have.

[A commitment to self-governance](#)

The intention here, is not to present, that the elder portion of the board prioritised the preservation of organisational funds for the facilitation of

remaining in adherence to the Black radical tenets of self-determination and autonomy, over the assurance of public safety. Nor, is it to suggest that the elder members were completely detached from, or unaware of the rationale of the younger members decision, as they had too, been socialised into the organisational safety cultures of their own respective places of employment. In contrast, commitment to Black radical tenets of self-determination and autonomy as participatory ideals, did not ignite opposition from the elders of the board, in any other instance in which the restoration or maintenance of environmental safety in the early years building had required the seeking of externally provided professional services, which would incur a significant cost to the organisation. These services included: 1) The removal of asbestos in the basement of the building, 2) A structural survey in order to confirm the structural integrity of the building, and 3) The installation of both temporary and permanent physical security measures externally to the building, (including the rental of perimeter security measures, and CCTV security cameras). The position, that the cleaning of the early years building should be carried out by board members, was predicated upon the deeming of cleaning that as an everyday skill, not requiring of professional assistance. An intergenerational misalignment of participatory ideals of a Black radical space, is further demonstrated, by the younger members being considered by the elders to be able, yet *unwilling* to impose such an inconvenience upon themselves, for the long-term benefit of the organisation.

Maxwell stated that the professional clean was an ‘unnecessary squandering of funds’ and explained to the board when he, himself had entered community activism in the 1970’s, that if something needed to be done, then the community would ‘do it ourselves’, as they simply had no other option but to do so. The other elder nodded along in agreement.

In further reference to the concept of Black radical autonomy, the perceived lack of differentiation between the effectiveness of the professional environmental clean, and that of which could be conducted by the members of the board as ‘laypeople’, meant that rather than the ‘professional’ standard being perceived as an investment in the preservation of the organisation’s reputation and future autonomy through the avoidance of risk, it was perceived as a hindrance to the autonomy of the organisation.

Maxwell advised that we should all be prepared and willing to personally shoulder the responsibility of completing the tasks that will ensure progress towards the organisation’s objectives to maintain as much control of the direction of the organisation (which in this case were our finances) as possible. “That is what ‘grassroots’ means”.

At this point, position of the elder board members, in context of the history of the elder organisation’s financial history, is necessary to contextualise this dispute within the history of Black community organisation in Britain. Unlike the Igbala organisation, who had been financially independent upon the state since its establishment, being unable to completely disentangle itself from the constraints of state regulation shapes the history of Ominara. The Ominara

organisation was established following the absorption of Black community organisations into the third sector during the 1960's and 1970's. As extensions of the public service provision specifically tailored to the Black community by the local council, Ominara's properties and services, that had allowed the organisation to attain its current assets, had originally been subsidised by a government program named the urban programme. The organisation was able to independently provide their services to the local community without much interference from the state. However, the initial and ongoing provision of this funding had been granted upon the condition that recipients would avoid engaging in any political activity deemed agitative. Therefore, the elders were well-acquainted with the day-to-day practicalities of Black community organisational activity, as overseen by the local authority.

The extended period of inactivity of the Ominara organisation beginning in the early 2000's (as aforementioned in chapter three), was attributable both to public funding, able to meet rising running costs with every successive year, and then a complete withdrawal of public funding as a penalty for financial mismanagement within the organisation. The establishment of the Kenyatta organisation marked the first time that the members of the former Ominara organisation had achieved absolute self-governance, operating as a financially and politically independent entity, not subject to periodic observation or review by the state; This political, and financial independence would require a heightened vigilance of self-preservation, the management of finances pivotal to this.

The option of the professional cleaning service was, in this situation, the ‘right’ decision, (The self-reflexive nature of this research requires that it be acknowledged that this point is likely to be so as an outcome of my own socialisation into the norms of safety culture). However, when addressing the legalised individualisation of risk mitigation as a form of the governmentality of risk society as a condition of modernity, the perception of the Kenyatta board investing such a substantial monetary amount of funds into a service that could have been completed by the board members, as allowing the organisation to become ‘tied up’ in legal ‘red tape’, does hold merit.

Pre-merger ownership, entitlement and trust

The Igbala-Ominara merge leading to the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, had been incentivised for the Igbala organisation by the exponential privatisation and inflation of the British property market prices, as a result of neo-liberalisation of the housing and property market had placed upon the feasibility of the younger organisation to independently obtain a property in its original organisational form. The two property assets owned the elder organisation, were significant acquisitions for the younger organisation as the property provided a permanent, community-based space: A key requirement for building a strong relationship with the local community. In a property market far more volatile from that of the time in which the Ominara organisation had purchased the property, it was highly unlikely that the Igbala organisation, a young community organisation with modest funds, would have been able to attain a large three storey residential building, with adequate perimeter grounds, in the unregulated and

increasingly inflating neo-liberal property market of current times (Slater, 2016) . Furthermore, as mortgage free properties, neither necessitated any future financial outgoings to be occupied in maintain their ongoing ownership. Through the formation of the Kenyatta organisation, and in ‘inheriting’ two large properties; One serving as an organisational headquarters, and the other serving as a source of passive income, the younger Kenyatta members had become the beneficiaries of Black community organisational generational wealth. Equally to the acquisition of assets being a windfall for the members of the organisation, alongside the experience as an intangible asset, there was a disproportionate possession of pre-merger possession of tangible (property and finance) between the two organisations. Thus, the board of the Kenyatta organisation was formed within an unequal power dynamic, elder members presiding.

The defying of majority rule

On numerous occasions, in occurrences in which the wills of the board had conflicted across generational lines, the elder members of the board inter-subjectively leveraged the imbalance of pre-merger asset ownership in order to rationalise the carrying out of unconstitutional action on their behalf. Underpinned by a sense of entitlement, these actions undermined the input of the rights of the younger board members as participants in the organisation’s governance and in doing so, undermined the organisation’s democratic style of governance. The first instance in which this was observed,

was in the immediate follow-up from the dispute discussed throughout this chapter thus far, in defiance of a majority board vote.

16.10.17

In today's board meeting, Maxwell and Desmond revealed to the rest of the board, that despite the board majority decision made in the last meeting to proceed with having the building professionally cleaned that both had, since then arranged to meet at the building and clean the building themselves. They both advised the board that there were now no syringes left in the building to be disposed of.

I asked the elders why they had both decided to make such a decision, even though it had been decided that no one in the board would enter the building at this time. Maxwell responded that he was not going to be held hostage by 'modern' guidelines and admitted that his decision to override the board majority had been due to his lack of trust in the decision-making ability of the younger portion of the board. The chairman of the board then advised the elders present, that by visiting the building and attempting to clean it themselves, that they have partaken in an act of board misconduct, and that despite their efforts, the professional clean would still need to go ahead.

The overriding of a board majority decision was a demonstration of the elder members attempt to preserve their pre-merger sovereignty, pertaining to the management of organisational funds, and was oppositional to the requirement for the successful inter-generational distribution of power to sustain the organisational, and intergenerational merge that the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation represented. Elder members entitlement to partake in board misconduct was expressed in the deeming of

their actions of misconduct to in fact be just, however deemed the consequences of the actions of misconduct, to be unjust.

A motion was then put forward by a younger member of the board, Matthew, that there needed to be clear guidelines as to how the board would effectively deal with board acts of misconduct going forward. It was agreed upon by the board majority that when any board member acted in opposition to a board majority decision, they were to have their voting rights suspended for three consecutive board meetings. The motion was passed by a majority of the board by way of a vote. In response to this, Desmond stated that this new rule was “not appropriate” for a Black community organisation. I replied to this, that there was simply a response to a breach of the board conduct of himself and Maxwell, and certainly was appropriate and necessary to ensure that all actions had been agreed upon by the board majority.

Omission from political process

In addition to overriding majority board decision, younger members were omitted from the organisation’s political process.

Next on the agenda, for discussion in the board meeting was the ongoing, unresolved issues surrounding the merging of Ominara funds into the Kenyatta organisation. Although officially merged since January 2017 (around ten months at this point), Ominara’s full organisational funds had yet to be transferred to the new bank account of the Kenyatta organisation. It had been

agreed as a condition of the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, that both organisations would merge their full funds together. This however, had yet to take place.

Watson, the Ominara treasurer and a signatory on the Ominara bank account, had since refused to provide his signature, to have the full Ominara funds transferred to the Kenyatta organisation bank account. Maxwell explained to the board, (absent) that Watson had expressed to him personally, that he was having reservations regarding transferring the full amount of Ominara funds to the Kenyatta account, due to concern that the younger portion of the board would not be able to handle the management of the early years centre, the other property, and the full amount of funds, responsibly.

Maxwell then disclosed to the board, that he, at Watson's request, had called a meeting with the elders of the Kenyatta board, and past members of the Ominara organisation, to address Watson's concerns. Maxwell stated that in this meeting, there had been a consensus, that as the funds and assets brought to the Igbala-Ominara merge, had originally belonged to the Ominara organisation, that the remaining Ominara members should not be held accountable to the full board of the Kenyatta organisation regarding how funds were spent. Therefore, the Ominara organisation did not wish to transfer their entire funds into the Kenyatta bank account.

That this meeting had taken place without notifying, or inviting the younger portion of the board, exemplified again how pre-merger ownership underpinned feelings of entitlement to justify actions that omitted the younger portion of the board from the political process of organisational governance, in display of a resistance to equally

distribute power inter-generationally, and undermined the governance style of the Kenyatta board, as per the constitution. The complicity of the other two elders in agreeing to aid arrangement, and attend the meeting, unbeknownst to the entire board, displayed a unification of the elders in omitting the younger board members from board process. Further, the clandestine nature of the meeting undermined the legitimacy of the organisational merge between the Igbala and Ominara organisation, and further emboldened Watson in his ongoing refusal to authorise the transference of funds, as a condition of the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation. The inability to access a majority of Ominara's pre-merger funds (approximately £25,000), allocated to renovate and re-utilise the early years centre, impacted the financial standing and prospects of the Kenyatta organisation considerably.

Watson withholding organisational funds (and then becoming uncontactable), led to the members of the Kenyatta board being required to pursue other avenues, to raise funds to progress towards our aims, much sooner than originally anticipated. This situation circumstantially highlighted how imperative the cultivation and maintenance of a strong relationship between the organisation and the local community was for the organisation's financial stability. Both the internal and external obstacles that compromised the relationship of the Kenyatta organisation with the local community, is discussed in further depth, in chapter six. In yet another instance, the unequal inter-generational dynamic of power located in an imbalance of pre-merger

asset ownership and possession, was magnified when the younger members, became unaware, that they had been incomprehensively informed as to the series of events that had led to the decline and eventual extended period of inactivity of the Ominara organisation.

06.11.17

In today's board meeting, when discussing the early years centre and the extensive schedule of renovation still required, Raymond asked where the ownership deed of the early years centre building was now, and whom exactly was named on it. Maxwell replied that the building was owned outright by the Ominara organisation, however there was currently a charge for £26,000 placed on the building by the local council, and this was noted the building deeds.

I did not understand what a charge on a building was exactly, and so asked, at which point Matthew explained that there was currently a debt set against the building, that placed conditions upon its use. If these conditions were breached, then the organisation would be required to pay the charge amount. This charge was directly related to the financial and legal issues that led to the period of Ominara's inactivity, and thus this charge was due to the organisation's debt to the local council.

Up until this point, we (the younger members), having been led to believe that the early year's building had no ties of ownership to anyone other than the Ominara, and now the Kenyatta organisation. Various younger members of the board asked for a full explanation,

and specifically how this could impact the organisation's progress with the early years centre moving forward. Maxwell replied that it was a complex and long story, and that now was not the time to tell it in its entirety. It was requested by the younger members of the board, that a separate meeting to provide a full explanation, and to address any questions from the younger portion of the board about Ominara's full financial history, be arranged as soon as possible. The elder members agreed to this, and the meeting was arranged to take place on Saturday, the 18th of November.

After setting a date for this meeting, Maxwell suggested that we should make the meeting, community-wide; A 'get together' of sorts, ahead of his departure from the country, (he was retiring). Maxwell then went on to state that a community meeting would allow us all to officially present the Ominara/Igbala merge and the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation to the community, which we had yet to do. All of the younger members present expressed perturbation at this suggestion, and explicitly communicated that we did not want to attend a wider community meeting to discuss this topic; But were owed a closed board meeting to allow for all required questions to be asked openly and answered honestly. An open community meeting would not be appropriate.

No claim can be made as to whether a majority of the younger portion of the board being uninformed on important elements of the elder organisation's financial history, was the result of the intentional omission of this information by the elder organisation, and so in itself cannot be presented as an example

of the enforcement of the pre-existing unequal power dynamics in the space between the two generations. It was the failure of the elder members to provide the format of meeting requested by the younger members after the fact, as detailed in the excerpt below, that would have addressed any unease felt by the younger members, upon which it is claimed that the existing inter-generational unequal distribution of power was consciously maintained, and again undermined the participatory influence and value of the younger members in the board.

18.11.17

I arrived at Matilda house, a locally Black owned community building at around 6.35pm, for the meeting that had originally been requested by the younger board members to fully explain the series of events that had led to Ominara's extended period of inactivity in the community. Upon arrival, I saw that nobody else from the younger portion of the board was present except for myself and the organisation's chairman. I had been informed during a telephone conversation with the chairman a few days before, that two of the elder members had gone ahead and arranged the community wide meeting mentioned in the prior board meeting, and not the closed board meeting initially requested by the younger members.

I had sent this information on to the younger board members through our separate WhatsApp group that had been set up as a 'safe space' to air our grievances within the board. However, no one had replied to that message. I stepped outside to phone Matthew, to ask if he was on his way to the meeting. Matthew answered and stated that this evening's meeting celebrating

Maxwell's retirement and emigration, was not the kind of meeting that he had originally requested or agreed to, and so he felt that he did not need to be in attendance. I then called Raymond, Katrina, and Clarissa, who all answered and too informed me that they would not be coming to the meeting because they did not agree to it. Raymond disclosed that when it comes to attempting to govern the organisation, that the younger portion of the board "never get what we ask for, or the respect that we are entitled to as board members."

The private board meeting originally requested, would have provided younger members with the opportunity to hold an open and honest discussion with the elder members, regarding a shared feeling amongst them of a lack of transparency, and equal valuing of their participation in the governing body of the organisation. From the positionality in the research space as a younger member of the board, the arrangement of a wider community meeting, in lieu of such a meeting, communicated to the younger members that our grievance had not been taken seriously in the previous board meeting. This was yet another, in a series of instances, in which the decisions and subsequent actions of the elder members, whether intentionally or not, had nullified the presence and contributions of myself, and the other younger members. In the excerpt below, taking place approximately a week prior to the meeting, a discussion between the board members, one of many like it, discusses how the conduct of the elders arose feelings amongst the younger members of inadequacy, and feeling undervalued in the space.

10.11.17

Today, three of the younger members of the board, Clarissa, Raymond, and Maxwell came to my house to discuss and plan the podcast that we had been planning to launch as a part of our plan to develop the organisation's community outreach. However, we spent most of the evening discussing the issues that we had all noticed in the board, with the elder members. The discussion revealed a growing overall frustration.

Raymond disclosed to us all that he often felt invisible in the board, and that the elder members had repeatedly shown that they did not trust or respect us as equals or for the skills that we entered the board with, and what we could do for the organisation. Matthew and Clarissa concurred. If they did not want us to have any say in anything, then why did they merge with us in the first place? I asked. Clarissa stated that it seemed as though there was always a disagreement between the two generations. It felt very 'us' and 'them' and had done for some time, and it was all a "bit draining." Matthew stated that he had initially been very excited and hopeful about the Igbala and Ominara merge, and the possibilities of the building renovation for the community. However, it had been over a year now, that he was tiring of how slow progress had been to date, and how combative interactions with the elder board members had become.

The various acts of misconduct by the elder members depicted in the excerpts throughout this chapter so far are directly attributable to a lack of trust placed in the younger members by the elder members of the board. Resistance to acting in accordance with the equal intergenerational distribution of power, a key theme displayed throughout the chapter that spurred on the continuous breaching of constitutional conduct was a lack of trust, of which was centred in concern of the elder members, as to the younger board member's readiness

of being ‘passed the baton.’ These concerns were primarily established upon the elder member’s expectations of the younger members that had gone unmet, pertaining to the younger member’s ongoing commitment to the organisation. These expectations were rivalled by the elder member’s retrospections upon the extent of their own dedication to community organisation by themselves throughout the years.

29.01.18

Today, I visited the early years centre with Desmond, one of the board elders and the chairman, to meet with the electrician who would be working on the building. Whilst waiting for the electrician and the chairman who was running late, Desmond asked me why he had not seen the younger members of the board for some time. I told Desmond that I had not spoken to any of them recently, but that I was sure that they were all just very busy. Since the beginning of the year, the attendance of many of the younger members to board meetings and participation in the board member WhatsApp group had declined significantly. Desmond proceeded to tell me, quite heatedly, that he had been in the Black ‘struggle’ (community organisation) for over 50 years, and that in this time, he had seldom missed a community or board meeting, and has never “backslid” in his duties. He said nothing more after that. We then waited in silence until the others arrived.

27.07.18

At today’s community task meeting, I spoke with Matthew who was in attendance, having travelled back to England from his new home abroad to visit family. He advised that the chairman had informed him that four of the younger members of the board had officially departed from the organisation since his migration in January, and that the other two had been absent and difficult to get in touch with for some time. I confirmed that this was so. Maxwell then went on to say that some “young people fail to understand that

involvement in Black community organisation is not a pastime, but a lifelong commitment.”

The association highlighted between the wavering commitment of the younger members to their roles in the organisation, and the undermining of their autonomy and involvement in governance within the space due to the conduct of the elder members, being influenced by the elder’s lack of trust in the younger generation overall, whilst correlative, was not wholly causal. In addition to the interpersonal obstacles with the elder members, the progressive, depleting presence of the younger members in the Kenyatta organisation was observed as a consequence of the conflict that the time-commitment of maintaining the full initial commitment of their roles within the organisation’s board, with the demands of modern life, namely the requirements and expectations of pursuing and developing a professional career in the contemporary labour market. This conflict shall be explored further in the next chapter, in discussion of the implications that the ‘neo-liberal turn’ (Spence, 2008) has had upon practical involvement of those who become involved in Black community organisations.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented inter-generational tensions as a form of fragmentation observed within the board of the Kenyatta organisation . The tensions were primarily observed as an intergenerational differentiation of participatory ideals in the space, exemplified by conflicting interpretations of the Black radical tenets of autonomy and self-determination, in application to

practical decision-making. Inter-generational tensions were observed to have been directly influenced by societal norms at the time in which the activist identities of each generation had been formed. The inter-generational tensions in the Kenyatta organisation also informs wider exploration of era specific concerns upon the relationship between political identity and practical decision making within Black community organisations, and that in order to achieve self-determination, and autonomy, that unlike the patriarchal gendered hierarchies of Black community organisations as briefly mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, unequal access to agency experienced by the younger members of the Kenyatta board is not put forth as being directly located in the political ideology and identity of the organisation. Aside from a misalignment of participatory ideals, the misconduct of the elders was resultant of an age based hierarchal dynamic. This dynamic, the consequence of a disproportionate ownership of pre-merger material assets and span of experience in community organisation through which the elder members tacitly wielded epistemic authority over the younger members.

The division observed between the two generations of the Kenyatta board, was symbolic of the conflict between the participatory ideals of a Black counter-publican of the time periods in Black British political history that each generation represented. Both generations, holding experiences, and therefore perspectives that resided on either side of the chasm of time that had passed since the beginning of political activity of one organisation, and the beginning of another. During the interim, the influence of the neo-liberalisation of the capitalist and political economy upon the heightening of cultural emphasis

placed upon individualism, which in the Kenyatta organisation was demonstrated in the affinity for individual preferentiality and adherence to the individualisation of risk responsibility as a characteristic of the parameters of the contemporary social contract.

Akin to the gendered hierarchies in Black power organisations of the past, the observations of this chapter provided a contemporary demonstration of the point that, despite all coexisting in a space that was bound by a shared Black political vision, that subjective identities can directly inform how one navigates the counter-publican Black political space. Additionally, the findings presented illustrate how access of any specific demographic in a Black community organisation that subscribes to a Black political ideological framework of nationalist unity, can become hierarchised upon whether a subjective aspect of one's identity, in this instance, generational age, poses threat to what otherwise would have been the 'status quo' is deemed an impedance upon one's capability of appropriately managing equal agency in the space for the progression of the organisation; Not necessarily because it is incorrect, but due to being in conflict with the ideologically stated hierarchal order.

The Kenyatta organisation's inter-generational tensions demonstrated the importance of locating a balance between continuity and change, for the successful maintenance of amicable inter-generational relationships in Black community organisations. The misconduct of the elder members that undermined the agency of the younger members, was justified through perception that not doing so would stifle their own political agency. This sense

of agency, and uncompromising entitlement to it, constructed when the Ominara organisation was still a single entity, and prior to the requirement for an intergenerational distribution of power. Paradoxically, the resistance to change displayed by the elder generation to accept the inter-generational distribution of power required, contradicted their key motivation for uniting with the younger organisation in the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation in the first instance; To safeguard Ominara's political legacy by ensuring ongoing Black community ownership of the organisational assets.

The overarching cause of the ongoing fragmentation of the intergenerational tensions as time passed, was a mutual failure of both generations to meet the participatory ideals and expectations of the other, leading to an overall loss of mutual trust and co-operation. The (in)actions of misconduct by the elders, preceded by a sense of epistemic authority, was informed by an overall lack of trust in the ability of the younger members to make the decisions required for the progress of the organisation. These actions, in turn led to a loss of trust by the younger members, that their input would be treated equally by the elders. This of which contributed to an overall loss of morale in remaining involved in the organisation's board.

Having presented the elder member's wielding of power in an unconstitutional manner as being a significant contribution to intergenerational disunity in the organisation, recognising the elder activists as convivial, rather than solely authoritative epistemic authorities in Black community organisations, is highly important. The cultivation of intergenerational connectedness fostered through a shared commitment to Black community action, and the

demonstration of longstanding dedication to the grassroots that elder activists represent, can inspire younger activists in upholding their own commitment to involvement in community organisation in the face of the inevitable hardships. Aside from the imparting of guidance, the many years of experience held by the elder activists when communicated become oral histories and can contribute greatly to deepening the political education and strategical knowledge of younger activists. Furthermore, intergenerational communication expands the function of Black community organisations from a space purposed in addressing the present Black condition for the building of better Black futures, to an archive of Black political history and cultural heritage. The concerns of the elder members of the Kenyatta board regarding the extent of commitment and therefore, the capability of the younger portion of the board to adequately govern the organisation, whilst often resulting in unconstitutional conduct, were not groundless as a majority of the younger members of the board faced difficulty in maintaining their commitment to the organisation. This shall be explored further in the next chapter as another obstacle to the progression, and future of the organisation.

A key point of discussion arising from the observations within this chapter, is that those who become involved in Black community organisation do so, not only as a social actor on the behalf of the objectives of the Black political space, but as a result of their subjective identity and experiences within the public sphere. As a social actor in both spheres, the Black community activist is positioned as an intermediary between the Black counter-publican space and the wider public. Whilst having the political autonomy to operate a Black

radical counter-publican space, this chapter has raised considerations regarding the power that the rules, and regulations of wider society, however necessary, can have upon the ability of Black community organisations to proceed towards the fulfilment of their political objectives. As it pertains to the practical aspects of operating a public facing counter-publican space, in order to avoid encroachment upon autonomy and self-determination by external interferences, Black community organisations with a physical premises must take the proper measures in remaining adherent to societally held regulations and guidelines required of a public space. As demonstrated in this chapter, the hesitancy to take measures necessary to meet this expectation is often closely related to the strain that doing so can place upon organisational funds. Nonetheless, prior to the political work, ensuring that organisational premises remain a safe and hospitable environment for the local community, is pivotal in establishing and maintaining community desire to be present in the space.

Chapter five

The Neo-liberal subject

“I have never met a revolutionary who worried about money”.

-Malcolm X·

Introduction

In chapter three, through depiction of the British history of Black community based political activism, explored the relationship between the changing British political and economic conditions of Britain throughout the latter half of the 20th century, with the disintegration of Black community led organisations and movements with radical objectives; The literature reviewed, presented the British nation-state’s utilisation of political reformation, as a means through which to steer Black British communities away from partaking in mobilisation underpinned by Black radical political ideals and objectives, as a strategy by which to destabilise the Black power movement during the 1960’s and 1970’s. This achievement of this objective was presented as taking place through two main avenues: The de-radicalisation of Black community organisations, and the absorption of Black community activists into the state political agenda of improving national race relations and as a result, the experiences of ethnic minority groups. This, monopolising their activist efforts and dwindling their ability to contribute effectively to community based, (and controlled) organisation.

The chapter then discussed the pivotal role played by the introduction of neo-liberalism in the re-conceptualisation of Black radical visions of progress and liberation, into alignment with neo-liberal capitalist interest. This chapter, in elaboration of this, seeks to explore how economic and political change over time, directly changed the relationship between Black community organisations and the community. The politico-economic and socio-cultural changes to British society that followed the introduction of neo-liberalism is presented to have constructed a reality that, under the guise of an all-accessible 'freedom,' undermines Black radical conceptualisations of freedom, through the exaltation of ideals that are conducive to neo-liberal capitalist ideals. This, particularly effective in furthering the societal masquerade of post-racialism, which is aided by the overlapping ideals of neo-liberal, and Black radical conceptualisations of freedom, such as self-determination and autonomy. In consideration of the drastic impacts of neo-liberalism upon Black life trajectories, this chapter explores the obstacles facing the board members within the organisation as it pertains to their ongoing commitment to the organisation. Insight is provided into the challenges presented by the structure of the neo-liberal labour market and workplace, and the board members place within this structure that impeded upon their ability to uphold the commitment to the work of the organisation. Throughout the period of data collection, a majority of the younger members on the governance board of the Kenyatta organisation, struggled to maintain the initial commitment to the organisation.

The steady decline in practical input and presence in the board over time, led to the eventual departure of a majority of the younger members from the organisation's board over the time period of 18 months. The declining commitment of the younger members to the work of the organisation, is identified as reflective of the conflictions faced by an individual when attempting to fulfil the motivations and concerns as it pertained to the contrasting visions of progress and liberation of their two contrasting identities: The Black neo-liberal subject, and the Black radical subject. Neo-liberal subjects who are characterised, as individuals whose concerns and motivations have been constructed by the ideals projected upon them, required in order to achieve socio-economic mobility. The Black radical subject as theorised in chapter one, conversely, is concerned with, and committed to contributing to community mobilisation toward the actualisation of a self-determined Black autonomous counter-public; Black community organisations being an institution of Black radical unity through which this mobilisation takes place.

This chapter explores the declining presence of the younger board members despite their initial commitment, when required to manage the concerns and motivations of both identities and is presented as illustrative of the incompatibility of neo-liberal and Black radical conceptualisations of freedom and visions of progression. The key confliction, the individualism of the neo-liberal subject, and the tendency towards collectivism of the Black radical subject. This, reflective of the ideological tenets of the politics that direct the motivations of each. The conflicts arising between the demands of work

responsibilities, and committed involvement in the Kenyatta organisation were allocated to falling into one of two categories 1) The practical, observed in the progressive requirement of the board members to redirect time that had been previously allocated to involvement in the work of the organisation (E.G. Attending board meetings, project planning meetings and community engagement and community meetings), towards attending to work duties, responsibilities and career progression; And 2) the perceptive, through the internalisation and adherence to the neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom. Observations highlighted a detachment of value of direct involvement in the organisation by some board members, from the fulfilment of the organisation's political objectives. Rather, the value of ongoing involvement was observed as being based upon the condition of not posing any interference to, and in some instances, directly contributing to the fulfilment of the interests and motivations of the individual as a neo-liberal subject.

In concurrence with the argument that the conditions materialising from neo-liberal governance are optimal for the maintenance of racial hegemonic conditions (Hall, 2011), the obstacles faced in sustaining commitment to the Kenyatta organisation being both practical and perceptive in nature, are deemed representative of the two forms in which the racial hegemony of the neo-liberal project is exacted. Firstly, as a political and economic structure, and secondly as a social and cultural project (Joseph, 2002), respectively. The structural element through which the neo-liberal project (the structural) seeks to subdue Black radical community-led, action sustains the socio-

cultural element (the perceptive), and vice versa. Drawing upon Deleuze's 'control society', an elaboration upon Foucault's concept of governmentality, the imposition of liminality as a state of permanence is highlighted as a central characteristic of neo-liberal hegemony. This chapter then goes on to present how, alongside practical liminality imposed by neo-liberal working conditions upon all that reside in such conditions, that the Black neo-liberal subject experiences a permanent liminality of perception that exists between two dichotomous nature of the current Black condition. This racialised liminality, existing between the realities of ongoing racially hegemonic structures upon which Black radical politics maintains relevance, and the neo-liberal embrace of a post-racial reality that is bolstered by retrospective comparison of the overt racist social landscape of Britain in decades passed, with the seemingly racially tolerant society of the present day, and the gradual betterment of Black life outcomes overall presented as evidence of this 'fact'. The latter, failing to acknowledge the evolution of racism through the passing of time, and furthermore, drawing conclusion of the state of the Black condition solely from consideration of that within the British nation-state. This, antithetical to the concept of global Blackness, a central concept of Black radical unity.

The declining commitment of a majority of the younger members of the Kenyatta board over time, when juxtaposed to the professional profile of the individuals that sat upon the board, situates the observations presented within this chapter as empirical data illustrative of the influence that the neo-liberal restructuring of higher education sector, and the increased routes to the increased access of Black upward mobility as a result, had upon the

incorporation of the Black community into neo-liberal conceptualisations of freedom. The confusions that arose in attempting to manage the demands of budding professional careers, alongside a commitment to the organisation, are considered as attributable to the hindrance that the conditions and ideals of a neo-liberal society to the ability and willingness of individuals to uphold commitment to community action, at the similar capacity as those involved in the pre-neoliberal era. This, presupposing the question as to whether, despite ongoing systemic racism and ensuing disparity, whether contemporary Britain's overall lack of overt racism is conducive to the difficulties faced in galvanising the tenacity of commitment required to maintain a 'bricks and mortar' community organisation. Such a question, expressive of the position that social re-organisation, primarily achieved through political and economic reformation in pursuit of social and cultural change, are the means through which hegemonic structures are transformed, yet maintained through the passing of time (Joseph, 2002).

As sustaining the commitment of those who become involved in Black community organisations is a prerequisite in preservation of Black community organisations, Black community organisations are required to facilitate the seeking of a balance between the fulfilment of the concerns, needs and motivations of the individual as a neo-liberal subject residing in the public sphere, with those of the concerns of the Black radical subject. The chapter concludes in stating that the direct influence of structural conditions and socio-cultural norms upon individual agency, must remain A key

consideration for Black community organisations in addressal of activist retention.

Intergenerational considerations

The struggle to maintain commitment to the Kenyatta organisation was not observed as presenting a struggle shared by the elder members of the board. The change of political-economic conditions through the passing of time, a key theme underpinning intergenerational disconnections in the previous chapter is an ongoing theme, as the obstacles facing the younger members impacted how differently the two generations interacted with the Kenyatta organisation as a Black political space. It is for this reason, that this chapter focuses predominantly upon the experiences of the younger members. Whilst a majority of the board were active in the workforce at the time of data collection, due to still being in the primary years of their career, for the younger members, the distribution of time allocation that the pursuit of career progression required, highlighted the influence that the concerted pursuit of upward social mobility, and the individualist, invested interest in one's position in the labour market can have upon an individual's ability and willingness to maintain their original commitment to community organisation. In order to understand the differing impact of these conditions upon ongoing commitment to the organisation intergenerationally however, it is necessary to outline the structural changes that paved the way to this shared point, as they are framed by the influence of neo-liberal political policy.

The neo-liberal reformation of the higher education sector and labour market

Since the 1980's, educational reform In Britain has been a key area of focus of which regardless of political leaning, the neo-liberal policies of any one government have continued to be built upon by the neo-liberal policies of the government that preceded it (Ratcliff, 2017). Educational reform was purposed to widen accessibility to higher education situated career progression, and thus upward mobility of the two generations in very differing socio-cultural, and socio-economic landscapes. Formed from 1966 onwards, funded and regulated by local government; Institutions of higher education provided vocationally focused courses in industries that required additional taught education and training, of which students were eligible following the completion of compulsory education. These institutions were named polytechnics, and existed alongside, however were not considered equal to universities. Following the lobbying of numerous polytechnic directors of central government regarding the constraints of being under local government control upon polytechnic functionality and progression, the Thatcher government passed the 1988 education reform act, which released polytechnics from local government control. Polytechnics gained access to wider pools of governmental funding through the forming of their own funding council (Booth, 1989). With a substantial increase in the autonomy over the direction of funds, and areas of educational provision, Polytechnics were offering undergraduate, master's, and research degrees (Ratcliff, 2017).

The 'binary line' existing between polytechnics and existing certified universities was officially abolished by the 1992 act, which granted 35 institutions of higher education with university status (Ratcliff, 2017). The

merging of the previously two separate types of institution, was officialised by the pooling of government funding of existing universities with 'new' universities, resulting in the creation of one single financial and regulatory framework of higher education in Britain (Bastin, 1992). The creation of universities nationwide considerably widened access to a university degree qualification. As a result, since 1992, the number of universities in the UK has increased significantly as further polytechnics and higher education colleges have been granted university status. Before the passing of the further and higher education act of 1992, there were 51 universities in the United Kingdom; At the time of writing, there are currently 164 universities and higher education institutions from which a university degree is obtainable.

The education acts of 1992 and 1998 assisted the gradual transformation of the British university into the independent income-generating institution that it is today. The introduction of means-tested tuition fees in 1998 by Blair's labour government, and their steady increase ever since, was followed the neo-liberal trajectory of education reform implemented by the previous two conservative governments. A prominent educational policy implemented to prepare the population for employment in a post-industrial economy following the mass outsourcing of manual labour jobs in the 1980s following de-industrialisation, the education act of 1992 greatly increased the number of university graduates over the subsequent years. Thus, competition in the graduate labour market increased progressively. The rising competition in the graduate labour market, resultant of the progressive prevalence of the university degree, underpinned a cruciality placed upon the prioritisation of

the careerist accumulation of educational qualification for professional development.

The ongoing struggles of the younger members to maintain their commitment to the organisation through the passing of time, alongside the demands of their professional careers, deemed illustrative of this difference. The inundating of the labour market with university graduates, predicated upon a culture of credentialism, has been argued to have garnered the opposite effect of that intended, by not automatically improving working class opportunity at achieving upward mobility (Brown, 2016). A more automated outcome of the restructuring of the higher education system, in accommodation of the transition from a manufacturing to service economy, being an over-saturation of graduates. This, leading to higher rates of graduate unemployment, and indicative of the lessened value of the British university degree overall (Brown, 2016). The competitive graduate labour market had amplified the significance placed upon accumulating other forms of human capital in the form of skills, knowledge, and experiences, *in addition* to the primary form of human capital required through the education and training obtained through university education (Brynin & Longhi, 2006) . This, a reality not only impacting those recently obtaining a degree, but also those who were already employed in a graduate position, and in pursuit of professional advancement within their respective field.

The Kenyatta board: A profile of educational attainment

At the time of the commencement of data collection in the Kenyatta organisation, eight of the nine younger members of the board were educated

to undergraduate university degree level. Of these eight, four additionally held a postgraduate (MA/MSc/MRes) degree. Of these four, two in addition, held a doctorate degree, whilst the other two were in the process of completing a doctorate degree (I was one of the latter two). Of the three elder members of the Kenyatta board, two held an undergraduate university degree. Of these two, one also held a postgraduate degree. All board members holding an undergraduate degree were gainfully employed in career fields that aligned with the specialised discipline of their university education. At the commencement of data collection, two of the three elder members were still active in the workforce. One of the two, who were still in the workforce, retired during the period of data collection.

The educational credentials of the Kenyatta board are representative of the increased access to occupational mobility facilitated by the neo-liberal restructuring of the British higher education in the 1980's and 1990's, which enabled a substantial increase in working-class access to a university education for the first time. The Black British community, a majority working class demographic inclusive of this opportunity. The two elder Kenyatta board members holding a university degree, had initially become involved in Black community organisation during their late teenage and early adult years, *prior* to embarking upon their higher educational journeys, attending university in their late twenties and early thirties. Having already dedicated a significant portion of their young adult lives to community organisation by this point, both had taken a period of reduced involvement from community organisation (one of the elders had been a member of another community organisation

during these years, before becoming involved in Ominara years later), returning in a more full-time capacity upon the completion of their university degrees, and having established themselves in their professional careers. The other elder of the board, having never left the Ominara organisation, had dedicated himself to his contribution to the organisations, working in the organisation's bookshop from the time of its opening in the 1970's, until its closure in 2008. In contrast, the younger members of the board became involved in the Kenyatta organisation board during their early to mid-twenties. As this point in their lives, having already completed, (and/or were in ongoing completion), of completing their university education, or were in the early years of building their professional careers.

Stating the education profile of all the board members, is made in aiding establishment of the parameters of discussion regarding the influence of the neo-liberal workplace structures upon the working lives of the board members, and the imposition of such demands upon their time as they correlated with age. This, preceding the argument put forth in this chapter, that alongside the differing amount of time spent in the workforce between the two generations, and resulting in each generation being in differing stages of their careers. One of the elders, when asked of his experiences in Black community organisations explained that he had been a founding member of the Ominara organisation, however had left to pursue his university education in law. He had then returned to the organisation year later, following the establishment of a career in the field, to impart his legal expertise to help the organisation. The other, having been involved in other Black community

organisations in his early adult life, had already established a career when joining the Ominara organisation in the early 2000's, stated that he had too, been absent from community organisation during the years of his university education, and establishment of his early career .

Another change considered to be significant within the higher education sector, is the introduction of university tuition fees. To sustain the ever-increasing university student population, in 1998, tuition fees were introduced. The introduction of, and progressive increase of university tuition fees (university tuition fees were a maximum of £1200 per academic year when initially introduced in 1998, the maximum increasing to £3000 in 2004, to £3225 in 2009, and then to a maximum of £9250 per academic year in 2012, where it currently stands, at the time of writing (Hubble & Bolton, P, 2017), and has gradually increased the financial pressure that the pursuit of a university education has placed upon the prospective university student. The agreement to enter into such a debt, done so in the expectation that one will be granted access to higher earning potential in the future (Brynin & Longhi, 2006), sees the pursuit (and achievement) of upward mobility through professional development following the attainment of a university degree qualification, become reflective of not only the recouping of the intellectual, but also of the significant financial investment required to obtain the qualification in the first instance. The introduction of tuition fees placed a financial burden upon the younger members (having all attended university post 2004), of which eclipsed that ever faced by the elder members, who having both attended university prior to 1998, had received a state funded

university education. From a financial standpoint, the stakes of professional success for the younger members for obtaining a university degree, were heightened.

The aforementioned point is not made as an inference that the accumulation of student debt was not a reality for those who had attended university during a period of times of which the cost of university tuition were state funded, or that the adversities of pursuing a higher education and professional career (or maintaining any form of employment at all), whilst simultaneously being involved in community organisation is only ever financial in nature. Rather, it is made, in order to highlight how the progressive neo-liberalisation of the higher education sector as a route to upward mobility, leverages the pursuit of professional development in a competitive labour market, against a financially dubious position at the beginning of graduate working life. Another point that is worthy of mention when discussing the intergenerational differentiation between the elder and younger members of the board, as it pertains to simultaneously maintaining a commitment to their professional careers, and to participation in the organisation.

The significance of experience

For a majority of the younger members, a position on the governing board of the Kenyatta organisation was the very first time that they had occupied a named position of responsibility requiring of concerted, ongoing commitment within a Black community organisational context. Only three of the nine younger members of the Kenyatta board had held official positions in the Igbala organisational board prior to merging with the elder organisation, the

remaining six having only engaged with the organisation as general members up until that point. Conversely, all three of the elder Kenyatta board members had held named positions on the governing board in the Ominara organisation prior to the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation prior to, and during the organisation's ten years of community inactivity, collaboratively overseeing the management of Ominara's assets. This placed the journey of the younger members in the board as presenting a significantly steeper learning curve in the space, given the introduction to a plethora of information and responsibilities required for community organisational governance, in addition to involvement in the progression of organisational initiatives. The extent of time and effort required to be a valuable member of the board, exasperated by the time and effort required to meet the ongoing demands of their paid employment work.

[The neo-liberal workplace](#)

The ability of a majority of the younger members to commit the amount of time and effort required to contribute effectively towards furthering the objectives of the organisation, was compromised significantly by the intrusion of work-related responsibilities upon leisure time; The category of time in which commitment to the organisation was allocated. The decline in the commitment of a majority of the younger board members, was attributable to the hindrance that the structure of the neo-liberal workplace posed to the practicality of doing so. This, due to the demands placed upon the time of the younger members, in ensuring meeting workplace expectations in their individual, respective roles. In conversations and observations thematically

coded under (initial and ongoing) 'commitment', under the categories of 'personal circumstances' and 'reasons for persistent absence or departure from organisational activity', it was ascertained that, unlike the two elder members of the board in gainful employment who were both self-employed, that all of the younger members (Excluding the younger member currently in full time education), were employed by companies with neo-liberal organisational structures.

The neo-liberal workplace structure holds the Implementation of measures (E.G. Employment policies and hierarchal structures) purposed with eradicating any hindrance to the maximisation of productivity, efficiency and, ultimately profit as a central feature of its operational structure (Cappelli, 1999). One key characteristic of a workplace with a neo-liberal organisational structure that is utilised to achieve this, is to cultivate an attitude of individualist entrepreneurialism amongst the employees. This is endeavoured through the implementation of processes that are purposed to monitor and evaluate employee work performance individually, rather than departmentally (Boreham, 2004).

Individual performance is measured through the setting of goals, targeted to measure individual levels of workload, the acquisition of new skills, the strengthening of existing skills, and the ongoing maintenance of position-relevant knowledge. (Cappelli, 1999). To highlight the strengths of this model, Individual performance appraisal as a model of management, aids organisations in retaining and investing in employees with the strongest workplace performance, and places them in the best stead for meeting of their

overall organisational goals (Fraser, 2001). The flexibility provided by the individualisation of workplace expectations, are officialised through mutually agreed arrangements that are “created at the intersection of top-down HR management and bottom-up proactive behaviour” (Hornung & Thomas, 2019:3099) and are defined as idiosyncratic deals, or “i-deals” (Rousseau, 2005). I-deals take the specific circumstances and needs of the employee (career stage, health needs, personal life circumstances, contract type) into account, and thus are conducive to flexible, and (assumedly) equitable workplace performance evaluation. This, improving the overall workplace satisfaction for employees (Hornung & Thomas, 2019).

However, the flexible workplace structure (E.G., working hours, professional development support, work task allocation, etc), rather than advancing the ideals of “individuation, solidarity, and emancipation”, as originally intended (and to some extent, achieve this), I-Deals dialectically compliment, and thus advance the neo-liberal values of “individualism, competition, and instrumentality” (Hornung & Thomas, 2019:3093). The disadvantage posed by such values upon individualised, flexible workplace culture and thus upon the workplace experiences of the younger members of the board, is that they practically impeded upon the time that had been allocated to attend to their duties within the organisation. The individualisation of workplace performance places employees in a perpetual pursuit of positive recognition for their work performance from their superiors in order to evidence that one is an asset and not a liability to the organisation’s progression. The benefit of individualised appraisal of workplace performance provides evidence that one

is competent in their role, but also exists as a measure of the ability to present oneself as a high achiever (Crowley and Hodson, 2014).

However, the individual performance assessment management model common in workplace organisations of the present day, conveys to employees that presenting oneself as a high achiever alone is not achieved unilaterally by meeting one's individually set workplace targets, but by *exceeding* these targets. Achieving set targets and goals, is relegated the minimum requirement for meeting one's end of the 'I-deal', a current unsatisfactory employment performance possibly resulting in being presented as additional performance monitoring is often referred to officially as a 'progress improvement plan', (Tovey Uren, & Sheldon, 2015). Consistently exceeding expectations becomes the required minimum to be considered for professional development opportunities ahead of co-workers within the organisation. Consequently, in alignment with the neo-liberal embrace of the meritocracy, individual workplace performance appraisal model creates a culture of co-worker competitiveness. (Fraser, 2001).

Work performance expectations are communicated through an employee's interactions with their manager/management team. It is through these interactions, that managerial assessment of whether the employee's work performance, both in quantity and quality, is determined to fulfil the conditions of their contribution for the projected progress of the organisation, is communicated. The pressure placed upon organisations to maximise efficiency and productivity, in order to achieve the overarching goal of remaining innovative and competitive in an open market economy, has also

contributed to the corporatisation of the once traditional life-long 'marriage-style' relationship between the employee and the manager as a representative of the organisation into one that is market-driven; Thriving only as long as it's terms and adherence to them, are considered to be beneficial for both the employer and the employee, and in peril otherwise (Cappelli, 1999).

The overall performance of employees is a key factor in how beneficial this relationship will continue to be for the manager, who acts as the negotiator between the employee and the employer. The employer-manager relationship is placed in context to the competitive environment that the flexibility of neo-liberal workplace structures manifest. Workplace managers placed are in a position to negotiate the fulfilment of the organisation's objectives. The manager-employer relationship, and the culture of competition are deemed inextricable, and were paramount to the concern of the Kenyatta board members, who in hoping to both maintain a workplace performance that was in competition with that of their co-workers, and a positive relationship with their workplace superiors simultaneously, were expected to become subject to a form of work extensification referred to by Fraser (2001) as 'job spill'. 'Job spill' is defined as work duties and responsibilities, transcending working hours and, and thus requiring completion outside of official working hours (E.G. Evenings and weekends). The activity of the Kenyatta board was primarily regulated to evenings and ad-hoc weekends, and thus did not present a conflict with the paid working hours of a majority of the board. However, on several occasions, it was observed that job extensification (or 'job

spill'), impeded upon time that been previously dedicated, by board members, to the organisation.

25/04/17

Raymond messaged me today to advise that he would, in fact not be able to help with the upcoming youth conference, as he had also taken on extra duties as a 'development opportunity' at work, and that the extra administrative work involved was impacting upon his evenings. He apologised for letting me down, and stated that he had not mentioned it sooner, as he had thought that he would be able to commit to both, but it turned out that it was all too much to handle, and so organisational duties would have to be side-lined, for now.

Those employed by organisations with a neo-liberal structure, in pursuit of professional development opportunities, were often required to comply with the requirements of job extensification. The purpose of this, to evidence that one qualifies as a valuable member of the 'team', by not only meeting, but by *exceeding* targets and expectations. The desired result, remaining competitive with co-workers, and garnering favour with workplace management.

06.06.17

This evening, I met with Matthew and Clarissa at the library, to discuss podcast topics. Matthew arrived not long after I did, and we both sat in the foyer and waited for Clarissa. While we both waited, Matthew, who worked in recruitment, explained that his employer was currently in the process of securing a new client, and that the

negotiations had been tense up until this point. Matthew had been entrusted by his manager to attend a meeting earlier that day with the prospective client, to present a final pitch.

Matthew state that although he believed that his company would be offered the contract, he still felt anxious. I asked why, and he stated that he was worried about what the conditions of the offer would be. He hoped that his pitch had been strong enough to secure contractual terms that his manager would be happy with, or whether further negotiation would be required. He explained that he had wanted this deal to be his opportunity to impress his manager, as he was hoping to be considered for a manager's position and did not want to be overlooked. Clarissa arrived at this point, and we set to work on podcast ideas.

Around fifteen minutes later, whilst deliberating upon a podcast episode filming date schedule that suited us all, Maxwell received a phone call, informed us both that he had to take it, and left. 45 minutes later, Matthew returned and apologised for the duration of his absence. It had been his manager on the phone, who had called to ask for a detailed reconstruction of how his meeting with the potential client had gone earlier that day. Matthew told Clarissa and I that he needed to go home now and send a written summary of the meeting to his manager right away. He then left. Clarissa and I continued with planning the podcast schedule.

Individualised work performance evaluation models weaponise the ideals of entrepreneurial individualism and self-responsibility, to extract the maximum amount of labour from employees. Consequently, a culture of overwork is generated as normative. The setting of unrealistic targets and expectations can often induce “psychological distress, worry, and increased pressure amongst employees” (Telford and Briggs, 2021:2) .

04.09.17

The board meeting today took place at a Black owned, local community space. I had arrived early. I left out of my car as I saw two of the younger board members, Ryan, and Clarissa both arrive. The building was locked, and the chairman, whom was yet to arrive was in possession of the key, so the three of us stood speaking together outside. We all joked about how this meeting was the last place we wanted to be after a 'long day at work'.

Raymond, A graduate in accounting and finance, and currently employed by an accountancy firm, stated that he was 'sick of his job'. He told Clarissa and I, that he felt that he had proven himself at work by taking on an excessive workload for a while now (which is why he had not been at the Youth conference planning, and other Kenyatta events), and had expected to have been offered some opportunity of professional development by now. He went on to say that he was currently looking for a higher paying job, which, was proving to be 'another full- time job', and very draining on his time and energy.

Feelings of anxiety pertaining to current work performance and future career prospects, conjured by constant job performance evaluation and competition (Courpasson, 2006), became particularly evident in the Kenyatta organisation when It was perceived by various board members that the additional time and effort being put forth in order to exceed workplace expectations, was not yielding the professional development opportunities that had been anticipated.

Clarissa, a media graduate who currently worked in an entry level market research role, expressed similar feelings about her own job. She told us that her office was entrenched in a culture of 'work-aholicism', and that her manager expected that employees work overtime multiple times a week, to meet deadlines targets. However, this expectation

was never communicated 'out loud'. Rather, it was an unspoken expectation, and was evident through how employees who did not work late regularly, were treated by management, in comparison to those who did. She then went on to explain that it was for this reason that she had been absent, or late from quite a few board meetings recently, and had not set up consistent meetings for the podcast, the organisational project that she was leading. Clarissa then went on to disclose that she wanted to move departments within the organisation into a better paying position that aligned more with her interests but would have a better chance of doing so if applying internally, and thus would like to remain in good stead with management who could ultimately determine if that progression took place. She felt that to have an opportunity at promotion, that she had no choice but to continue to work overtime.

Whilst the conflict posed by the demands placed upon the time of some of the younger board members by work duties and responsibilities, to their ability to maintain their initial time commitment to the Kenyatta organisation was primarily practical in nature, the choice to prioritise workplace expectations above the initial commitment made to the Kenyatta organisation is also illustrative of the elevation of the concerns pertaining to what was required in progressing towards their individual career aspirations, as subject to the requirements of the structure of the neo-liberal workplace, and made clear in their decision-making of some of the younger members. Thus, a choice made in the concern and motivations as a neo-liberal subject, in the performance-based concern of creating an environment that utilises employment scarcity and precarity to coerce maximum productivity out of workers (Catlaw & Marshall, 2018)

The work of the Kenyatta organisation took place in the same manner as which all other life commitments for those involved took place, on a schedule. Whilst systemic inequality is very still much a concern of Black life, and community-based mobilisation in response to this condition still holds purchase in contemporary society, ongoing commitment to the grassroots community organisation does not hold the centrality in the lives of those who become community activists in the current day as it once did. The days of those who become involved in community activism, dedicating a majority portion of their time to the 'struggle' is for the most part, a thing of the past, due to the incorporation of the Black community into the neo-liberalisation of the capitalist economy. The scheduling of activism, or activism 'by appointment', starkly contrasts from the uncompromising standard of dedication for which Black radical revolutionary politics is prolific. The decision to withdraw all involvement, rather than tailoring involvement to fit the contours of their lives (E.G, reducing their duties, leaving the board and its related responsibilities whilst remaining involved in the organisation in some other capacity), highlights how the perceived expectation of commitment, contributed to activist attrition in the Kenyatta organisation. Not being able to give their 'all', 'all' being relative to their initial commitment of time and skill contribution to the progression of the organisation of each individual respectively, and thus resigning to giving 'nothing', was a consistent theme in announcements of departure amongst the younger members.

01.02.18

Today, Asher sent a message to the board WhatsApp group chat to advise that he would be leaving the board, mainly because he just did not have the time to give the board all that he wanted to at this time. I responded and let him know that I appreciated his contributions and wished him well. He then messaged me privately and said that he had a new job and that he would be working until later in the day than in his previous role and so would miss the time slot for all board meetings. He then went on to say that he had also been given the opportunity to volunteer on a project a few hours a week in his free time, which would help him gain experience for his future career field. He explained that he knew that he had not been giving as much time to the organisation as was required of him for some time now. He had thought about it and realised that he did not want to keep 'letting us down'.

05.05.18

Today I received a call from Jarrod, the editor of the Kenyatta blog. Jarrod had joined the board in March 2018, not long after many of the other younger board members had departed. He had always been very vigilant in his role and had been a credit to the organisation as our online presence had been the only consistent engagement with the community for some time. Jarrod, like me is a doctoral researcher and had called to say that his research was becoming more and more all-encompassing of his time lately, that he has been suffering with stress and so needs to prioritise his commitments. He let me know that he wished that he did not have to leave, and it had been a difficult but necessary decision for him. This was a significant loss to the organisation's board, but how could I argue with him or convince him to stay? His reason for departure was not underlined with any contention or unhappiness with his time spent in the board; It was simply a lack of time.

The realities of modern workplace culture presented itself as an obstacle not to initial commitment to the grassroots, however this cannot be attributed to any one class status. In the pronouncement of economic instability and scarcity, a culminative result of both austerity induced by neo-liberal political policy and economic financial crisis that it proclaims to remedy (Tellmann, 2015), the primacy held by the neo-liberal capitalist economy of the connection or investment of an individual into it, means that the compromises that the obligations of a neo-liberal society to ongoing commitment in community activism are not reserved to any specific rung of the socio-economic class strata. Both the graduate employee conducting the day to day demands of their current role, whilst attempting to meet the demands of their employer in order to open the doors to career progression, as displayed in the Kenyatta organisation, and the unemployed individual, whom contending with the hardships of unemployment whilst concurrently ensuring that they are evidencing an adequate effort in seeking employment is being evidenced, in order to evade sanctioning through the forfeiting of benefit payments as a disciplinary outcome, are both held in the permanent liminality of preoccupation with the capitalist economy, only at opposite ends of the class strata. Grassroots-level activism is susceptible to the upending of activist retainment, and in turn, probability of steady progression and growth of community organisations like the Kenyatta organisation by the primacy that one's ability by which to provide for oneself financially, alongside other life responsibilities, holds in the life of the average individual.

As it pertains to retaining activists of the neo-liberal age, the future of such organisations as the Kenyatta organisation is rooted not in an either/or scenario, but rather in circumventing the incongruities between traditionalist structures of grassroots activism in contemporary society as a form of adaptive resilience. The importance of cultivating resilience of activists involved in community grassroots activists relies in the ability to recover from hardship, interruption or difficulty, and continue as before has become an increasingly popular discourse of grassroots organisations in addressing social and environmental injustices (MacKinnon & Derickson, 2013).

Ultimately, it is the upon the will of the individual to remain steadfast to the commitment initially made to the organisation, however the future of Black community organisations such as the Kenyatta organisation is heavily reliant upon the strategic cultivation of activist adaptivity and resilience by community organisations. Beginning with an acknowledgement of the conflict that the conditions of neo-liberal capitalism, with conceptualisations of the image of the ideal, revolutionary activist that have been constructed, and normative in recanting's of Black political history.

15.05.18

I had missed call From Raymond today. I called him back a few hours later and he told me that had called to ask how things in the board had been going lately. I told him that progress was moving along with the refurbishment, albeit slowly, but the inter-personal issues the board persisted. I then mentioned that I had not seen him for a while and asked if everything was ok with him. He told me that he had left the organisation and

would help in the Kenyatta organisation on an ad hoc basis but could not commit to the scheduled commitment required of him as a board member. He just did not have the amount of time that he felt he should be giving to the organisation's work.

The permanence of liminality

Liminality is defined as a temporary state of indistinctness in the transition between two separate conditions (Thomassen, 2009). The experiences of the younger members in the neo-liberal workplace structure are a result of being a part of a work culture that functions through the induction of employees into a state of permanent liminality (Johnsen and Sorenson, 2015). "Permanent liminality as a modern condition" is symptomatic of the reformation of societal power structures from 'disciplinary society' into a 'society of control' (Johnsen and Sorenson, 2015:332). The *disciplinary society*, A Foucauldian concept, in explanation of the concept of bio-political governance (how individuals are successfully governed through political regime), presents that power, rather than being sporadically employed, is omnipresent and is maintained by the regimes of societal institutions that serve as fenced environments of guideline and regulation. These institutions maintain governance through the implementation of "regimes of truth" (Foucault, as cited in Lorenzini, 2016). Regimes of truth are defined as social and cultural norms and are communicated often through societal discourse that shapes the framework of social consensus as to what is to be societally accepted as rational and true, and therefore 'common sense'.

Unlike in the disciplinary society, where societal institutions as enclosed environments of control result in citizens transitioning from one institution to another, commencing and recommencing adherence to the regimes governing them in each one (E.G. The family, the workplace, of education), and completing these regimes upon departure from them, to then return to them once more; Deleuze posits that in the control society, governance over citizens is no longer statically exerted in the separate, regimental disciplines of societal institutions. The regimes of each institution instead, co-exist in a constantly deferred, unfinished state. Consequently, a citizen of the control society becomes subject to various institutional regimes in a simultaneous fashion, which are all in need of constant tending, and is never entirely completely immersed in the regime of any specific institution. (Deleuze, 1992).

The permanent liminality imposed upon individuals by neo-liberal workplace organisational structures, underpins the difficulty presented to the ability of the neo-liberal worker to draw clear, inflexible boundaries between work and non-work spheres of life, and thus the division between work and leisure fading progressively into obscurity with time (Johnsen and Sorenson, 2015). The state of permanent liminality can become imposed upon workers in the contemporary workplace when outside of work, by the expectation of the worker to relate to their work as a 'lifestyle'. Work as a lifestyle, sees the worker become encouraged to entwine their home and work lives (and identities) as seamlessly as possible. Viewing work as a 'lifestyle', and embodying their role of employment, whilst allowing working life to have no fixed beginning or end; The individual comes to exist in a "permanent zone of

indistinction between work and life”, or permanent liminality (Johnsen and Sorenson, 2015:328).

Taking into consideration that It is the status of human capital as a tradeable commodity on the neo-liberal labour market, that positions human capital as a feasible means through which to control the neo-liberal subject (Fehrer, 2009), the relationship between the attainment of human capital, and permanent liminality of work as ‘lifestyle’ are inextricably entwined, as permanent liminality is required for the successful accumulation of human (and social) capital that is necessary for career advancement in the neo-liberal labour market, as highlighted in the aforementioned workplace experiences of the younger board members (E.G. Work extensification and intensification). It is through permanent liminality, that work as lifestyle aids in controlling the time of workers outside of ‘official’ working hours. Such control is sustained by the possibility of reward. This is rationalised in the neo-liberal regime of truth as the ‘price of progress’, which is parallel with the neo-liberal value of meritocracy. The demands of permanent liminality of work as a lifestyle, made the maintenance of the initial commitment of time to the Kenyatta organisation impractical. Additionally, permanent liminality also impacted how the board members perceptively engaged with their involvement in the organisation. Alongside the neo-liberal workplace structures depleting the practicality of ongoing commitment to the organisation, a common theme in conversations and observations coded under ‘reasons for departure’ and ‘steadfastness and commitment’, it was observed that involvement in the Kenyatta organisation became entwined with the career motivations of some

of the board members. This, resulting in an altered perception of the intrinsic value of involvement in the Kenyatta organisation, for its own sake.

The liminality of the Black neo-liberal subject

The entwinement of Black self-determination as a central tenet of Black radical politics, with self-responsibility as a central tenet of neo-liberalism; A significant happening that framed the modern relationship between the Black community, the western nation-state, and the capitalist economy (Spence,2008) 2015), has facilitated the maintenance of racially hegemonic structures. Hegemonic structures are successfully sustained under the guise that they are no longer hegemonic at all. This guise, qualifying as plausible only through social re-organisation, and the impending politico-economic and socio-cultural changes deemed evidential to the claim of societal transformation and innovation; All whilst the offending structures stand, and societal conditions remain as hegemonic as they ever were (Joseph, 2015). For Black communities, the neo-liberal reorganisation of the British political and capitalist economy, had facilitated the actualisation of freedom for all that, had socio-culturally, politically, and economically freed Black communities from the shackles of systemic racism. Placing Black communities in a position that they would no longer be 'required' to turn to community-based mobilisation to enact change. The neo-liberal individualisation of Black life outcomes directly intersects with the ideology of post-racialism in the detachment of the racialisation of an individual, from any social stratification experienced by that individual. This rendering the concept of race, due to social and political change through the passing of time,

to no longer be a significant factor of life outcomes (Cho, 2008). Dethroning racism as the great un-equaliser, the construction of society conducive to 'individual freedom' centred in neo-liberal ideologue, evidencing this as so.

The refusal of neo-liberal political discourse, to acknowledge systemic racism as an ongoing reality, that directly underpins racialised life outcomes in contemporarily, co-exists upon the mainstream political stage with progressivist left-wing discourses that acknowledge racism as a reality, however one that is being gradually remedied over time, through educational and political progress (Singh, 2017). Both discourses, whilst not in entire agreement with the other, utilise actualised racial progressivism in order to collaboratively embed liminality into Black neo-liberal discourses of freedom from conditions of systemic racism. The assertion that the conditions of racial liberation either already have been, or will be achieved, given time. The comparative dichotomisation of present British society, with British society of the past, when overt state sanctioned racism was a commonality presented as verification for both positions, captures the Black neo-liberal subject in the liminal space between residing in an improved, yet ongoing racist society, and a post-racial society. These two points, reconciling at the point that the conditions of systemic racism, whether their abolition be deemed completed or in progress, can be achieved through state action, in a 'top down' fashion. This, endorsing the stance, that in lieu of revolution; Structural reformation can grant the authentic Black liberation and in turn, supports the continued racial hegemonism of western democratic political model and capitalist economic system.

The value of activism

A majority of the board members held positions within the organisation's board that aligned with their existing skills and knowledge, of which they had attained through higher education and subsequent work experience. The alignment of the contributions of board members, with their individual existing skills and knowledge, was intended to utilise these specialisms to enhance the organisation's efficiency in fulfilling their objectives. This, an example of an individual applying the human capital attained primarily for use in the capitalist labour market, to directly assist and benefit the endeavours of community-led social and political movements at a grassroots level (Andrews, 2014). The transference of individual knowledge and skills into one's contribution to the fulfilment of the objectives of a community organisation, can also serve the aspirations of the individual. Involvement in community organisation can present an opportunity for an individual to gain new, or improve upon existing skills and gain experience, and thus provides an opportunity for the individual to accumulate human capital. Such an opportunity incentivises initial involvement in community organisation, as a space that facilitates entering political activism, and can strengthen ongoing commitment once involved (Van Dyke and Dixon, 2013). In the Kenyatta organisation, this was observed to be so. Becoming a board member in the Kenyatta organisation was perceived as an opportunity to build upon existing skills and experiences, whilst concurrently contributing towards the organisation's objectives.

05.08.17

Today, the chairman of the organisation introduced me to a prospective new board member named Clarissa. We had all arranged to meet in the local library after Clarissa had expressed interest in joining the board. Clarissa stated that she had been following the organisation on social media for a while now, and was passionate about committing to putting her passion for Black community organisation 'into action'. She explained that she was impressed with our online presence and engagement and asked if we had ever thought of beginning a community podcast, as she would like to lead the beginning of one for the Kenyatta organisation. I asked Clarissa about her experience with podcasting, to which she replied that she was a media and marketing graduate and hoped to enter broadcasting or advertising in her future career, and that she thought that a community podcast would provide her the opportunity to develop her podcasting skills, whilst furthering the organisation's community engagement and drawing in support.

The prospect of accumulating individual human capital through involvement in the Kenyatta board, was not highlighted as raising any concern initially. However, the boundaries between the motivations and concerns of some of those in the space as governing board members of a grassroots community organisation, with their individual motivations and concerns as they had been shaped as neo-liberal subjects, became indistinct. Whilst there is no reason to believe that Black radical motivation was not at the heart of the younger board member's initial intentions for becoming involved in the organisation, board members that were allocated to roles and responsibilities in the Kenyatta organisation that aligned with skills and experience attained through their education and ongoing career, and whose initial involvement

had been incentivised by the opportunity to accumulate additional human capital, were observed as perceiving themselves as existing in the space primarily as an embodiment of their human capital, first and foremost. Existing parallel to workplace demands and responsibilities, communications coded under ‘reasons for departure’, were centred upon the opportunity, (or lack thereof) to actualise the accumulation of human capital in the space as had been originally anticipated.

10.01.18

Today I received a phone call from Clarissa. She had phoned to let me know that she would be leaving the organisation with immediate effect. When I asked why this was, she stated that she was currently working on an application for a master’s degree as well as applications for a new job and could not commit to the increase of time that she would be expected to give to the organisation as the project of the early years building progressed, as well as board meetings. Clarissa went on to say that the podcast, which is the reason she originally joined the board, would also be too much of a commitment for her going forward.

The opportunity-cost model, a concept of macro-economic theory, aids understanding of the role that the internalisation of the ideal of individualist entrepreneurialism had upon the decision of some of the board members to leave the Kenyatta organisation. The opportunity cost is the “anticipated

value”, of what may have come to be, if a different choice had been made. In short, the opportunity cost is what is forfeited alongside the rejected choice (Buchanan, 1991: 520). Entrepreneurial Individualism, the ideal upon which the contemporary labour market and workplace organisational culture is constructed and maintained, saw the initial motivation of joining the board for the younger members, be strategically mediated through the interests of the neo-liberal labour market. The prospect of appreciating one’s human capital was tacitly positioned as a conditional clause of ongoing commitment to the work of the organisation. Consequently, the motivations of the neo-liberal market identity of the younger board members mentioned, and their desires as a neo-liberal subject came to precede that of furthering the objectives of the organisation. How one’s departure would negatively impact the facet of organisational development of which that individual was allocated to aid progress, the overall effectiveness of the board, and in turn the progress of the organisation as an institution were no longer at the forefront of the opportunity cost of departing the organisation.

31.01.18

I sent a message to Matthew today, to ask how he was doing, as we had not seen him in person in the organisation since the November 24th board meeting. I provided him with an update on the building works on the early years centre and asked him if we would be seeing him soon, to which he replied that he had grown so frustrated with the issues in the organisation, and that he did not feel that him, or his opinion were valued. He then went on to say that he needs to prioritise his time, particularly as alongside his

fulltime time job, he is currently planning a career change from recruitment, into being self-employed in property development.

Matthew then went on to state that he had not only become involved in the organisation's board to contribute to its political objectives, but to be involved in the early years building development in order to contribute to his property development portfolio in order to demonstrate that he had worked in a non-for-profit project. However, he had not actually been given the autonomy in the organisation to advise, or 'project manage', and the progress on the renovation was too slow. He stated that his 'expertise' needed to be utilised more widely in board discussions and decisions to make his presence feel worthwhile.

The opportunity cost for those who decided to leave the Kenyatta organisation, was their direct involvement in the realisation of the objectives of the organisation, and in turn the fulfilment of their motivations of becoming involved in Black grassroots community organisation. Perceiving the decision to remain involved in the organisation as rational, only insofar as doing so continued to provide the opportunity to accumulate human capital, and in turn, benefit individual career endeavours and aspirations resulted in the intrinsic value of the activism, becoming secondary. Central to the motivation of those that become involved in community activism, the cause notwithstanding, is an understanding that current conditions are resultant of systems of inequality, and a sense of personal responsibility in furthering the cause towards bettering the lived experiences of those that are negatively impacted by these systemic inequalities (Maslach and Gomes, 2006). The neo-liberal subject on the other hand, an entrepreneurial vessel of human capital,

is encouraged to be strategic, settling upon their decisions according to what will allow them, as an individual to maximise the accumulation of human capital and consequently, their earning potential (Ferher, 2009). The juxtaposition of ‘doing for others’, and ‘doing for self’ of which a majority of the younger board members were representative, again highlights the incongruences between community activism, and neo-liberal ideals.

A colonial habitus

The transactional and conditional nature of the younger board member’s ongoing commitment to the work of the organisation presented in the previous sections of this chapter, demonstrates that whilst actively engaging with the Kenyatta organisation as an institution of the Black radical counter-public, with political values and objectives oppositional to that of which govern wider society (the public), concerns of the younger board members were primarily aligned with fulfilling the requirements of the neo-liberal ideals that govern the material conditions in which they reside. It is in the incongruence between neo-liberal, and Black radical conceptualisations of freedom; An incongruence found in the disparity between current material conditions, and the conditions of imagined, liberated Black radical futures, where the political liminality that underlined the confictions facing the younger Kenyatta members as individuals actively participated in both, are situated. Colonial habitus conceptually marries Frantz Fanon’s colonisation theory, with Pierre Bourdieu’s habitus (1984). Habitus is defined as the individual internalisation of cultural norms as “the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities

to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them” (Bourdieu, 1984:170).

Concerned with the “colonisation of consciousness by dominant social forces” (Schaffer,2004:102), Fanon’s colonisation theory presents that the psychological impact of colonisation upon a people, results in the oppressed group developing a sense of self that results in them coming to see themselves as they are depicted from the perspective of the colonial power. The oppressed group, coming to see themselves through the eyes of their coloniser as the lesser ‘other’, as a result seek to alleviate these feelings of inadequacy by mimicking the oppressor’s culture, in the hopes to be more like the oppressor, and less like themselves. Whilst habitus takes place, “without any deliberate pursuit of coherence...without any conscious concentration” from the individual (Bourdieu, 1984:170), colonial habitus (aligned with Gramsci’s cultural hegemony in doing so), facilitates contemplation of the significance of individual agency, in the internalisation of values that support the maintenance of racially oppressive conditions.

[Working ‘twice as hard’: The internalisation of discourses of Black individualisation](#)

Due to their involvement in a Black radical community organisation, and in that, the acceptance of its Black radical politics, it is highly unlikely that the younger members of the Kenyatta board accepted post-racialism as a contemporary condition. However, as all in the Black British community reside in a time of racial progressivism, all were susceptible to the internalised discourses of racialised individualisation that whilst not accepting of post-racialism as a current reality, utilise the values of internalised hegemonic

discourses as it pertains to racial progress. One such, being the claim that in order to overcome the limitations that have been systemically placed upon Black life outcomes, that Black people residing in western nations are required to ‘work twice as hard’ [as the white population], only to get ‘half as far’ (Desante, 2013) . A well-known adage in the Black communities, ‘working twice as hard to get half as far’, speaks to an ever-present awareness of the continued significance of systemic racism upon Black life outcomes (Johnson, 2020) . Whilst the pervasiveness of racially hegemonic systems that make positive Black live outcomes ‘twice as hard’ is acknowledged as an ongoing reality (which it is), it is accepted that the burden of overcoming the disadvantages of this reality, resides primarily with the individual.

Akin to Black self-determination, Black resilience has too been ideologically individualised, this necessary in order to interweave the interests of the capitalist economy into political discourses of racial progressivism. The Black power movement (USA and UK) demonstrated Black resilience, with the objective of politically and economically disrupting the status quo, driven by the objective like many community grassroots efforts, “to build, from the ground up, a transformative alternative to capitalism” (Cretney & Bond, 2014:23) . Emerging from the internalisation of the individualisation of Black life outcomes is Black resilience neo-liberalism, a politicised discourse that encourages individuals to display their achievements as evidence of their resistance to racial oppression (Clay, 2019). Black resilience neo-liberalism discourse simultaneously converges the collective resilience as a characteristic that is required to achieve both Black radical

conceptualisations of freedom by operationalising the individualism at the core of ‘working twice as hard’, and positioning individual Black achievement despite systemic conditions, as one’s own personal liberation.

19.03.18

Whilst waiting for the board meeting to begin today, Raymond and I were speaking about our university experiences, and mentioned that we were both the first in our family to receive a university education. Clarissa and Matthew, arriving at the same time during our conversation, stated that they too had been the first in their families to attend university. Matthew said he went to university for his parents as much as he did for himself, and that it “Meant a lot to my mum that all of her children went to university”. I at that point, recalled my own mother and grandmother, in my youth, stressing the importance of doing well academically, as ‘Black people in England haven’t always had fair access to an education’.

Whilst a discourse of radical liberalism (Andrews, 2018) categorised here more specifically as a discourse of radical neo-liberalism, Black resilience neo-liberalism is premised upon defying pre-existing limitations placed upon Black life outcomes by overt systemic racism and achieving one’s goals “against all odds” (Clay, 2019:75). Black resilience neo-liberalism discourse stores a socio-historical sensitivity, evoking an oppression-redemption arc that is hinged both, upon a gratitude for being able to access to opportunities that prior generations were either never, or seldom granted. This gratitude embodied in a sense of responsibility to pursue and achieve educationally as retribution for those past, stolen opportunities. Nonetheless, encapsulating a

vision of Black liberation that is reminiscent of the ‘pulling oneself up by one’s bootstraps’ narrative, Black resilience neo-liberalism embodies the prioritisation of individual socio-economic mobility, over community political unity and action. The stronghold of the pursuit of upward socio-economic mobility upon individual motivations is normative, implemented by the material realities of capitalist economy. Therefore, discourse that communicates the liminality of the Black neo-liberal subject s taking form between overt forms of racial oppression of the past, and the more subtle forms of ongoing institutionalised racial oppression in the present day

[The neo-liberal scholar-activist](#)

Despite all being suspended in the liminality of neo-liberal conditions, a key point of divergence between myself as a doctoral researcher, and a majority of the younger members of the Kenyatta organisation, resides in the extent to which my future career was directly entwined with my ongoing involvement in the organisation. For all of the younger board members that eventually departed from the organisation, the motivations and concerns of Black community activism and its objectives and the means in which they made or planned to earn their living did not overtly intersect. Thus, the decision to leave the organisation had no evident bearing upon their individual career trajectories, overall. Remaining reflexive when considering the influence of my presence within the space a a key requirement of critical ethnographic process, requires acknowledgment that the activist positionality of a researcher does not always equate to the same in practice. For the other board members mentioned, the opportunity that involvement in the Kenyatta

organisation presented to accumulate human capital, would aid in furthering an existing career. For myself, on the other hand, this opportunity facilitated the completion of an educational qualification of which is required to *commence* an academic career.

The career aspirations hinged upon the completion of this ethnographic data collection, were not only aided, but *reliant* upon my ongoing presence in the organisation as the site where data would be collected. Furthermore, the significant amount of time that had been dedicated to the space by this time, made departing from the organisation in search of a new research space, impractical. Whilst my personal political stance aligned with that of the Kenyatta organisation, validating the declaration of choosing to become a researcher with an activist positionality reached a point in which my reflexive integrity as a researcher required that the extent to which my own involvement in the organisation had been initiated and sustained by the entwinement of my own motivations and concerns as an activist, with those of as a neo-liberal subject, be acknowledged.

03.12.18

The constant required pro-activity of my role as the organisation secretary, (as well as taking on other responsibilities that transcended my role in the last year), in addition to completing my required research hours and teaching responsibilities at the university, all alongside maintaining the responsibilities of my personal life, has taken a toll on me throughout the last two years.

The above excerpt is demonstrative of what is commonly referred to as 'burn out'; A state of mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion that is typically the result of overwork by the demands of work duties and responsibilities for a prolonged period of time (Leiter, Maslach and Frames, 2014). Notwithstanding, just as some of the other younger board members, I too, in times in which ongoing involvement became tiresome, frustrating, and overall inconvenient, came to perceive the value of ongoing involvement primarily as it pertained to the space's role in the process of furthering my own educational and professional endeavours and aspirations.

If remaining completely transparent, I will admit that if the Kenyatta organisation was not my data collection site, that I would have resigned from the role of board secretary and reduced my responsibilities long ago, if not left the organisation altogether.

The extent of my involvement in the Kenyatta organisation as a member of the governing board as the organisation's secretary, was entwined with my individual professional aspirations to a further extent than anyone else in Kenyatta board. Holding the position of both scholar and activist, initial and ongoing involvement in the Kenyatta organisation was necessary for my future career prospects. Ongoing commitment to the organisation as the site of data collection meant that I existed in the space as a neo-liberal subject more so than any of the other board members. As a result, my involvement was of heightened susceptibility to commodified conditionality, as my own commitment to the organisation was directly tethered to the future career prospects of choice. Any desire to depart from the former, presenting a high

risk of possible forfeit of the latter. Such insight, concurrent with concern of the influence of the neo-liberal university upon the effectiveness of the scholar-activist. This observation, reflexive in nature, and drawing attention to the ethical considerations that accompany managing the liminality within which a scholar-activist is suspended when concurrently engaging with the community organisation as a radical commitment, and as a research site.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored how neo-liberal conditions posed both a practical, and perceptive hindrance to the sustained commitment of some board members to the work of the Kenyatta organisation. As the state within which the confusions posed exist, liminality has been a central concept throughout this chapter. The liminality that encapsulates the plight of the individual occupying the identities of both Black neo-liberal, and radical subject is theorised well by DuBois' concept of double consciousness. DuBois articulates the co-existence of two conflicting identities that exist within one body, explaining the "twoness" of being a citizen of a nation, yet one belonging to a marginalised demographic who is not seen, or treated as equal to the typical population in the economic, political, legal, social, or cultural structures of society. The experiences of the younger members as depicted, representative of "two warring ideals within one dark body" (DuBois, 1903: 38). The concept of colonial habitus aids in conveying the existential liminality of the contemporary Black neo-liberal subject into socio-historical context. This experience aligned with other times in history in which Black communities have faced the challenge between pursuing political progress for

the good of the Black community, and concurrently meeting individual, (and primarily economically based) needs and wants. This remaining a powerful tool through which societal powers have bartered Black communities from community based political endeavour, and into accepting the terms of state-led solutions.

In joint acceptance of the fact that racialised oppression remains a structural reality, and of the fact that substantial political progress has been made in this regard in the 50 years that has passed since the ending of the British Black power movement; The perceptual liminality of the Black neo-liberal subject with Black radical consciousness, supports dialectical engagement with neo-liberal conceptualisations of Black progress and liberation. Whilst such engagement is required for the pursuit of one's own personal goals and motivations within the conditions of the public sphere; For those who decide to become involved in community based organisation, a balance must be found between adherence to neo-liberal conceptualisations of liberation as the 'survival politics' of the 21st century (thus far), and Black radical conceptualisations of liberation that sustain ongoing contribution to grassroots efforts of Black betterment. The achievement of this balance, residing in a state of liminality that is encapsulating of all others that have been previously mentioned throughout this chapter: That of which exists between the actual, and the possible. A key insight from this chapter is that the ongoing, in-person commitment required for the sustainment of Black community 'Bricks and mortar' organisation, in exceeding that of which is required for ad-hoc political protest and digitally based activism, places the

practical and perceptive hindrances to ongoing commitment as a priority on the agenda of activist retention. Thus, Black community organisations must remain adaptable and innovative in the devising of strategy of supporting members in maintaining their commitment to the cause.

Chapter six

The leisure Organisation

“If we’re not careful, we allow mobilization to become an event. The struggle is never an event, it’s a process, a continual eternal process.”

—Kwame Ture

Introduction

This chapter explores the difficulties observed in the Kenyatta organisation in navigating its relationship with the local Black community. As the organisation from which the Kenyatta organisation adopted its funding structure, the difficulties facing the Kenyatta organisation are presented as a continuation of those faced by the Igbala organisation. Therefore, most of the data presented, retrospectively details the experiences of the Igbala organisation, ascertained from both my own experiences of the organisation, and insights from conversations with (pre-merger) Igbala board members. The strength and quality of the organisation-community relationship is presented as one that is determined by the achievement of symbiosis between the engagement or contact of the organisation with the community, incorporation of the community into the progression towards its aims, and the support of the community in aiding the organisation in progressing towards the fulfilment of its objectives through the donation of personal funds and time.

In chapter three, two main (external) factors impacting the de-radicalisation, and ultimate demise of grassroots Black community organisations in Britain

were identified as 1) A shift in the function of Black community organisational focus following state involvement in their running, and 2) The professionalisation, subsequent absorption of former Black power activists into state implemented race relations work. The transition of many Black community organisations that survived past the Black power movement, (or were established after its demise, like the Ominara organisation) into the BME third sector as institutions of community based, state funded public service provision, was put forth in having resulted In Black community organisations, once existing both primarily as spaces of political action, coming to function solely as culturally tailored subsidiaries of a liberal state agenda. This chapter presents the difficulties faced in navigating the organisation-community relationship between Igbala, and then Kenyatta with the local Black community, as a lasting legacy of this history.

It was observed that the Igbala organisation was engaged with by the community in an episodic and transient fashion by the local community, rather than in the pursuit of becoming involved in the organisation as a site of Black political activism on a long-term basis. This, illustrated primarily by the lack of uptake in paid membership uptake and/or donation of time by a majority of those who attended the Igbala organisation's events on a regular basis. The lack of conversion from episodic engagement to ongoing committed support arose again when the Kenyatta board encountered financial difficulties, and despite having maintained online engagement with the local community (In the absence of in-person engagement) since its establishment,

were unable to garner the required financial support from the wider community.

The key finding presented in this chapter is that the overall non-committal nature of community engagement with the Kenyatta organisation was resultant of engagement with the organisation by the community as ‘casual’ as opposed to ‘serious’ leisure. The Igbala organisation is argued to have been engaged, and thus operated not only as a causal leisure space, but additionally as a space of ‘neo-liberal radicalism’; The definition of which shall be explained further on in the chapter. The chapter concludes with highlighting the organisation-community relationship, of which is vital for a self-funded organisation like the Kenyatta organisation, as a significant challenge facing Black community organisations in contemporary times.

Igbala: A community-funded Black community organisation

The organisational structure and governance style of the Igbala organisation was modelled directly upon the Organisation of African American unity (OAAU), an organisation founded by Malcolm X in alignment with the pan-Africanist roots of the organisation’s politics, and with the objective of connecting African diasporic communities to one another, and to the continent of Africa. The Igbala organisation sought to attract membership from all of African ancestry, encompassing and holding equal the spectrum of experiences significant to varying intersecting facets of Black lived experiences (E.G. Gender, nationality, cultural background, and class) for the “*centralisation of knowledge . . . of experience . . . of conclusions*”. (Mandel,

1983:6, original italicisation). The organisation's strategy was to organise locally, later connecting with other Black community organisations both locally and nationally and eventually, internationally.

The centralised democratic, non-hierarchical structure of the OAAU sought to circumvent “the tensions between democratic organising and charismatic leadership” that existed in Black American political organisations in the first half of the 20th century (Felber, 2015:214). However, despite this objective, the organisational structure of OAAU mirrored the structural model emblematic of Black community organisations of the past, of which were often headed by compelling male leader, who became symbolic of the organisation's image and lasting political legacy. Such a structural model, furthermore, was one of which had in Black community organisations of the past, been a source of varying forms of intracommunal fragmentation, particularly along gender lines (Felber, 2015).

The organisational structure of the Igbala organisation was conducive to one of the organisation's overarching objectives: To build a community-based institution of non-discriminative, egalitarian, Black radical unity purposed to facilitate the collective addressal of racially oppressive systems and conditions. Therefore, the democratic centralist structure of the organisation dictated that it be governed in such a way, that it ‘belonged’ equally to all members. As a self-funded organisation, the centralist democratic structure of the Igbala organisation was directly tethered to the organisation's primary source of financial income: Membership fees. Igbala's mass membership

payment structure consisted of varying payment tiers and frequencies, purposed to accommodate all incomes and financial circumstances.

Such a structure was predicated upon the expectation that in turn, all members would consider themselves to be individually significant to the organisation's progress, and this in turn would encourage ongoing commitment. As it pertained to the practical running of the organisation, a significant condition of practically implementing democratic centralism, was an open and egalitarian governance structure; Specifically, the provision of unvetted access to all organisational business. The organisation's governing board pledged full transparency, ensuring that all organisational information was accessible to the wider community. Whilst only those with positions in the organisation's board (E.G., Chair, co-chair, and heads of the various departments) were permitted to attend board meetings, members were consulted on matters of organisational governance, and provided with copies of board meeting minutes that informed of all matters discussed, all decisions made and all actions to be taken, of which members were encouraged by the board to query if they deemed it necessary to do so. Members were also actively encouraged to send forth matters of discussion for board meeting agendas. Members were also kept up to date with a full account of organisation's financial information (Ingoing's, outgoings, and current available funds) at the end of every annual quarter.

In the pursuit of membership as the primary organisational revenue, the founding members of the Igbala organisation spent the first three years following establishment in building a strong community presence. This was

achieved by consistently hosting community events. These events included book study circles, debate and discussion sessions, and politically themed conferences focused around important dates on the Black political calendar, such as the birthdays of Black historical political figures, and anniversaries of significant events in Black history. The Igbala organisation events attracted audiences of all ages.

Whilst the organisation regularly encouraged membership at every community event and through the organisation's social media platforms, the Igbala organisation struggled to convert the vast community engagement into an official membership base. The few official membership sign-ups secured by the organisation were of a high turnover, with many members cancelling their monthly payments within six months of joining. Others simply would become 'honorary' members; Consistently attending organisation events, yet never officially joining as members, and thus never paying dues at all. In lieu of committing to a monthly membership fee, others opted to occasionally contribute to the organisation by way of one-off donation.

Many of the Igbala's organisation's community events were led by the organisation's chair and co-chair. Events led by external contributors, such as keynote speakers around which the specific event had been promoted, often did so free of charge. Whilst Igbala's community events were very well-attended, the organisation struggled to convert community engagement, into a dues-paying membership base. With no fixed headquarters, and very little overhead costs for running the organisation aside from venue fees where community meetings and events were hosted, and the costs involved in

printing Black history booklets that were sold by the organisation year-round to raise additional funds, the Igbala organisation had few overhead expenses. Therefore, the scarcity of inconsistent financial investment from the local community did not present any immediate hindrance to Igbala's first objective: To establish community engagement in order to disseminate the organisation's politics.

Ominara: A State sponsored Black community organisation

Unlike the Igbala organisation, the Ominara organisation, during its active years had not been financially dependent upon community membership fees or wider community donations to fund organisational activity. Thus, whilst always encouraging and welcoming of wider community contribution to the running and growth of the organisation, be that in the form of monetary donation or the donation of time, the Ominara organisation did not actively pursue community membership beyond that of board members, existing volunteers, and paid employees. The small membership base of the Ominara organisation did however, pay 'dues' to the organisation every calendar month. The funds accrued from these dues summed a negligible contribution towards the running costs of the organisation's services however, and was more so a customary practice, than a funding source.

Following the establishment of the Ominara organisation in 1974, the organisation was selected as a recipient of the government funded initiative the 'urban programme'. In the following decade, funding from the urban programme which facilitated the organisation's ability to become a local

provider of various public services specifically for the service to the Black community, and one of many community organisations who formed what is known today as the BME third sector (Craig, 2011). The funding of the Ominara organisation had a correlative relationship with organisational autonomy. Despite the Ominara governing board having full control of the day to day running of the organisation, this freedom was curtailed at the financial, which were governed by the local council. All financial information, including a full account of all organisational expenditure were required to be made available to the local council by the organisation at regular intervals for review. This, a stipulation for the guarantee of future funding . The reliance of the Ominara organisation upon sources external sources, meant that ultimately, the organisation was beholden to the wishes and guidelines of donors first and foremost.

Whilst the stipulations placed upon Black self-help community organisations in receipt of Urban programme funding prohibited the affiliation of the organisational image with agitative political mobilisation, (that being any imagery or ideologue deemed reminiscent of the anti-state sentiments of the Black power movement), such stipulations did not equate to the de-radicalisation of their interactions with the community. Alongside the teaching of life skills and general education, Ominara's youth hostel regularly held Black history study groups for the residents , providing the Black radical political education required to convey Black personal lived experiences within the context of racialised oppression. The ethos of Ominara's early years centre was akin to the UK Black supplementary school movement; An educational

movement began by Afro-Caribbean communities throughout Britain in the mid-1960's in response to systemic racial inequality experienced by Black children in the British education system (Coard, 1973; Gerrard, 2013).

Through the provision of a culturally centred curriculum, designed to instil pride and foster self-confidence in preschool age children, just as the Black supplementary schooling movement, the early years centre aimed to counteract the detrimental impact that racial bias in the mainstream British school system was having upon the educational attainment and self-esteem of Black children (Andrews, 2014). Ominara's bookshop provided not only a source of revenue for the organisation, but in addition served as a space that the organisation used to provide additional services. The book shop hosted clubs, tea and coffee mornings for the elderly, and a citizen's advice bureau. Furthermore, Ominara upheld a strong community presence throughout the decades, by supporting other local Black community services and organisations in an affiliative capacity. An all-Black staff across the organisation's services strengthened cohesion between the organisation with the wider community, as volunteers and employees were able to build relationships with the wider community upon a bridge of shared lived experience.

Holding the education and empowerment of the local Black community as a core value of its services, enabled the Ominara organisation to avoid falling entirely into the "social consciousness vs dole-outs" dichotomy (Constantino-David, 1982), an issue that is often encountered by community organisations. When aiding communities in fulfilling their basic and immediate needs, a

community organisation can become distracted from directing its political work to addressing existing structural oppressions that have created conditions that have necessitated that such an organisation be in existence in the first instance (Constantino-David: 1982:195-196). Whilst the Igbala organisation sought to provide the spaces required to contribute to the radicalisation of Black community consciousness that would potentially prepare those who engaged, to partake in the building of Black radical futures in other spaces, due to the financial conflict of interest that doing so would pose, the Ominara organisation did not offer a community space or education that encouraged direct engagement with Black radical political activism.

Thus, whilst not falling directly into social-consciousness vs dole-outs dichotomy, did come close to doing so. Ominara, in its creation of a Black civil society, as “a realm where citizens associate (and organise) according to their own interests” outside of the direct control of state governance (Carothers, 1999: 18), was of inherent Black radical political value, as a civil society is integral to the establishment of a Black radical counter public. Notwithstanding, the Ominara organisation was a culturally specific provider of public services, that sought to support the Black community (specifically the Afro-Caribbean community), with integrating into mainstream societal institutions, and not in mobilising for direct action to dismantle these systems. In a classic case of catch-22, any direct engagement in Black radical political action by the Ominara organisation, such as publicly aligning the organisation’s image and/or name with Black radical protest or mandate, could have compromised the future of the organisation altogether.

Whilst funded on a consistent basis throughout the years of its service to the community, it is noteworthy to mention that the receipt of ongoing state sponsorship did not safeguard the Ominara organisation from experiencing financial hardship throughout their forty-plus years of local community service provision. The organisation often struggled to attain sufficient funds to meet the ever-increasing costs of their services throughout the years. Financial strain, both from the shortfall of available funding to meet growing organisational costs, and internal financial mismanagement eventually took its toll, resulting in the reduction to the organisation's service provision throughout the 1990's, and a complete halt to all services by the early 2000's (as initially detailed in chapter four).

Community engagement

Prior to the official merging of the two organisations, it had been agreed upon that the Kenyatta organisation would adopt the political identity of the Igbala organisation: This identity consisting of the political ideology, constitution, and organisational objectives. In addition to the organisation's assets, any passive income generated by these assets and any pre-existing funds, of which were inherited from Ominara as a parent organisation, membership fees would remain the organisation's main source of revenue for the Kenyatta organisation. The transfer of financial capital and property assets from the elder, to the newly merged organisation instilled a confidence that immediate and consistent progress towards the younger organisation's objective of obtaining a headquarters from which to mobilise the local Black community

could be made, whilst maintaining the ability to uphold the Black radical tenets of self-determination and autonomy, would be made. The unification of Igbala's political vision with Ominara's assets, provided a feasible route for progression towards an insular, community-led Black radical grassroots community organisation.

A significant change that followed the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, was the level of organisational community engagement. Focused solely upon engagement with the community in the three years of existence before the merge, the attention of the board of the previous Igbala organisation (now the Kenyatta board majority), became centred around the renovation and opening of the early years centre; The building that had spearheaded the merge between the two organisations. All Kenyatta organisational activity during the period of data collection consisted primarily of board meetings, and board site visits to the organisation's properties. Consistent community facing engagement, in comparison to the frequency of which community events had taken place prior to the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, had effectively ceased; Resulting in the diminishment of the community presence that the organisation had established.

During the period of data collection, the only anticipated forms of community outreach of the Kenyatta organisation were those managed by either one or more individuals on the board. These forms of engagement were the organisation's blog, which was the sole ongoing form of community engagement following the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, and a podcast. Both the editor and editor-in-chief of the blog sat on the board, and

thus the blog did not require ongoing engagement with the wider community in order to be progressed.

Despite numerous brainstorming sessions and demo recordings by several of the younger members of the board (including myself), following the departure of the project lead from the board, the podcast never aired a single episode. Furthermore, both projects only facilitated virtual engagement with the organisation, and not in-person face-to-face community engagement for which the Igbala organisation had come to be known in its pre-merger state. Over the course of 18 months of data collection, only four community facing community events took place; All of which were poorly attended in comparison to the events hosted by the Igbala organisation prior to the merging of the two organisations.

25.04.18

Ahead of this evening's board meeting, Katrina and I arranged a phone call to discuss the idea of hosting community movie nights at a local Black owned community space in order to re-engage with the community. During this conversation, we discussed the detrimental impact that the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation has had upon the community presence that had been established by the Igbala organisation. We had now become so preoccupied with the amount of work required for the renovation of the early years building, that none of us had the time, energy or will to arrange organisational activity outside of board meetings, and so had collectively resigned to not doing so, at least for now.

As Igbala being an organisation upon which the progression and growth of, had been hinged upon the ongoing financial support of the local Black community, community disengagement was primarily a consequence of the newfound capacity of the Igbala portion of the board, due to the acquisition of substantial funds from the elder organisation in the merge, to financially support organisational endeavours without immediate community support. The early years building was one of two properties owned that had been previously owned by the Ominara organisation, and the avenue through which the Igbala organisation's vision of independently owning a headquarters and community space could be actualised. Had the Kenyatta organisation not been in possession of the substantial funds required to begin renovation of the early years building, then financial support from the wider community of which the Igbala organisation had been so reliant upon prior to the merger, would have continued to have been so. Furthermore, due to the organisation's second property, of which provided a source of passive income resulting from being let to tenants, meant that prioritisation of ongoing face to face community engagement as a prerequisite for the continuous drive for membership was no longer imperative for the progression of the organisation. The Kenyatta organisation board's adoption of a closed, operational style following its establishment, in its confliction with the community facing operational style of the Igbala organisation, led to the organisation practically functioning in such a way that situated the organisation's immediate operations away from, rather than in collaboration with the wider community. Allowing a change in financial situation to take precedence over political

vision when ordering the steps of operational style, undermined the symbiotic relationship between the organisation and the community as the overarching ethos of egalitarianism of the organisation's democratic centralist structure, and a pre-requisite for the achievement of a counter-publican political space of Black radical unity.

Social bonding capital

The financial position of the Kenyatta organisation allowed the board to retreat from community engagement for some time, in order to focus their efforts towards to their short-term objective of renovating and opening the early years centre. The plan being, to then 'reveal' the building renovation in the style of an organisational relaunch, with the hope that it would be demonstrative to the community, that the organisation was making progress and therefore had a future that was, indeed worth investing their own time, and financial support into. The amount time and effort required for the planning of community-facing events to the standard of that the community had come to expect from the organisation, in addition to the management of ongoing board duties, provides a reasonable explanation as to why the Kenyatta organisation's board withdrew from regular community engagement. However, such a decision undermined the cruciality of consistent community engagement for the political mobilisation of bonding social capital.

Social bonding capital, a form of social capital, is a sense of connection and comradery that is built through interaction between those who of the same,

or share parts of identity to oneself (Claridge, 2018). As an organisation with the objective of mobilising the local Black community in response to shared experiences under systemic racism, bonding social capital is a concept upon which the organisation's political tenet of Black radical unity rested. Due to the withdrawal from the Igbala board from the community however, both in the six months leading up to the official merging of the two organisations and continuing following the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation; The new organisation's opportunity to build upon the bonding social capital that had been established with the local Black community by the Igbala organisation, during a crucial time of transition, was missed.

In accordance with the closed board operational style adopted into the Kenyatta organisation, those that had engaged with the Igbala organisation prior to the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation were be reintroduced to it anew, now a new organisation, with a new name. The community involvement in the journey in reaching such a point however, non-existent. The potential of bonding social capital as a foundation for collective committed action to a community organisation, is located not only in the shared identity and/or experiences of the individuals in relation to the cause or issue upon which the activism is predicated, but in community involvement in the practical aspects of activism. As it pertains to the two elements upon which social capital is built upon; Trust and association, (Paxton, 1999) , the closed operational style of the Kenyatta board was not conducive to strengthening the social bonding capital between the organisation and the local community.

Community engagement and community support

A key point of observation in the relationship between the organisation and the community as a key determinant of the future of the Kenyatta organisation, is the relationship between community engagement, and community support. Following a disagreement between the treasurer of the (formerly) Ominara organisation, and a majority of the other Kenyatta board members, the Ominara treasurer had refused to honour a central stipulation of the Igbala and Ominara merge; The transferral of full organisational funds from the Ominara bank account to the newly established Kenyatta organisation bank account (The situation was first mentioned and fully explained in chapter four). Consequently, the Kenyatta board were placed in a position in which we were longer able to access the funds that had been allocated to the renovation of the early years project. To overcome such a significant setback, the decision was taken by the board, to reach out to the community for financial assistance in order to avoid any further disruption to the renovation schedule of the early year's building.

02.07.18

In today's board meeting, fundraising was raised as a matter of urgency. We were quickly reaching the end of our existing funds, and the disagreement with Watson over the Ominara bank transfer had yet to be resolved. The chairman suggested that we launch a crowdfunding page to raise the £15,000 and suggested that we share the petition on all of our social media platforms, including the organisation's blog. I was unsure of how successful this would be and stated that fundraising was a project that required focused and dedicated effort. I communicated to

the board that £15,000 was a substantial amount of money to raise, and that launching a crowdfunding page alone would not be sufficient. For the community to be invested in the opening of the early years building project, and the organisation altogether, we must reconnect with the people, and be as present in the community as we once were. The board all agreed unanimously to launch a crowdfunding page.

20.08.18

Today, I checked the organisation's online crowdfunding campaign page. The page contained a post written by the chairman detailing all that the organisation's board had endured in the dispute with Watson, and explained that the organisation was reaching out to the community for help. The page had garnered over 5000 views and 49 shares. However, the organisation had raised only £640.00 towards the £15,000, from 18 contributors .

The lack of community engagement by the Kenyatta board leading up to, and following its establishment, contradicted the open operational style that underpinned the organisation's democratic centralist structure, and of which prefaced the Igbala organisation's objective of creating a space conducive to actioning an egalitarian model of Black radical unity. However, it must be acknowledged that despite the Igbala organisation's consistent engagement with the local community prior to the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, that the Igbala organisation had still faced ongoing struggle in converting such engagement into a growing dues-paying membership base. Therefore, the relationship between engagement with the community, and the lacklustre community support to the fundraising efforts, despite such a wide

viewership of the fundraising campaign, cannot be deemed to be linearly causative.

The wide viewership garnered by the online fundraiser campaign was illustrative only of the organisation's maintenance of their online presence. The lack of financial support from the wider community, in instances both with, and without ongoing community engagement by the organisation, highlights the same lack of conversion of community engagement, into committed community support of the organisation's long-term objectives. Whilst a lack of face-to-face community engagement would certainly deplete the social bonding capital of the organisation with the local community, in the case of the Kenyatta organisation, it is not the level of social bonding capital that lay central to the relationship between community engagement and community support. The relationship between community engagement of Igbala organisation prior to, and community support following the establishment of the Kenyatta organisation, lay in a misalignment between the actual function of the Kenyatta organisation as it pertains to its organisational objectives, and its public engagement.

Despite being a political space, with explicit political intention, the wide community engagement achieved by the Igbala organisation had been achieved through providing a culturally sensitive space of engagingly delivered political education, yet there had been no requirement made by the Igbala organisation, of the community to make a commitment to the organisation at any point by becoming dues-paying members. Thus, the future of the organisation, reliant upon the building of the Igbala organisation's community

presence through the provision of a politically educational, and social space in exchange for a financial (and, hopefully time) investment of attendees, had seen the organisation's future come to be rested upon a transactional relationship with the community. However, this transaction was seldom honoured on the behalf of the community.

Whether in consistent engagement with the community or not, the Igbala organisation's presentation of itself to, and engagement with the local community primarily as a leisure space, directly contributed to the struggle of the Kenyatta board in garnering financial support for the organisation in the fulfilment of its objectives, rooted in concerted community based political action. In its early years, the Igbala organisation, whilst a political space was engaged with primarily as a place of leisure, rather than one of collective political action. The two were entwined however, as the organisation provided political education as a form of leisure, and thus because a space of 'leisure education'.

'Casual' leisure

Casual and serious leisure are two key concepts of focus, in presentation of how the marketisation of leisure education, or Black political education engaged as leisure specifically, has caused a significant shift in the nature of the relationship between Black community organisations and local Black communities. Casual leisure is most simply defined as a form of leisure that is "intrinsically rewarding, relatively short-lived pleasurable activity [and] requiring little or no special training to enjoy it" (Stebbins, 1997:18) . Examples of casual leisure can range from a trip to the theatre, or to a

restaurant. Casual leisure activities are typically episodic, non-committal and without profound consequence of influence to any other facet of one's life (Stebbins, 1997). Distinguishing serious leisure from casual leisure, aids in highlighting that the provision of education by a Black community organisation with political objectives, is determined as serious leisure and fulfils the foundational function of the organisation; To politically educate the local Black community. Community participation in the political education provided by the organisation followed by collective actioning of what has been learnt, is required to action the transformative function of the organisation, which is to actualise political education through mobilisation, and contribute towards the building of the organisation as a Black counter-publican space through which political unification with other Black community organisations, collective and initiatives, locally, nationally, and internationally can take place.

'Serious' politically engaged leisure

The exact requirements of the leisure activity for it to be constituted as serious, and not casual leisure are: "1) Need to persevere at the activity, 2) The availability of a leisure career, 3) A need to put in effort to gain skill and knowledge, 4) Realisation of various special benefits, 5) Unique ethos and social world, and 6) An attractive personal and social identity." (Pickard, 2017:4) . Stebbins (1997) does not consider engagement in politically natured activity as leisure in any form (Pickard, 2017), however engagement with a community organisation with a political identity and objectives is considered here to meet the criteria of serious leisure, as it fulfils all of the requirements

as listed. Politically natured leisure is diverse and often constituting of both casual and serious leisure, and so there is need to place politically natured leisure within Its own category, as ‘politically engaged leisure’ (Pickard, 2017).

Politically engaged leisure can take the form of both non-conventional political participation (E.G. Sit-ins, protests, and social movement involvement), and conventional participation (E.G. Electoral voting or becoming a political party member). Politically engaged leisure is “dependent upon a sense of citizenship and is important to both individual and collective identities through shared political values and goals” (Pickard, 2017:5). Historically, Black political education has predominantly taken place at a grassroots level, in the community, and outside of official institutions of political participation, education and work; Therefore, has always in one shape or form, been politically engaged leisure. Thus, engagement with a Black community organisation with political objectives such as the Kenyatta organisation (then Igbala), would fall into the category of non-conventional politically engaged leisure. Politically engaged leisure, in being a merge of the characteristics of both casual and serious leisure (Stebbins, 2017), calls for consideration of the causal relationship between the fate of Black community-based organisations as a provider of politically engaged leisure, and ongoing community engagement.

The reliance of the progression, growth and, consequently the future of a self-funded Black community organisation with political objectives like the Kenyatta organisation, upon having those of whom who engage with it,

fulfilling the requirements that deems said engagement as serious leisure (primarily through the donation of personal finance and time), places such organisations in a precarious position. A position that is not only hinged upon the mass donation of finance, but also upon the mass donation of time; A conversion of episodic and non-committal casual engagement, into a long-term desire to pursue a serious 'leisure career' as a community activist by an significant number of people.

Leisure education

The concept of leisure education has various definitions. The one that shall be applied here is leisure education as the "lifelong learning process that helps people achieve through socially acceptable leisure activities, their fullest leisure potential and desirable quality of life...". This of which can take place "...within a wide variety of settings, both formal and informal" (Stebbins, 1999:14). Leisure education is concerned with "helping all persons develop appreciations, interests, skills, and opportunities that will enable them to use their leisure in personally rewarding ways" in various facets of their lives. (Brightbill, 1961: 188) .

As aforementioned earlier on in this chapter, the Igbala organisation, in its provision of political education in the format of community facing events (E.G., Film documentary screenings, conferences, speaking engagements, book talks, panel discussions, youth focused events and lectures), were navigated towards disseminating Black radical political history and thought. Igbala engaged with the community in such a way that was conducive to its

political objectives, fulfilling all the characteristics of effective leisure education by providing “Lifelong learning, social participation, diminishing constraints [does not interfere with the fulfilment of other life responsibilities and needs], inclusivity, and a moral and social responsibility” (WLRA, 1993:13)

The progressive indistinction between leisure and educational spaces through the progression of time into contemporary society, has typically followed the developmental stages of the capitalist economy. Leisure education began in the 19th century, at the onset of the industrial age, and was initially purposed to initiate the working-class masses into the industrialised working model of shorter working days, with heightened efficiency. Leisure and material consumption have been at the heart of the industrialised service-based economy since the onset of industrialisation; The solidification of the entwinement between consumerism and leisure, a central characteristic of industrialised societies. (Nahrstedt et al, 2000) .

A Black radical, politically engaged, leisure education

The community events held by the Kenyatta organisation, being both politically engaged leisure and a leisure education, is termed here as a politically engaged leisure education, specifically, in acknowledgement of the politics of the organisation; *A Black radical* politically engaged leisure education. A politically engaged leisure education offers those that engage, a space of social and cultural enrichment, affirmation, and upliftment. A Black radical politically engaged leisure education aids the development of

understanding of the relationship between racialised power dynamics and societal conditions and subsequently, one's articulation of their individual racialised experiences in relation to social, political, and cultural constructs and systems .

Black radical political leisure education as 'edutainment'.

As data collection took place solely within the governing board of the Kenyatta organisation and not the wider community, it is not possible to provide analysis any specific factor that dissuaded any one individual within the community +who engaged with the organisation, to not take the decision to convert this engagement from 'casual', to 'serious' politically engaged leisure. Thus, it is the influence of political-economic and socio-cultural change through the passing of time, as the contextual framework of prominence throughout this thesis, to which the changing role of Black community organisations in the lives of Black communities shall be directed. Whilst the first and foremost function of a Black community organisation as a political space, is to provide the community with a political education, the conversion of community engagement to committed community support, and therefore from 'casual' to 'serious' leisure, must be contextualised in consideration of the commodification of political education in the contemporary leisure market.

Leisure education events facilitating discourse regarding issues that concern Black lives and experiences specifically, have become increasingly popular in recent years . Taking the form of both virtual (pre-recorded and live streamed), and face-to-face events, there are A myriad of formats through which leisure

education can be engaged in the present day. The Igbala organisation since its establishment had hosted events in the form of symposium-styled debate and discussion panels, open discussions, informal lectures, podcasts, and book talks. These events provided not only as a space to be informed, but an outlet for critical and dialectical explorations of the topic at hand.

Black politically engaged leisure education has gained popularity in recent years due to the accessibility that such spaces provide to specialist knowledge and expertise opinion. This popularity is underpinned by an increasing interest for public discourse through which social issues impacting Black lives are critically presented and dialectically explored. Multiple community events held by the Igbala organisation and then by the Kenyatta organisation, featured individuals deemed to have expertise knowledge on the specific issue or topic at hand. Such knowledge and expertise gained either academically, in industry, or through lived experiences (activist endeavours or personal life). Some of the Igbala organisation's most well-attended events were those featuring prominent activists, authors, academics, and industry advocates for improving racial inequality.

The surge of interest and engagement with Black political education, became re-ignited by the light that has been being shed on ongoing systemic racism since the mid 2010's. The placed Black community organisational provision of Black political education as a commodity in the leisure education market. A space in which Black community organisations of the past did not reside. The Igbala/Kenyatta organisation was established specifically to mobilise organised community action in response to conditions of systemic racism,

and thus engaging with the community to provide a Black political education, a precursor to anticipated *collective and revolutionary* political action. Whilst the events held by the Igbala/Kenyatta organisation were always delivered with the purpose of calling the local Black community to committed collective action, the marketisation of politically engaged leisure education overall, has not only casualised engagement of Black communities with Black community organisations that provide Black political education, but has also individualised said engagement.

16.04.18

Earlier on today, Katrina and I spoke on the phone about the online fundraising page. We discussed how despite being so well-known in the community only two years ago, and with so many people who had attended our events still connected to us on social media, I was surprised that there had not been a higher amount of funds raised. Katrina replied that as the organisation had not been hosting face to face events for some time, many of the people who once had attended, had moved onto other spaces who were providing the similar events. People had just 'moved on'. At that point It occurred to me that those who had attended the organisation's events regularly at one point yet had been reluctant to make any longer-term commitment to the organisation's work or objectives, had engaged with the organisation primarily for an educational and entertaining afternoon or evening, and not much more than that.

The 'woke' capital of the Black political education

The surge of public engagement with political mobilisation, and of popular discourse concerned with systemic inequalities faced by individuals racialised as non-white (Alongside other demographics who are disproportionately disadvantaged by the structural facets of inequality on the grounds of gender, sexuality, age, disability, or religious beliefs and values), intersects with the rise of 'woke capital', that has, since the early 2010's, contributed significantly to the marketisation and commodification of social justice political activism. 'Woke' capital is typically utilised to describe the attempt of corporations to garner public favour from their existing customer base, (in addition to attempting to attract more customers), through the alignment of a company's public image, with timely social justice issues and social movements; This , a deviation from the overall apolitical stance upheld by large corporations in the past. Woke capital is the conceptual amalgamation of consumer culture, identity, and politics, for economic ends (Fan, 2019) .

A prominent route through which a corporations seek to raise their 'woke capital', is through the aligning of the corporation's brand image with any particular social cause (Riley, 2020) . This is often undertaken by way of making a large (public) donation, by sponsoring charity events, or by pledging a percentage of business proceeds to supporting the socio-political cause or issue. Such measures have been termed as 'commodity activism' (Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser, 2012). In the spirit of 'anti-capitalist capitalism', commodity activism aligns a corporation's product with the raising of awareness of the issue at hand, and as per its pledge, seeks to aim to bring

about change, and presents the consumption of its product as an opportunity for consumers to contribute to supporting addressal of the matter. Ironically, commodity activism supports the idea that capitalist interest can be conducive to the betterment of issues that have either been created or aggravated by the capitalist market in the first instance.

When considering the engagement of Igbala/Kenyatta organisation by the local Black community organisation as a provider of leisure education, and considering the relationship between the organisation and the community within a market producer-consumer model; the concepts of 'Woke capital' (Rhode, 2021) and 'commodity activism' (Mukherjee & Banet-Weiser, 2012) aids articulation of how Black community organisations with political objectives are undermined in garnering committed ongoing community support by the cultural phenomenon, that is the commodification of the tenets of Black radical community activism in a neo-liberal market. Corporations engaging in commodity activism in order to garner 'woke capital', do so in pursuit of profit (and tax exemption purposes). As a space established to pursue the actualisation of a racially just society, constructed upon a political outlook that seeks to dismantle the conditions that make it so, the Igbala/Kenyatta organisation possessed intrinsic 'woke capital', and thus had no need to attempt to conjure such capital through commodity activism.

The Black political education provided by the organisation was engaged with by the community overall, in the fashion in which a consumer would engage with a corporation utilising commodity activism. Whilst there was no 'product' for sale, the marketisation of political education through leisure events, like

the corporation, contributes to the cultural normalisation of the consumer activist. In the era of the marketisation of activism, the Kenyatta organisation's marketisation of Black political education, sees the organisation come to be commodified by its own woke capital. This capital, whilst drawing engagement, sees the value of the transformational purpose of the organisation become undermined.

Black neo-liberal radicalism

In the previous chapter, it was presented that for a majority of the younger board members, involvement in the Kenyatta board was directly aligned with the individual pursuit of human capital in the form of experience, in order to be leveraged for benefit in the neo-liberal labour market. This was argued to have compromised their involvement's intrinsic value, with the commitment to remaining involved in the organisation becoming reduced primarily, to the fulfilment of conditions pertaining to individual gain. Just as the younger members of the board, the wider community are too subject to neo-liberal conditions and values, and so the effectiveness of the community engagement with the Kenyatta organisation was, like as experienced by the younger board members, restricted by the conceptual objectives of neo-liberal ideologue (individualism, self-reliance and accumulation of wealth and resources) than govern contemporary society. These restrictions all encapsulated by self-interest. The Igbala/Kenyatta organisation provided access to a political education, that could be incorporated into the relevant areas of individual lives (E.G. The workplace, home, and personal wellbeing, and when interacting with societal institutions including healthcare, education, and the legal system) in order to empower themselves and those closest to them. Yet

whilst engagement with this political education was tethered the political identity and objective of the organisation, it was not contingent upon an individual commitment to ongoing individual engagement with the overarching objectives of the organisation, nor the wellbeing of the community overall.

One example of this was the Organisation's youth conference. In 2015, preceding the time of data collection, the Igbala organisation had arranged and hosted a youth conference, purposed with introducing children aged between 5 and 15 years of age, to speakers who were specialised in their concern with the educational, mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing of Black children. The topics of the talks given were focused upon the importance of education, health and nutrition, self-esteem, racial pride and Black history. During the period of data collection, the conference was referred numerous times, to as the most successful of all of the organisation's events that had ever been held, having been so well-attended.

Katrina stated that many of the parents that she had spoken with since the conference, had very much enjoyed it and that she had been asked repeatedly if, and when there would be another. She went on to say that many parents had enjoyed the conference as it had provided their child with positive Black representation. The conference had aided parents in communicating to their children that if they worked hard, and focused upon doing well in school, that they could grow up and be able to 'get good jobs' and 'be somebody', just like the speakers that they had seen that day .

Empowering Black children to strive for educational, and in turn socio-economic success, along with the provision of positive Black representation is not problematised here. Contrarily, it is a required service of Black community organisations for Black children, and was one of the objectives of the conference. Highlighted as the point of critique, is the engagement of the children with the organisation by parents, primarily to aid their integration into mainstream societal constructions of what it would mean to be 'successful'. This, a mirror of what had been observed in the board; The organisation being engaged primarily with the long-term intention of individual, rather than collective benefit in mind. This is demonstrative of how the Igbala organisation was being engaged as a space of Black radical neo-liberalism. A term coined here, that of which prior to defining, must be prefaced with the definition of its conceptual predecessor; 'liberal radicalism' (Andrews, 2018). Liberal radicalism is a culmination of liberal and radical political ideologue and objective, buttressed by those who "embrace radical theory, but ignore radical solutions because we benefit from the liberal system" (Andrews, 2018:217).

However confrontationally or boldly petitioned in the name of social justice and equality, liberal radicalism endorses radical political measures only insofar to the extent in which Black communities are enabled to reside in a society that has undergone no actual revolutionary change, but rather, has achieved what Andrews terms, "symptom free racism" (2018:217). This, A society that whilst averse to overt racism in the social world, is constructed upon racially unjust laws, political policy, and institutional practices. In

expansion upon this concept, neo-liberal radicalism is termed here as the (often marketised) provision of resources that facilitate radically liberal political discourse and action.

Neo-liberal radicalism supports neo-liberal ideology and conditions in a dualistic fashion. Firstly, by commodifying and marketising Black radical political thought, theory and action and secondly, through aiding the dissemination of liberal radicalism into wider society, through discursive discourses of continuity and change as it pertains to racial inequality, that as discussed in the previous chapter, take place within the liminal space between racial progressivism and post-racialism, within which the Black neo-liberal subject is suspended, as presented in the previous chapter. The widespread provision of equality and diversity training education within workplace organisations, is one example of how the tenets upon which the state pursuit of a racially tolerant society is based, have been disseminated into the societal institutions to support the development of a racially tolerant workplace culture. The implementation of equal opportunity policies and practices in the workplace is in response to the addressal of institutional systemic racism by social policies instated throughout the decades (E.G. The race relations acts of, 1965, 1968, 1976, and the race relations amendment act of 2000- All of which were culminated alongside other forms of discrimination into the equality act of 2010). The act of 1976 was specifically instated in order to explicitly outlaw racially discriminative hiring practices and treatment in the workplace. The purpose of equal opportunity policy and

practices is to actively take measures to address and mitigate identity-based inequalities.

Despite the fashion in which it was engaged with the community overall, as an organisation with clear political objectives, the lack of conversion of community engagement, to equivalent committed support (both in time and finance), and so the lack of conversion from the foundational, to transformative function of the organisation, is not perceived here as attributable to the Kenyatta organisation operating intentionally, as a space of liberal radicalism. What it is signifiable of however, are the adaptations of strategy that the Black community organisation of contemporary society is required to make in order to maintain community engagement. Black community organisations are tasked with providing avenues to securing the committed and ongoing involvement of the community, and thus should not rely entirely upon one form of community engagement in achieving this objective. A key pitfall of the Igbala organisation, however, was not imposing an admission fee for all events held in order to generate income, even in the absence of membership uptake. This further highlights another point of conflict between societal conditions and Black radical political objective, as to seek payment from the wider community in exchange for the provision of a Black radical political education is incongruent with the Black radical tenet of communalism.

For this reason, it is not asserted here that it was an misstep on the part of the Igbala organisation in attempting to attract the community to engage with its political education as a form of 'edutainment', nor is it put forth that Black

community organisations of the 1960's and 1970's were not too, engaged by local communities as casual, as opposed to serious leisure spaces, as these organisations served a social, in addition to political function (Wild, 2000). Furthermore, the lack of community support of the Igbala, and subsequently Kenyatta organisation cannot be solely attributed to the transformative influence of neo-liberal conditions and ideologue upon Black conceptualisations of freedom, as demarcated by the 'neo-liberal turn' at the end of the 1970's, (Spence, 2011); nor to the marketisation, and commodification of activism since the mid 2010's as such an issue precedes both, and even precedes the Black power movement itself. Akin to the Igbala organisation, the Organisation of Afro American Unity (OAAU), also had trouble in converting community engagement into community support, "hundreds would regularly turn out for OAAU events but refuse to pay the \$2 membership fee" (Marable, 2011: 89) .

Conclusion

In addressal of research question one, as it pertains to the relationship between the local Black community and the Black community organisation, (*How is Black radicalism carried out in practice?*), this chapter presents that Black radicalism in contemporary community organisation is carried out in practice through the cultivation of this relationship, which can only be strengthened upon the reciprocal exchange of the outreach of the organisation with the community, and in return, the financial support and commitment of time of the local Black community, to the political work and objectives of the

organisation. This reciprocity is pivotal for the longevity of Black community organisations that seeks to fulfil the Black radical objective of building a community-led, counter-publican institution of Black radical unity.

The organisation provided a 'safe space' where A Black political education, pertaining specifically to social issues directly brought about by systemically unjust systems could be discussed to arm the local community with social and political insight, and the terminology required to effectively articulate the limitations that such conditions have directly imposed upon their own lives. Such an education, aiding in disentangling conceptualisations of Black liberation that have been convoluted by neo-liberal ideologues through the liberalisation of Black radical ideals, as theorised by Spence's neo-liberal turn (2012). Simultaneously, the organisation provided a space where the "dream of a new world", upon which the Black radical imagination is constructed (Kelley,2002:3), could be cultivated. It is necessary to state at this point, however that despite being deemed insufficient for sustaining a self-funded organisation, the efforts of the local community to support the Igbala organisation through event attendance, are not overlooked. Any utilisation of the political education gained through engagement with a Black community organisation, in improving the life experiences of oneself and others in mainstream society, is political action.

Whilst racial inequality remains a systemic reality, the overall social progressivism of British society over the last 70 years has resulted in an overall dissipation of urgency that had once underpinned committed involvement in community based, Black community organisations with

political objectives. The political and socio-cultural liberalisation of society through the passing of time, has resulted in contemporary societal conditions as sufficiently 'symptom-free' of racist treatment, for the majority of the Black British demographic to forgo mass response.

In reference to research question two (*What long-term and short-term obstacles must be overcome to secure the future of Black community organisations in contemporary British society*); The instating of urgency pertaining to the need for Black community organisations with a Black radical politics, to the extent that a larger demographic of the Black communities not only engage, but are ignited to commit their personal time and/or finances to grassroots efforts in the building of Black counter publican institutions, is one of the greatest obstacles spanning both the short, and long-term, that faces the future of Black community organisations in 21st century Britain. The challenge so great, that reliance upon the commitment of local communities for financial income to sustain Black community organisations, initiates contemplation as to whether a mass membership model of self-funded community organisation is sustainable for such an endeavour.

In acknowledgement that "the struggle is never an event, it's a process, a continual eternal process" (Ture, 1996), this sentiment must too, be applied to the community engagement to support conversion. As a result, whilst in the journey to garnering community-based financial support, Black community organisations would do well to establish multiple streams of financial income. Perhaps contrarily to the line of argument presented thus far, it would be favourable for self-funded Black community organisations to

embrace the marketisation of Black political education and remain strategic regarding how to maximise most effectively their ‘woke capital’, without compromising their political integrity.

Such a recommendation stokes contemplation as to how attributable the success of Igbala’s rate of community engagement, is due to the heightened social and political attention that the topic of racial (in)justice was garnering both nationally and globally during 2013, the year of Igbala’s establishment. The significance of this year, being that it was also the year in which the Black Lives Matter movement began. If the popularity of community engagement with, and/or support of Black community organisations, is in synchronisation with social and political trends, or driven by the most recent racially motivated transgression, crime or scandal, then what is required of Black community organisations in order to maintain their relevance, and thus their future in contemporary Black life ‘in the everyday’ is of the highest priority. The Igbala organisation was fortunate in being presented with the opportunity to merge with an organisation that was both politically compatible, and much more affluent than itself. This enabled the organisation to secure substantial finances, property for the furthering of its work, and property as a source of passive income. Notwithstanding, when encountering financial hardship, it was the local Black community alone to which the organisation was able to turn, for immediate aid.

Conclusion

Reviving radicalism?

“I have never cared very much for personal prizes. A person does not become a freedom fighter in the hope of winning awards.”

-Nelson Mandela.

Introduction

This thesis has sought to explore the future of Black community organisations in 21st century Britain. Chapter one explored the philosophies, alongside the political concepts and ideologies that have underpinned the formation of the Black radical tradition. Additionally, this chapter outlined Black radical unity as the conceptual framework of this research, derived from the political ideology of Black radicalism; Of which presents that the western world is built upon racism, and racism remains systemically central in western societies until the present day (Andrews, 2018). Black radical unity was presented as the pre-condition required for the actualisation of Black independent nation building, of which the ideology of Black radicalism places as necessary to build a radical political unity that is transcendent of nation-state borders that is, in turn achieved through the tenets of Black radical unity, 1) A commitment to Black social, cultural, political and economic egalitarianism, and 2) An individual commitment to contribute towards collective action in meeting the overarching objective of actualising Black radical visions of liberation were outlined. Black radical unity was differentiated as a concept

that abandons the concept of 'race' as an externally enforced category of social status upon people of African descent, along with the socio-cultural systems that have justified hierarchical structures and practice in Black political organisations and spaces of the past, and that have contributed to their eventual fragmentation and decline. Instead, establishing Blackness as a unit of political essentialism that is based upon shared ancestry, and shared genealogical experiences of oppression.

Chapter two explored the history of Black political grassroots activism in Britain. The chapter was concerned with the influence of the progressive liberalisation of the political identity of Britain, through the state addressal of racist conditions and treatment, upon the overall deradicalisation of Black community organisations of the Black power era of the 1960's, and the diminishing of Black radical tradition in Britain for the latter part of the 20th century. The neo-liberalisation of the economic structure of Britain throughout the 1980's was discussed, and was considered important for its role in the formation of the Black neo-liberal subject; An identity defined by the absorption of ideals that have been historically aligned with Black radical politics, such as collective self-determination, into the neo-liberal ideals of self-responsibility and individualism. This, resulting in a distortion of the Black radical visions of liberation as a united, politically led effort, and alternatively achievable as an individual, economically-led endeavour through the accumulation of individual wealth. The latter, being antithetical to Black radicalism, which deeming capitalism as the foundation of racism, deems

liberation as only being fully actualised upon the dismantling of the capitalist system.

Chapter three outlined the Black radical position on conducting research, methodologically. Alongside critiquing traditional sociology for its Eurocentric origins, Black sociology, the epistemological foundation of Black studies which is the discipline that is presented as appropriate for conducting research of political transformative potential was presented. Reflexivity as central to the integrity of the Black studies researcher integrity was presented as an additional ethical consideration. The empirical portion of the research was also outlined. The findings of chapters five, six and seven shall be discussed further throughout this chapter.

Findings

In addressal of the second question, 'What are long-term and short-term obstacles that Black community organisations face?', the empirical portion of this research was concerned with identifying factors that impeded upon the practical functioning and progression of the organisation towards its objectives. Each chapter of analysis focused upon obstacles facing the organisation, which were situated directly in the fragmentation within one of the three relationships that must be continuously maintained and strengthened to support the progression of A self-funded, Black political counter publican community space like the Kenyatta organisation. These relationships being 1) The interpersonal relationships between organisational members (particularly between those in governing positions), 2) The

relationship between the members, and the organisation, and 3) The relationship between the organisation and the wider community. Agency and structure were both found to contribute towards the obstacles faced by the Kenyatta organisation. It is concluded that although it was through the agency of the board members that a majority of the challenges faced in the Kenyatta board were perpetuated; Individual and collective agency were directly imposed upon by, and reflective of the norms, values, expectations and regulations of contemporary Britain as they are accepted and adhered to by the societal majority.

Time

As it pertains specifically to the day-to-day matters in need of targeted and planned action, (E.G. Community engagement, activist strategies, recruitment and mitigating membership attrition), time (or lack thereof) is of the utmost importance when articulating how structure and agency collaboratively posed both short and long-term obstacles to the future of the Kenyatta organisation. Workplace responsibilities were presented as a key factor that posed interference with the ability of several of the board members to maintain the initial dedication of time made to the work of the organisation. The requirement to sell one's labour and along with it, time in exchange for a wage, and thus the workplace being the location in which employed, working-aged adults spend a majority of their time is no newly arisen reality, and thus is not an obstacle to Black community organisation that is unique to the present-day society. What was notable however, is the correlative relationship between the declining availability of pre-dedicated time, and the necessity to

tend to workplace responsibilities beyond scheduled working hours, and consequently the encroachment of work, upon leisure time. As the realm of time in which all of the responsibilities of one's life reside, the encroachment of working responsibilities upon leisure time as a feature of neo-liberal working culture is a key point in theorisations of how Black community based political organised mobilisation is practically actioned.

Alongside individualised workplace performance appraisal, neo-liberal organisational structures have introduced a perpetual state of economic instability that has been brought forth by a widespread casualisation of work, often in the forms of fixed term and 'zero-hour' contracts (Koumanta & Williams, 2009), in simultaneity with ever increasing living costs due to neo-liberal disdain of market regulation, and hence the requirement to submit to a life that is unequally balanced between work and leisure, has seen the rise of the neurotic citizen. This, a departure from the sufficient, autonomous and unrestricted image of the neo-liberal subject (Isin, 2004) Black community organisations are tasked with maintaining open lines of communication surrounding availability with those who occupy roles that are significant to the overall functioning of the organisation, as a means of time-conflict management.

Whilst at its core an anti-capitalist politics, Black radicalism embraces Black upward social mobility, and considers those who occupy traditionally middle-class careers, as valuable to the actualisation of Black radical visions of liberation (Andrews, 2014). One way of which, being through donation of human capital (education, skill or finance). Whilst a majority of the Kenyatta

board members were employed in what were traditionally considered to be middle-class occupations, when speaking strictly of a lack of time, consideration of the conditions that the infiltration of neo-liberal values into British working culture upon the individual ability to uphold an initial commitment to community activism, cannot be restricted to individuals of any specific occupation; As the impact of neo-liberal ideology upon working experiences, such as the rise of employment precarity, transcends sectors.

Finance

Despite the Kenyatta organisation having a substantial amount of funds, and a passive stream of income at the time of establishment, time spent upon the governance board of the Kenyatta organisation displayed the plethora of ways in which financial issues can introduce additional adversity to the already arduous task of progressing a non-profit community organisation. It was in relation to finance, that inter-generational fragmentations arose most fervently, and were presented to have been informed directly by an intergenerational misalignment in actioning the Black radical participatory ideals of self-determination and autonomy. This misalignment was located in a shift in societal norms relating to the mitigation of public health and safety risk, that is resultant of governmental regulations that have been put in place to mitigate public health and safety risk between the two periods of time of which each generation embarked upon involvement in community organisation. This resulted in an incongruent amount of significance between the two generations, being placed upon adhering to the present-day regulatory measures, that are purposed for the mitigation of public health and safety

risk. A key theorisation arising from the misalignment of participatory ideals intergenerationally, is that whilst the ideological tenets and ideals of a politics can remain unchanged over time, that what is an actioning of political ideals in practice is socially constructed, and therefore is subject to change. This is a finding that could provide a framework through which to analyse the significance of intergenerational relationships for the future of community spaces of which ancestral and/or cultural tradition and history are significant characteristics for the identity and objectives of the space.

Further interpersonal fragmentation relating to finance, resulting in inaccessibility to existing organisational funds, brought about discussion as to whether the organisational mass paid membership model as the primary means through which the organisation would receive external financial support, was feasible for supporting the organisation's growth. The observations made pertaining to finance and funding made it apparent, that a communal ownership model alone, would not be a sufficient funding strategy. Community donation will always be a central source of funding for self-funded Black community organisations, however sponsorship should be sought beyond private citizens to politically aligned businesses and fundraising collectives with other community based organisations, initiatives and projects.

The 'will' to build

An overarching factor that is embedded into much of the theorisation throughout all three chapters of analysis, (and is inclusive of the two

aforementioned sections), due to being closely connected to societal conditions brought forth by neo-liberalism, is the will to build. The will to build refers to an individual and collective adherence to the actions that are required to progress the work of community-based organisation. The will to build, or lack thereof was informed by the influence of these current societal conditions upon individual agency. In chapter two, the literature reviewed described the relationship between the establishment of Black community organisations and movements as a collective grassroots-level response to racist societal conditions in the 1960's and 1970's, and state responses to these forms of community action that followed. The argument put forth, that the implementation of race relations policy by the British state throughout the 1960's and 1970s, contributed significantly to the de-stabilisation of the British Black power movement, which resulted in the national addressal and response to racism becoming state, rather than community led.

It was also presented that the steadily progressive community engagement with Black community spaces as culturally, rather than politically centred institutions (this propelled by the deradicalisation of these spaces by state intervention), undermined the transformative potential of these spaces, and contributed to the overall disintegration of Black radical political culture In Britain. In reference to the liminality of the Black neo-liberal subject; An identity formed in the reality of being suspended between the triumphs of racial progressivism, and ongoing racial oppressions, and in review of the conditions that have brought forth collective Black responses to racism in the past; It is contemplated as to whether contemporary British society is 'racist

enough' to ignite the collective Black radical imagination to the extent that is required in order to sustain notable interest, involvement and commitment to Black radical community organised mobilisation over a sustained period of time. The overall lack of Black grassroots political culture, and consequently ongoing community led activism in contemporary Britain is indicative that only a minority of the Black British community are currently committing their time, resources, or human capital to community based and led political mobilised organisation. Whilst the ongoing influence of systemic racism upon unequal life outcomes is a typically accepted fact, it would be reasonable to state that an overall societal culture of racial tolerance has significantly depleted the collective 'will to build' Black community organisations for liberatory political purpose.

Further considerations

In answer to the research question: *What are the short, and long-term obstacles that Black community organisations face?* There are further factors to consider that did not arise in the data analysis of this research yet are noteworthy to mention: The changing ethnic demographic of Black Britain, and the institutionalisation of Black political discourse and action.

The changing ethnic demographic of Black Britain

As it pertains to post-WW2 Black British political history, Black organised mobilisation at a grassroots level in resistance to racism has historically, been actioned predominantly by those of Caribbean communities, with a majority

of Black political organisations of the past having been established by those of Afro-Caribbean descent. The Kenyatta organisation was no exception to this as all members of the board were of Caribbean descent, specifically Jamaican. The Caribbean population of the Black community in Britain, having a longer mass presence in the country than any other ethnicity of the African diaspora, was the predominant Black ethnicity in Britain for a majority of the 20th Century. However the ethnic composition of Black Britain has since changed since. The 2001 UK census showed that the Black African population size had grown at such an exponential rate during the 1980's and 1990's, that it almost equated that of the Black Caribbean community (Owen, 2006) . In the 2011 UK census, it was found that the number of British born Africans (323, 000) was only slightly led by the British born Afro-Caribbean population (358,000). Furthermore, non-British born Africans (666,000) outnumber the population of non-British born Caribbeans significantly (237,000) (ONS, 2015). In the census of 2021, 2.5% of the population identified as African, whilst those who identified as Afro-Caribbean comprised of only 1%; 0.5% identified as 'other' Black ethnic group.

Black radical unity as it has been presented in this thesis, is a concept that places genealogical ancestry as the centre of its presentation of pan-African political essentialism. This essentialism is necessary for bringing the conditions of Black liberation to fruition and seeks to deprioritise the significance of national or cultural differences in the collective commitment to resist the global racialised unequal distribution of power. This, imperative to meeting such an end. However, as it pertains to Black political history the

British context specifically, the significance of the overall changing ethnic demographic of Black Britain, upon the future of Black community organisations with any political objective, should not be underestimated. The changing demographic of Black Britain is not presented here as a disadvantage to the longevity of Black community organisations who seek to engage with a Black radical politics, as Black communities of varying ethnicities have in the past, and until the present day, engaged in coalition in opposition to racist conditions (Owusu-Kwarteng, 2017) .

Nonetheless, In order to maintain the egalitarianism that underpins the actualisation of Black radical unity, it is imperative that Black community organisations organising under the concept of Black radical unity, remain intentionally engaged with providing a space that seeks to collectively compartmentalise divisive narratives and belief systems that are often entrenched in cultural difference(s), in order to ensure that such differences do not interfere with both intra- and inter- organisational unity structurally, or in the day a day-today running of the space.

The institutionalisation, and marketisation of 'race' education

Alongside the rise of the leisure education economy, as discussed in chapter six, the mainstream institutionalisation of education pertaining to race is a reality that could negatively impact the future of Black community organisations. As explored in chapter two, the overall liberalisation of political and economic landscape of Britain, and as a consequence of the liberalisation

of socio-cultural landscape of the country, have contributed significantly to the overall decline of the Black community-based activism in Black British communities. The implementation of race relations policy, beginning in the 1960's, marked the beginning of a dialectic relationship between the British government as the ruling system of the nation-state, and Black (and other non-white) communities in Britain, by which the political, economic and legal framework of the nation-state at any given time, became responsive to mitigating any visible features or conditions that were derailing the actualisation of a racially just society. Despite the depletion of Black community based political activism throughout the decades, the legacy of the Black radical tradition in Britain has resurfaced multiple times in response to specific events that have been collectively concluded to have been racially motivated.

In the British context, Instances of racially motivated violence towards members of the Black community have formed the majority of instances leading to a surge of community-led responses; Both in response to the transgression itself, and to what has been perceived as an inadequate reaction from the criminal justice system. Some notable mentions include the 1981 new cross house fire, killing 13 young Black people, and the 1993 murder of Stephen Lawrence. Both racially motivated attacks that were met with a lacklustre investigation by law enforcement (Henry, 2017 ; Modhin , 2021). More recently, was the police shooting of Mark Duggan and the ensuing riots that took place throughout Britain in the Summer of 2011 (Waddington, 2012). Citizen death whilst in police custody, and police abuse of stop and

search laws (Yesufu, 2013), both of which disproportionately negatively impact the Black community in Britain (Elliot-Cooper, 2019 ; Afzal, 2020), are other prominent issues that have found no difficulty in rallying mass Black community response.

Aside from the issues of racially motivated injustice from societal authorities however, in the day to day lives of the Black British community, the collective engagement with matters pertaining to the Black condition, be it current or historical has been interwoven into the organisational objectives of mainstream institutions. This is demonstrated in the celebration of Black history month in schools through modified curriculums tailored to Black history and experiences (Doharty, 2017), and the rise of equality, diversity and (anti-) racism education and training in the workplace (Swan, 2009 ; Ashe & Nazroo, 2017). These measures are in place, to circumvent the social and cultural aspects of racial injustice, through educating *non-Black* communities, and serve the wider objective of ensuring that the institution in question is perceived to be providing an equitable environment; Of which is imperative for peaceable functioning. Such measures are not purposed for providing the Black community with the political consciousness required in order to ignite the desire to unite for the collective creation of Black counter-publican, community-based spaces with Black radical objectives.

Such measures seek to, just as the race relations social policies that provide their foundation, maintain race relations organisationally through the encouragement of liberalised attitudes towards those of racial and ethnic difference. These measures have resulted in the broadening of knowledge and

nuanced consideration of how structures and systems contribute to racialised realities, and a positive and necessary undertaking for a multicultural society. However, the rise of consultancy and training firms that specialise in race, equality and diversity training that have contributed to the marketisation of 'race' education by externally delivering such education within workplaces, both fills a role where Black community organisations could be purposed, and contributes to the cultural normalisation of episodic engagement with such matters.

Research limitations

Due to the ideological and theoretical positioning of the work, validity is a point that could be raised as a research limitation. The tenets and objectives of Black radicalism as the ideological framework, and Black radical unity as the conceptual framework derived from this ideology, determine that this research has a clear and specific political leaning. However, in reiteration of the point that there is no adequate way in which to gain both objective, and in-depth knowledge of the social world that is centred upon specific lived experiences; There was no goal to conduct this research from a position of neutrality. Black radicalism as a subjective ideological framework may suffice as a general critique, yet this research sought to contribute insight into workings of a space that was created for the addressal of Black oppressions as they are contemporarily experienced, and as they arise from a history of ancestrally specific political, economic, social and cultural histories. As also forementioned in chapter three, A critical ethnography is political in nature, and requires the researcher positionality to be activist in order to 'take up' the

mantle of the space's cause. As carried out with a scholar-activist positionality, the intentions of the researcher align with the intention of the activist, and the political value of the research, qualifies the research as activism. Therefore, the tacit objective of this research is not only to inform, but to ignite a collective propelling of effort towards the grassroots.

Another limitation of this research, is that it's long-term usefulness as a research trajectory for myself, is contingent upon my actions following the completion of the research. Reconciling the concerns and motivations of the scholar of the neo-liberal university with an activist positionality, was one of the more challenging aspects of completing this research. As responsibilities of each increased over time, it became difficult to effectively manage my responsibilities both in the university (E.G. Teaching and research) and in the organisation. Whilst the time flexibility that an academic position can allow for the pursuit of completing independent research and community activism is acknowledged, In the pursuit of building an academic career, there will be progressively less time to commit to such activity. In ensuring that one remains competitive in the neo-liberal academic space, professional progression remains at the forefront of the concern of an academic, and so it is doubtful that I will, ever again be afforded the time required to engage as deeply with a community setting as I have done for this research.

The role of neo-liberalism upon the capitalist economy and university organisational culture, in the incongruence between the conditions required to theoretically engage with Black radical political theory, ideas and thoughts within the university, simultaneously action the aforementioned through

community engagement, further illustrates the limitations that face the effectiveness of the scholar-activist as a neo-liberal subject. This, despite the fact that ample engagement with both is central to fulfilling the role of the scholar-activist in a transformative manner. This further highlights the inherent incompatibility of current conditions, with the conducting of community-based Black studies research. Furthermore, bringing further into question, the significance of the university in the creation of the truly radical academic.

The Black radical scholar-activist

I departed from the board of the Kenyatta organisation as the secretary in May 2019 in order to begin writing up the findings. Despite having established a role within the space as the board secretary over the time period of 2 years and 8 months, departing in order to gain distance from the space was necessary. Practically, the claiming back of time that holding an active position in the organisation had required that I dedicate, was pivotal in making steady progress with the 'writing up' stage. Following departure from the board, I returned to the Kenyatta organisation for an additional six months (September 2020 - February 2021), in order to aid the Kenyatta board with the recruitment of a new board secretary (as one had yet to be appointed since my initial departure), and to provide training and administrative support to the newly appointed secretary. The decision to return, albeit temporarily, aligned with the immersive nature of Black studies research, and the personal

investment that I had developed over time in the future success of the organisation.

Whilst at times physically and mentally strenuous due to the obligation to fulfil the responsibilities of both the identities of scholar and activist (The former being to gather data for the completion of research, and the latter being to contribute towards the progression of the organisation); The immersive engagement, and reflexivity required for the observation and analysis of the day-to-day happenings in the Kenyatta organisation, highlighted the importance of engaged, critical ethnography as a research methodology for Black organisational studies in the recording of Black British political history as it is taking place. This, in order to ascertain not only what is happening, but furthermore contemplating how these happenings are reflective of societal continuity and change. This provides a vantage point from which to discuss the adaptations that must be made in order to support the future of Black community organisations. This research, in dialectically engaging with the goings on in the Kenyatta organisation, the societal conditions of the time, and societal changes that have taken place throughout time to bring forth such conditions, has facilitated the building of critical discourse regarding what is required practically, to effectively action change through community-level engagement with Black radical politics in the present day.

[“The people make the place”: The future of Black community organisations In Britain](#)

An overarching consideration as to what is at stake as a result of the challenges faced by Black community organisations in 21st century Britain

that threaten their overall future; Particularly those with Black radical objectives, is the shrinking accessibility to community based activist engagement. Whilst acknowledging that activism is not tethered to any one place, and can exist in multiple sites (Roth, 2016), community organisations provide a traditional, and highly accessible pathway to engagement with Black community-based political concern, education, strategy and action. Alongside the rise of online, corporate and media discourse and action concerned with Black lives and experiences that would traditionally take place in a face-to-face community setting, the decline and steady loss of access to Black community organisations as physical spaces that have historically been at the heart of localised collective resistance, could lead to an isolation of those with political concern pertaining to Black lives and experiences from geographical locality. This isolation could lead to a disconnection between those who are regularly engaging with politically resistant knowledge and strategy, and those who are affected most prominently by the issues being discussed.

In addition to the overall professionalisation of activism as a vocation; A trajectory beginning since the 1990s onwards (as discussed in chapter two); The rise of intellectual activism (Hill-Collins, 2013), which is the commitment to understand and articulate the complexities of anti-Black racism, and thus the analytical nature in which we are called to engage with the impacts of race and racism, can also lead to a complexification of the perceived 'requirements', in order for one to actually take part in 'the work', and can serve as a barrier to engagement. This issue is typically mitigated in Black community organisations, as all they are purposed with embedding community needs

into political objectives, and thus involvement of all is directed according to their individual interests and abilities. Furthermore, the overall nuanced and complex conceptual understanding that contemporary discourses of race and racism demands, that has accompanied the professionalisation/academisation of Black political discourse and action, could see those pursuing activism being increasingly likely to do so via professional-adjacent routes, such as through a university education, directly into being employed by professionalised organisations with a concern with social justice (an example of the neo-liberal 3rd sector), whilst seldom gaining any actual 'grassroots' experience.

[The Kenyatta organisation: A success in progress](#)

At the time of writing, the Kenyatta organisation is operational. In August of 2020, the organisation held a public online Q&A meeting that had been advertised via social media, in order to fully explain what had been taking place during the period of community-facing inactivity in the last few years. In this session, the chair of the board laid out the plans for the organisation's future and encouraged membership sign-ups. The early years building was officially opened to the public in the spring of 2021. Since opening, the building has served as a space for numerous community events and member's meetings. As it relates to the political growth of the organisation, the organisation has gained members who have formed the committees of several departments (E.G., youth, political education and fundraising), and continues to work towards building working relationships with the local Black community in addition to other Black community-facing organisations and

prominent figures, both nationally and internationally. Paid membership of the organisation continues to grow, steadily.

Kenyatta's ownership of property, and ongoing online presence through the organisation's blog, in addition to its comprehensive and uncompromising political programme, has seen the community engagement of the Kenyatta organisation steadily returning to the levels that were achieved by the Igbala organisation (Prior to Kenyatta's establishment). Kenyatta's success notwithstanding, maximisation of the conversion of community engagement from its foundational, (to politically educate), to transformative function (to recruit through membership, politically educate further, and mobilise), is both a key short and long-term obstacle that, both pertaining to the organisation's local relevance, and in sustaining multiple streams of income, will remain a long-term obstacle.

In response to the sub research question: *How can Black community organisations overcome these challenges?*, fulfilment of the potential of the Kenyatta organisation as a community organisation that seeks to develop itself into a counter publican institution of Black radical education and action, lays in the ongoing acknowledgment (by the governing board specifically), of how contemporary structural conditions, alongside current socio-cultural norms directly influence the difficulties that can undermine organisational progress (E.G., Membership, finance, attrition, inter-personal conflicts) and recognise how the aforementioned are reflected in the day-to-day running of the organisation. In fulfilling the Black radical tenet of egalitarianism as not only a political, but structural objective of the organisation; A transparent

organisational communication style and the equal representation of each department sitting on the governing board is necessary in cultivating a culture that seeks to build collaborative working relationships between the various departments, which must remain one of the highest priorities in organisational longevity.

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