What's Left of the Struggle: The Oakland Community School and the Black Panther Party

Senior Honors Thesis

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Introduction

Though small in size, the Huey P. Newton Intercommunal Youth Institute in Oakland, California was a shining addition to the collection of Black Panther Party Survival Programs in January 1971. A special feature in the May 15th edition of the party's newspaper that year illustrated their pride. In the five-page article, a party reporter extracted the young students' knowledge of their parents' world. When the children, all ages ranging from five-to seven-years-old, were asked if they were all Panthers, they responded, "Right on!"

The interview revealed what a child might learn and interpret about society under that tutelage of the Black Panthers. The children provided a detailed history of the party from its creation in 1966 to the present day, including the ideologies of founders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, the organization's troubles with the government, and essential philosophies to live by. When asked why the government did not accept the Black Panther Party, a student responded:

> "The pigs don't like the Black Panther Party cause the Black Panther Party is educating the people and they don't like the Black Panther Party feeding hungry school children every morning… They don't like to see people eat no more. They want the people to starve and die." [1]

How does one interpret such a strong statement from a young mind? Was it possible that the Black Panthers were training young revolutionaries though their Survival Programs? It was true that this famous organization encouraged young people to reevaluate "the American Dream" and accept that all people in a capitalist society become slaves to finding material success. To ignore the well being of others in one's community, according to founder and leader Huey P. Newton, was detrimental to all within it. Newton's strategy of "survival pending revolution" was

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[1] "A Talk With the Students of the Huey P. Newton Intercommunal Institute," *The Black Panther* 8 May 1971, 11.

a more grassroots and inclusive approach to encouraging Black and oppressed people to rise up against the worldwide monolithic capitalist power structure. Though its tactics were evolving, the Black Panther Party was still an organization with radical ideologies.

Studying the Intercommunal Youth Institute, known as the Oakland Community School after 1974, connects the Black Panther Party to precedents in education for empowerment in the African American tradition. The interest in Black community action and knowledge as means to gaining prominence in society has existed since the end of the Civil War. In the years directly following emancipation and Reconstruction, there was a movement to educate and politically motivate African Americans. Within Black communities emerged a culture of collaborative community work, especially in the case of child rearing. Those traditions carried on throughout the decades to influence future generations of African Americans. The grassroots nature of the OCS built upon contemporary efforts in Black education such as Citizenship Schools and Freedom Schools in the Jim Crow South established in the 1950s and 1960s. While their initial efforts and ideologies starkly contrasted each other, the Black Panther Party and SNCC, SCLC, NAACP, and other Black southern activist organizations shared the goal of rousing the community to action against inequality through political work and education. The Oakland Community School was more than a Black Panther Party project: it was one of the last vestiges of the Civil Rights Movement and a large step forward in multicultural education.

The OCS also unveils an often-overlooked side of the Black Panthers. Though often characterized in popular memory as a militaristic organization composed of angry, gun-toting Black men, the party was a complex group devoted to uplifting their community. The Oakland Community School was arguably the party's most successful program, and it attested to the diverse approaches to educating and liberating oppressed members of ethnic and social groups. Most historical narratives of the Black Panther Party touch lightly upon or even overlook the

OCS because it was one of their least sensational endeavors, but this essay will analyze its importance through its connection to past Black grassroots movements and gender roles. The institution was an excellent experiment in urban alternative education and it accompanied the changing politics of the Black Panther Party. The OCS's creation in 1971 signified a change in direction for the faltering Black Panthers – a renewal of purpose set forth by Huey Newton and carried on after party interest declined. Throughout its eleven years, the OCS and other Black Panther projects related to uplifting urban youth exposed a more nurturing side of the organization that is has been forgotten in popular memory.

Studying the OCS also challenges typical ideas about female image and involvement and underscores women's importance to the longevity of the Black Panther Party. Before the school's creation, party ideology dictated that female comrades were to fight alongside the brothers in arm. In reality, however, they experienced considerable sexism, often confined to roles involving cooking and communal childrearing. Though female members, notably Elaine Brown and Erika Huggins, became some of the most pivotal members of the Black Panthers after their transition to progressive politics in the mid-1970s, male chauvinism prevailed over their devotion to service. Newton and his cronies controlled and dominated their actions, even in his absence from 1974 to 1977. As a leading historian of Panther women, Angela LeBlanc-Ernest concluded, male leaders "did not provide resistance to chauvinist actions that resulted in female members' departures" toward the end of the 1970s, thus crippling the party until the end.[2] Hotly contested gender issues in the Black Panther party contributed to the personnel problems and eventual collapse of both the party and the school in 1982.

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[2] Angela LeBlanc-Ernest, "'The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job': Black Panther Party Women, 1966-1982," *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered* ed. Charles E. Jones (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998) 324.

Why is it significant to pay attention to the Oakland Community School when connecting the Black Panther Party to activism in the African-American tradition? Most scholars tend to focus on scandals within the Central Committee, ongoing legal issues of political prisoners, and the party's war with COINTELPRO. Historians offer some insight on community development projects initiated by the Black Panther Party, but most have focused on the radical period of the Panthers, which lasted from 1966 to 1970. Hugh Pearson's somewhat sensationalized *The Shadow of the Panther* portrays the party as more of a street gang than a revolutionary organization. His narrative almost serves as Huey Newton's biography, emphasizing how his erratic personality and drug addiction guided the party's successes and failures. Yet, Pearson's book is helpful in providing insight on internal party politics that eventually effected the OCS.

Paul Alkebulan, by contrast, spends far more time on families, women, children, and community work within the Black Panther Party especially after 1970 when Newton dropped many of its radical positions in favor of catering to the community. *Survival Pending Revolution* delves deep into Newton's theories of Intercommunalism - the existence of an international network of oppressed people that could work together to overcome the inequalities of capitalism. Though Alkebulan describes the dark side of the party – the feuds, mass purges, and forced resignations – his *Survival Pending Revolution* also provides an important evaluation of the Survival Programs and explains their true value to the longevity of the Black Panther Party. While he does follow Pearson's example of spending a great deal of attention on scandals and sensational issues of the party understandably, Alkebulan's work fits in with a recent trend of debunking the myth of the ultra-masculine and militaristic Black Panther Party.

Studying the Black Panther Party's predecessors in Black liberatory education illuminates the organization's approach empowering Black and oppressed youths. Charles Payne's *I've Got*

the Light of Freedom provides the groundwork for political education throughout the Civil Rights Movement. In his exhaustive study on Citizenship and Freedom Schools in the South during the 1950s and 1960s, Payne documents pivotal grassroots movement in Black history that put the importance of understanding why the dominant culture permitted blatant and degrading acts of racism and oppression against African Americans. Payne's analysis of Freedom Schools also provides a context for the organizational efforts of Black activists, capturing the importance of a basic education in terms of empowerment. Although he does not provide a detailed analysis of future grassroots movements that might those orchestrating the Freedom Summer and other motivational programs, Payne's work provides context to begin an analysis of liberatory education within activist organizations such as the Black Panther Party.

Daniel Perlstien connects moderate educational activists Payne discussed to advocates of Black Power in his "Politics and Pedagogy in SNCC and the Black Panther Party." He argues that the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and early 1960s is connected to the radical events and ideologies of future decades more than previously assumed. Encouraging young people that their influence could create change in society strongly connects SNCC and the Black Panther Party. Though less interested in socialism and other radical doctrines, the student-based teaching style and curriculum were essential to carrying on a tradition of community empowerment. Payne's book and Perlstien's essay will serve as the groundwork for the historical background of the OCS, as they describe previous Black grassroots movements and the transition of the meaning of freedom for people of color.

A key weakness in the historiography of the Black Panther Party is the sheer lack of secondary source information on the OCS. As mentioned, histories on the Black Panther Party often spend up to two pages on the school, but fail to assess what the school truly meant to the part and grassroots educational movements in the Black activist tradition in the late 20th century.

One very short essay has been a major influence for setting the foundation in describing the OCS. "The World Is a Child's Classroom" by Charles E. Jones and Jonathan Gayles, analyzes what occurred at the school on a daily basis and administrative tasks Black Panther leaders were involved in. It also provides brief details of the party's inner politics surrounding the OCS, an important part of how it functioned through the years. Yet without Jones and Gayles' contribution, this study would have little else to work with in terms of secondary sources about the Panther School.

Elaine Brown's, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story*, is an essential tool in understanding the climate of the party until the late 1970s. As the chairman of the party from 1974 to 1977, she explains her experience related to fundraising, recruiting, and supervising party activities, including the administration of the OCS. While several other women in the party held prominent positions, Brown's autobiography is an indispensable primary source to this study for two central reasons. The first is the fact that her assumption of power played a part in the de-radicalization of the Black Panther Party. Second, like Pearson's book, Brown provides vital insight on internal politics of the party throughout her years of participation. Her personal concerns about the direction of the party manifest themselves in a way Pearson could not portray. Again, there were several female members of the Black Panthers, but as Brown was in the seat of leadership, her account provides details of what happens to a group when typical gender roles are changed.

The Black Panther, the party's newspaper, is the most significant primary source used in this study. Staffed, printed and distributed by party members, the weekly paper was a prime fundraising source and was intended to be the window to the world of Black Oakland. The newspaper documents the activities of the OCS unlike any other source. Aside from oral histories, articles in this source provide the most detail concerning specific events, activities, and

administration at the OCS. Furthermore, *The Black Panther* describes stance on children's rights, women's liberation, and the advancement of the poor, which coordinates well with this essay's arguments on alternative stances on party's history concerning gender. Approaching *The Black Panther* as a viable source has its obvious issues and limitations, however. Most events, especially those toward the end of the 1970s, are spun in a positive light. If one had no knowledge of Pearson's or Brown's work while approaching this news source, it would be difficult to understand why the party crumbled in the early 1980s.

Other primary sources that are extremely relevant to this study are party literature and records. The *Service to the People Programs* handbook lays out the Black Panther survival programs, including the Oakland Community Learning Center and the Oakland Community School. These descriptions are too brief to gather a complete understanding of the party's early intentions in creating these programs but the language and tone used in writing them are noteworthy. Documents such as party memoranda regarding the OCS, teaching manuals, and minutes from Oakland Community Learning Center meetings provide valuable insight as well. These sources share similar issues with the newspaper, but are imperative in tracing the downfall of the Black Panther Party.

Shining A Light: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition

Post-Slavery

In order to properly analyze the relevance of the Oakland Community School, it is imperative to look to previous efforts to enhance education in the African American tradition. This chapter will explore two cases: actions taken directly after emancipation in the late 1860s and the steps Civil Rights activists took to grow their ranks in the mid-twentieth century. These examples are precedents of Black community empowerment and self-reliance.

Aside from finding a stable place to live and generate income, newly emancipated African Americans sought and valued the skills needed to successfully navigate their new world.. Freedpeople understood the advantages of education in two ways. With the task of fully clothing, feeding, and supporting themselves at hand after living on self-sustaining plantations, African Americans needed the ability to read and decipher mortgages, bills of sale, contracts, and other literature necessary to the daily lives of full citizens. Literacy meant having full use of the judicial system and having access to the ballot box. If nothing else, gaining an education meant having the ability to read the Bible to oneself and heightening spiritual fulfillment.[3] Educating oneself promised independence – true freedom to move and make decisions beneficial to oneself and one's kin.

Schooling also held a symbolic significance to Black families. Ex-slaves of all ages were enthusiastic about establishing and attending local schools, but communities held special expectations for their children. Freed adults had grown up under slavery and they saw the next

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[3] Steven Hahn, "To Build a New Jerusalem" *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African-American Tradition* ed. Charles E. Cobb Jr. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008) 16.

generation as fundamental to the political future of Freedpeople.[4] Growing the ranks of educated African Americans meant security at the voting booth and in their daily lives. Newfound equality was unstable at best, but an educated generation provided multitudes of possibilities for the future.

Although African Americans had various outside sources of help in forming and maintaining schoolhouses for local youths, economic and social barriers forced communities to pool whatever resources they had. The Freedmens' Bureau, a federally controlled organization, oversaw the incorporation of former slaves into post-Civil War society in the former rebellious states. While it was not solely responsible for education, part of its function was to oversee the establishment of aid institutions that included schools. Teachers from the bureau were often in short supply because of high demand from former slave communities. Students in Freedmen's schools were to learn basic literacy skills as well as "the course of Reconstruction, the substance of their rights, the goals of the Republican party, and the importance of voting."[5] The Republican Party's education efforts among freedpeople paid off, as certain counties all over former-Confederate states gained a majority of leadership from within the party. These institutions not only played a critical role in creating the foundation for financial independence for former slaves, they provided a precedent for political education that would be emulated in the future.

While the Freedmen's Bureau was a pivotal source of financial and administrative aid, many Black communities in the South created and ran their own schools. Methods varied as to how Freedpeople worked as a collective to opportunities for themselves and their children.

Newly emancipated African Americans held little political agency on an individual basis, but plantation owners highly valued their labor. Some refused to sign work contracts with

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[4] Mary Niall Mitchell, *Raising Freedom's Children and Visions of the Future after Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 2008) 191.
[5] Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003) 278.

landowners unless they were guaranteed provisions for a school for their children on or near the premises. In this situation, planters had little choice but to meet their demands. In instances like this, Black education became an "economic investment that would sustain their labor force" in the post-war era.[6] Plantation schools are a consistent feature in sharecropping contracts, exposing the results of former slaves using what resources they had to attain their goals.

Community women were also pivotal in establishing schools for former slaves after the Civil War. As historian Mary Niall Mitchell wrote, former slaves in Louisiana "chose not to wait for the goodwill of legislators before they began setting up their own schools," often having to rely on the efforts of their mothers, sisters, and aunts.[7] Black women played a crucial role in the education of their neighbors and families as they took up collections, found venues, and sought out teachers wherever they could. Their cause was for more than their children's betterment: as the youth learned, they took their skills home and taught their parents. In many ways, women in this situation learned through building schools rather than attending them. By 1867, about two thirds of schoolteachers in these freedmen schools were African American, a statistic telling of the amount of dedication many emancipated women possessed.[8]

Debates raged on state-by-state about whether African American children should have their own publicly funded schools or if they should even be allowed an education at all. The enthusiasm in Black communities was obvious: by early 1866, the Freedmen's Bureau estimated that about 90,000 African Americans were enrolled in schools in former slave states.[9] White supremacists used violent intimidation tactics against Northern teachers, justifying their attacks with their belief that literacy was "emboldening the freedpeople, turning against their White

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[6] Mitchell, *Raising Freedom's Children,* 203.
[7] Mitchell, *Raising Freedom's Children,* 198.
[8] Hahn, "To Build a New Jerusalem," 17.
[9] Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet*, 277.

employers, and currying their favor for the Republican Party."[10] Although Jim Crow and mandated segregation were not in officially in place until the end of Reconstruction, its elements were already in forming as soon as official emancipation took place.

Freedpeople's efforts after 1865 did not put every African American child into a classroom but thousands did make it into some kind of educational institution whether public or private. Because of limitations on resources, efforts to keep Blacks in the fields and out of school, and fears of repercussions, the push for literacy fell short by the end of Reconstruction in 1877. Nevertheless, these educational efforts during Reconstruction display the beginnings of African American traditions of collaborative community work and interest in improving the lives of their children.

Education and Empowerment In the Mid-Twentieth Century

Citizenship and Freedom Schools established in the Deep South during the great push toward civil rights in the 1950s and early 1960s served as predecessors to the Oakland Community School. Once Reconstruction ended, poverty, neglect and institutionalized oppression pushed book knowledge to the wayside in favor of laboring as sharecroppers. For example, Mississippi Delta school calendars for Black children were built around the cotton-growing schedule. Days were shortened or cut so pupils could join their parents in the fields. The emphasis on economic survival led to high drop out rates. Many Blacks children in this region did not attend school past the eighth grade.[11] Citizenship and Freedom Schools encouraged Black empowerment through education in two ways: first, by collecting and teaching leaders skills necessary to guide a grassroots movement in their home towns, and second, by encouraging

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[10] Hahn, "To Build a New Jerusalem," 17.
[11] Charles M. Payne. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 26.

awareness of rights awarded through citizenship. Though less celebrated than the striking images of sit-ins and marches in the Civil Rights Movement, Citizenship and Freedom Schools played a pivotal role in the pedagogy of activism and major societal change.

Black education for empowerment in the 1950s saw its first real victories in an extremely unlikely place: Johns Island, South Carolina. The racial status quo in the area had felt few adjustments after the Civil War until the 1930s when local leaders created a bridge to connect it to the mainland. This feature brought an influx of white settlers: out of the population recorded in the 1950s, less than 35% of the population was African American.[12] Although these statistics are less than encouraging at first glance, community leader Esau Jenkins found Johns Island to be a critical starting point in the Citizenship School Program in 1957. With help from the Highlander Folk School, an institution devoted to seeking out local leadership within the Appalachian region of Tennessee, Jenkins found a space and means to fund a special voter education project on Johns Island.

Though Johns Island was the first in many similar projects in Alabama and Tennessee during the 1950s, its curriculum of empowerment was different from anything seen in previous decades. For four hours a week, fourteen adult students met in the back of a cooperative store. Bernice Robinson, a Black beautician from Charleston, hesitantly volunteered to teach the first Johns Island class, fearing her inexperience would hinder her ability to properly educate the mostly uneducated farmers and laborers.[13] Through literacy lessons, Robinson stressed democracy, functions of elected officials, and critical thinking at the ballot box. The curriculum was interactive as well; students requested lesson plans and administrators turned their ideas into

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[12] Aimee Isgrig Horton *The Highlander Folk School: A History of its Major Programs, 1932-1961* (New York: Carlson Publishing, Inc.,1989) 216.
[13] Horton, *Highlander Folk School,* 223.

reading assignments and related them to voter registration.[14] With meager means, little experience, and plenty of passion, Jenkins and Robinson created a positive environment that gave Johns Islanders a further sense of purpose and a greater understanding of opportunities as voters.

Although risky in certain areas due to segregationist opposition, the Citizenship School idea took off throughout the South. Attendance at Johns Island grew to thirty-seven within the first two months of operation.[15] The program soon spread to other islands off the coast of South Carolina and other regions. Its goals grew from simply encouraging African Americans to utilize their full rights denoted by citizenship to finding and training local leaders for future projects. Their efforts were not in vain. By 1961, about ten thousand individuals received some kind of teacher development program at Highlander and about two hundred schools operated at one time.[16] What is most important to gain from the Citizenship School campaign is its emphasis on seeking out future organizers and grooming them to uplift others out of illiteracy and political ineffectiveness.

The Freedom School Program, a later manifestation of Citizenship Schools, was an essential forerunner to Panther educational efforts. SNCC activist Charles E. Cobb, a recent Howard University graduate, traveled down to the Mississippi Delta in 1962 to establish his youth project. Freedom Schools found their most fame in 1964 with the Mississippi Freedom Summer. Though the intended audience was potential voters, these schools primarily attracted youths.[17] SNCC's strategies in gaining attendance were in no way as controversial as the Black

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[14] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* 73.
[15] Horton, *Highlander Folk School,* 224.
[16] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom,* 75.
[17] Daniel Perlstien, "Freedom, Liberation, Accommodation: Politics and Pedagogy in SNCC and the Black Panther Party," *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition* ed. Charles M. Payne and Carol Sills Strickland (Teachers College Press: New York, 2008) 77.

Panther Party, they did take a more aggressive stance to education than their forerunners at Citizenship Schools.

Though the Freedom Summer of 1964 was meant to be another voter registration drive sponsored by the NAACP, SCLC, SNCC and other large Black activist organizations, the roughly forty schools taught its two thousand pupils to look at society with extreme skepticism. Participants were challenged to take an approach to protest that challenged the values of the predominant culture in the United States. The program asked three fundamental questions:

1. What does the majority culture have that we want?
2. What does the majority culture have that we don't want?
3. What do we have that we want to keep?[18]

The areas of curriculum took a few steps in a more controversial direction as well. Students at Freedom Schools attended remedial lessons on history, literature and culture, and were encouraged to ponder why Jim Crow policies in education held them down socially and economically. Teachers, many of whom were Northern white college students, encouraged their pupils to consider the societal factors that pushed poor whites to express vehement hate against Blacks in their communities and to compare their situation with other oppressed peoples around the world. This type of thinking displayed "how far discussion within SNCC had progressed beyond narrow concern with civil rights" and a new "analysis that went beyond racial problems and policy about them."[19] Freedom Schools were in no way radicalized versions of Citizenship Schools, but they did serve as an outlet for frustrated youths and raise new, difficult questions about society.

Although Freedom Schools succeeded in gaining popular support for the various activist organizations in the South, SNCC slowly realized that gaining Civil Rights would not end oppression against African Americans in the South. As the subject matter of the curriculum

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[18] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, 303.
[19] Payne, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, 304.

suggests, legal matters and American society's attitudes toward integration and acceptance were in question during Freedom School lessons. By 1964, SNCC leaders began raising serious questions about the effectiveness of northern white supporters as teachers. They believed that lessons should flow solely from student's experiences with racism and injustice.[20] As older activists pushed along with their philosophies of non-violence and citizenship classes, SNCC members and their allies became frustrated with the slow pace of acceptance. In an ironic twist, the Freedom School project increased Black awareness in areas of the South and encouraged a heavy impatience with old methods of organizing. SNCC's turn against integration in favor of Black Power ideology in 1966 is a strong indicator that attitudes had changed drastically since the early days of educational activism in Johns Island, South Carolina.[21] SNCC president Stokley Carmichael's advocacy of Black Nationalism, a doctrine that called for the rejection of white society, attracted the attention of frustrated youths all over the nation.

Citizenship and Freedom Schools were essential forerunners to liberatory educational pursuits like the Oakland Community School because they were moderately successful attempts at self-empowerment in the African American tradition. Community members and sympathetic outsiders attempted to remedy the effects of a vastly unequal educational system on Black people young and old. Not only were volunteers working against the reality that *Plessy v. Ferguson* created for millions of African Americans in the country, they advocated taking political autonomy into one's own hands. Though action was highly valued during the radicalization of the Civil Rights Movement after 1966, education for skepticism and enlightenment were essential tools in promoting Black Power and later, Black Panther causes.

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[20] Perlstein, "Freedom, Liberation, Accommodation," 81.
[21] Perlstein, "Freedom, Liberation, Accommodation," 79.

Factors such as the growth of the Black population in the Bay Area and lack of opportunities for them to flourish contributed to the creation of the Black Panther Party. Oakland, California grew as an industrial city during World War II. In 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued executive order 8802, prohibiting racial discrimination in national defense companies receiving federal contracts. As a result of this law, local shipyard employers recruited thousands of African Americans from areas of the Deep South in fill gaps in the workforce.[22] After the war, however, increased technology and white dockworkers returning to their jobs from the battlefields pushed Blacks out of this sector. Unskilled or semiskilled laborers struggled to find a place in the post-war economy because local business leaders encouraged development outside of the city.[23] By 1960, most jobs within the metropolitan area were minimum wage, service-based, and provided little chance for advancement. Between 1950 and 1970, one-fourth of the population in Oakland was Black and two-thirds of those people lived in poverty.[24].

This atmosphere of police violence, inter-cultural divides, and frustration with the slow pace of the mainstream Civil Rights Movement gave birth to the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in 1966. Co-founders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, both from families that migrated to Oakland from the South during World War II, conceptualized a group that would "organize the most delinquent elements in urban black America."[25] The two met while attending

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[22] Hugh Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther: Huey Newton and the Price of Black Power in America.* (Reading: Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1994) 17.
[23] Robyn Ceanne Spencer, "Inside The Panther Revolution: The Black Freedom Movement and the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California." *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America,* ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: New York University Press,: 2005) 302.
[24] Rhodes, *Framing the Black Panthers: The Rise of a Spectacular Black Power Icon.* (New Press: New York, 2007) 57.
[25] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 108.

classes at Merritt College in Oakland, California. Swept up by the politically charged atmosphere at nearby UC Berkeley and the growth of Black Power ideology in the West and North, they decided to start a grassroots organization that mobilized the Black community to take its safety and prosperity into its own hands.

After months of research, Seale and Newton found a philosophical basis for their new group, The Black Panther Party for Self Defense. Newton was fond of Marxist revolutionaries like Mao Zedong, but Malcolm X, who Paul Alkebulan calls "the Patron Saint of the Black Panther Party," was a key inspiration.[26] A former street thug and narcotics addict, Malcolm X represented what were to become essential concepts for the Black Panther Party: mental and spiritual rejuvenation. In their ideology, the hustlers, beggars and other people who are considered the bottom-feeders of society - the lumpenproletariat – could use their street knowledge for their own empowerment. The Panthers thus recruited gangsters and other local toughs with connections to Oakland's criminal underground. Their involvement added an element of illegitimacy which would later affect their ability to function within the community effectively. Not only did Newton and Seale admire how Malcolm X transformed his wayward life into one dedicated to radical change, they adopted his ideas of organizing the lower class, having an interracial coalition of the oppressed, internationalizing their movement, and most importantly, encouraging self-sufficiency within the Black community.[27]

The initial outburst of bold, controversial philosophies and rhetoric is a staple in popular memory of the Black Panther Party. Much of Black Oakland lived under the poverty line and had to deal with hunger, job discrimination, and violence from their neighbors and the authorities on a day-to-day basis. Seale and Newton attributed these issues to a blatantly racist legal and

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[26] Paul Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution: The History of the Black Panther Party.* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2007) 22.
[27] Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution,* 24.

housing system that kept minority cultures around the world dependent on a brutally uncaring capitalist machine. The Black Panther Party sought "to provide an example to the community of what is possible and to raise the people's political consciousness," indicating an emphasis on education.[28] The Ten Point Program, the party's platform, laid out their specific goals. In 1966, Newton and Seale penned their ideas:

What We Want, What We Believe

1. *We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.*
2. *We want full employment for our people.*
3. *We want an end to the robbery by the capitalist of our black community*
4. *We want decent housing fit for shelter of human beings*
5. *We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society.*

   We want education that teaches our true history and our role in the present-day society
6. *We want all black men to be exempt from military service*
7. *We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people*
8. *We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county, and city prisons and jails*
9. *We want all black people when brought to court to be tried by a jury of their peer group from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States*
10. *We want land, bread, housing education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as their national destiny.* [29]

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[28] *The Black Panther Party: Service to the People Programs*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press), xii.
[29] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther*, 109-111.

Demands of the Ten Point Program mostly served as an ideological outline that did not come into fruition. But the party did act upon them. As one can imply, Political Education classes, liberation schools, and eventually the Oakland Community School all resulted from the fifth point of their platform. Although The Black Panther Party seemed to be dedicated to battling police violence, releasing political prisoners, and ending the draft of Black men, transformative education was on its agenda from the very beginning.

It was not necessarily ideologies that brought the Panthers to their initial fame, however. Their policy of armed patrols around West Oakland attracted news media from across the country and shocked newspaper readers and television viewers around the nation.[30] Armed with guns, tape recorders, cameras, law books, Newton, Seale and their recruits patrolled the streets to confront the primarily white police force.

Five Simple Words: "All Power to the People"

Word spread quickly about Oakland's group of Black revolutionaries due to national television and newspapers. In attempts to boost ratings and circulation, these media outlets displayed images of stone-faced African-Americans toting shot guns, clad in black leather jackets and berets. Almost entirely ignoring female involvement, the press played into white America's fear of Black male sexuality. While television and radio studios used actual quotes and sound bytes from Panther members, they spread extremely vague and misleading ideas about the Black Panther Party. News outlets also used the content of Black Power ideology to raise the prospects of a race war, which was a reality to those who believed the Civil Rights Movement

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[30] Rhodes, *Framing the Black Panther Party*, 70.

had been progressing too quickly.[31] Though Newton, Seale, and their Panther cohorts conveyed an image of rough and ready urbanites bent on turning the status-quo upside down, their intention was to rectify centuries of neglect, poverty and ignorance spurned by racists in local and national government. Uniting Black communities and connecting them to a cause was the path to accomplishing their goals.

The Survival Programs, party initiatives addressing hunger, fear of violence, and lack of educational resources, grew out of two concerns. The first stemmed from fears about the party's longevity. The government's campaign to discredit or destroy their leaders put a strain on party unity and shaped its public image as a group full of mislead youths and philosopher-thugs. COINTELPRO, a program spearheaded by the FBI, infiltrated organizations perceived to be a threat to the country's social harmony. Starting in 1969, undercover agents began a blitz of extralegal surveillance and disruption tactics aimed at the Black Panther Party. COINTELPRO directives included arresting and detaining members in order to drain the party's bail funds, aiming to discredit and divide leaders through forged letters, and even assassinating leaders under the thinly veiled guise of police self-defense.[32] The FBI's efforts tarnished the Black Panther Party's image, and as a result, the mainstream media and the public saw them as a criminal organization bent on turning society on its head.

The second reason for the establishment and encouragement of Survival Programs was the party's goal of radical change. Huey Newton's philosophy of Revolutionary Intercommunalism created a movement that reached out to all oppressed communities. The focus of his philosophy relies on collective living and action as he states, "if the people are not here,

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[31] Rhodes, *Framing the Black Panther Party*, 70.
[32] Winston A. Grady-Willis. "The Black Panther Party: State Repression and Political Prisoners" *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered]*. Ed. Charles E. Jones. (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998) 371.

revolution cannot be achieved, for the people and the people only make revolutions."[33] In it, he applies a materialist approach to the late twentieth century. Outdated forms of capitalism thrived from corporate globalization in a cycle that continually spread poverty. There were no borders or nationalities in the philosophy of Intercommunalism, as all people living under the burden of the free-market system were united in the struggle. Although convoluted and often misunderstood by the rank-and-file of the Black Panther Party, Newton's message of community and mutual help resonated.[34] Survival Programs embodied the simple, five-word slogan "All Power to the People."

The Black Panther Party's Survival Programs closely focused on aiding the youngest members of the community live happy, healthy lives. Free Breakfast for School Children and Liberation Schools met the perceived physical and intellectual needs of the community's youth. Not only did they get party members involved with feeding and educating children, they served as the direct forerunners of the OCS, as many of their educational philosophies carried over to the creation of the school. Though the analysis of Free Breakfast For School Children and Liberation Schools, one can find the foundation for the OCS.

Established in 1968, the breakfast program became the most widespread survival program in the shortest amount of time. The Central Committee of the Black Panther Party believed the ineffectiveness of the state and federal welfare systems many of these students survived on was creating another generation of an underclass that would cycle as long as the system existed. They understood that poor and underrepresented groups knew "from the

American experience that it is impossible to obtain and sustain any education when one has to

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[33] Huey P. Newton, "speech delivered at Boston College: November 18, 1970" *The Huey P. Newton Reader,* ed David Hilliard and Donald Weise (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002) 161.
[34] Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution,* 23.

attend school hungry."[35] Panther members, primarily women, woke up in the early hours of the morning to cook a simple breakfast of eggs, grits, toast and bacon. St. Augustine's Episcopal Church on 59th Street hosted the Oakland chapter's breakfasts. Places of worship were the main supporters of this program because of its charitable aspects, but they were still weary to approve of the Black Panther Party itself.[36] Despite some local leaders' suspicions, however, the breakfast volunteers continued their campaign to reach out to local youths. Like past educators in the African American tradition, the Black Panthers knew that these children could have a better chance at changing the world as they knew it. By November 1969, teams of Panthers had served over 20,000 children nationwide, a telling sign of its widespread popularity in poor neighborhoods.[37]

Liberation Schools were an extension of exposing children to the rhetoric of revolution. The Survival Program strongly connected the Freedom Schools of the southern Black organizations with the Black Panther Party. First established in Berkeley, California over the summer of 1969, the goal of party volunteers at Liberation Schools was to transmit revolutionary rhetoric and party ideology directly to children of the poor and oppressed.[38] Classes addressing Point Five of the Ten Point Program were to replace the Free Breakfast For School Children in all chapters of the party during summer vacation in order to keep young minds interested in Panther activities. "We know that our children our brilliant," a writer for the *Black Panther* commented, "all you have to do is show them and guide them in the right direction."[39] The

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[35] "Liberation Schools," *The Black Panthers Speak* ed. Philip Sheldon Foner and Clayborne Carson, (New York: Da Capo Press, 2002) 169.
[36] JoNina Abron, "Serving the People" The Survival Programs of the Black Panther Party" *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered]*. Ed. Charles E. Jones. (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998) 182.
[37] Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution*, 30.
[38] Daniel Perlstien, "Freedom, Liberation, Accommodation" 85.
[39] "Liberation Schools," 172.

direction they were looking toward, of course, was one that demanded resistance against the status quo and encouraged asking critical questions about American society.

Although the focus centered on party rhetoric, the content of the Liberation Schools was very similar to the future full-time Black Panther School. Each lesson was "designed to meet the needs of the youth" and "to guide them in their search for revolutionary truths and principles."[40] Panther volunteers covered a different topic every day: Revolutionary Culture, Revolutionary History, Current Events, Revolutionary Movies and field trips within the community. Though the curriculum was not as complex as the Political Education classes adult Panthers had to attend, volunteers introduced to Huey Newton's teachings to participating youth. Teaching about class struggle and collectivism were central goals, as party educators wanted their students to adopt a mentality of sharing information and resources for all children in the community to benefit from.[41] Through songs, skits and stories, children aged two through thirteen learned that "revolutionaries are changers" and the "pig businessmen" needed to be pushed out of their communities[42] While Liberation Schools were initially a part time venture, they became a very popular Survival Program. Like the Free Breakfasts, most Black Panther Party chapters hosted at least one such program. The idea of teaching alternative values to those presented in mainstream American public educational institutions was a central theme in Liberation Schools. Later on, it would also come to define the Oakland Community School.

Despite the popularity and success of the Free Breakfast for Children and Liberation Schools in the urban ghettos around the country, COINTELPRO continued to actively discredit the party. In order to prevent the growth of the Black Panther Party, the FBI continued to use their strategy of disruptive anonymous letters and media manipulation. Agents sent threats to

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[40] "Liberation Schools," 172.
[41] "Liberation Schools," 172.
[42] "Liberation Schools," 170.

churches and food donors regarding their involvement with the school.[43] COINTELPRO also created rumors and news reports that claimed the party was poisoning the food with drugs and brainwashing innocent children with anti-white propaganda.[44] These claims held little, if any validity, but they managed intimidate and alienate some so much that participating in Black Panther activites seemed too dangerous to go on. Despite the work of COINTELPRO, the party retained enough followers to continue Newton's original mission.

Changing Tides: "Survival Pending Revolution"

The Black Panther Party changed drastically after Huey Newton's first incarceration. Convicted of the murder of Oakland police officer John Frey in 1967, his status as a self-proclaimed political prisoner spawned the famous "Free Huey" campaign. Though sentenced to several years in prison, Newton emerged from incarceration in 1970 after the state of California dropped his case.[45] The chairman was back in action, but the party was in serious disarray from ongoing schisms and a widespread lack of faith in the legitimacy of intercommunalism as a core philosophy. From the chaos, however, emerged a plan to create the Oakland Community School.

In early 1971, the Black Panther Party took a new official stance against violent revolution with the intention of leaning closer to community service. Constant combat with COINTELPRO and other intelligence agencies led to several deaths, increased incarcerations, and forced hiding or exile. Newton realized that having most of the organization underground as outlaws buried them "so deeply that the people can neither relate to nor contact [them],"

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[43] "FBI Director: 'BPP Breakfast Program is a Threat,'" *The Black Panther,* 10 August 1980, 3.
[44] Abron, "Serving the People," 183.
[45] Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution,* 43.

defeating the purpose of spreading the world of revolution.[46] Many of those party members who believed taking up arms and fighting the law was necessary to inciting the revolution Black and other oppressed people needed so desperately became involved with the Black Liberation Army in conjunction with the Black Panthers. They endorsed tactics similar to the actions of the Weathermen, a terrorist organization primarily targeting political entities related to the Vietnam War.[47] Newton and his cohorts in his Oakland base of operations planned on shifting focus to reform and community service, thus necessitating a large-scale purge of individuals still bent on carrying the torch of armed revolution.

The 1971 separation of the Black Liberation Army and the Black Panther Party is of importance to the creation of the Oakland Community School because it indicated a certain level of battle fatigue. Some historians argue that the Panthers lost elements of what truly made them a revolutionary organization; it was the drive for immediate action and self-defense in the Black ghettoes of America that attracted a great deal of members in the first place. While Newton discouraged carrying guns and intimidating police, he believed the party could "truly become a political revolutionary vehicle" and with community service "lead the people to a higher level of consciousness so that they will know what they must really do in their quest for freedom."[48] Though the Black Panther Party gained multitudes of respect from the Oakland community, its ideology change was seen as a sign that the idealism of the 1960s had cooled off into a slower paced, obedient activism of the new decade. Political education had always been an important

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[46] Huey P. Newton, "on the defection of Eldridge Cleaver from the Black Panther Party and the defection of the Black Panther Party from the Black community: April 17, 1971" *The Huey P. Newton Reader,* ed David Hilliard and Donald Weise (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002) 201.

[47] Akinyele Omowale Umoja, "Repression Breeds Resistance: The Black Liberation Army and the Radical Legacy of the Black Panther Party" *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party* ed. Kathleen Neal Cleaver and George Katsiaficas (New York: Routledge, 2001) 10.

[48] Newton, "Eldridge Cleaver," 207-208.

part of being a Black Panther, but it would soon take a central role in the Party's existence in its quest for respectability.

Criticisms of Public Schools

While the creation of the OCS can contribute itself mostly to the Point Five of the Ten Point Program, Black Panther attitudes toward public schools in their community were a considerable force as well. The foremost complaint Panther administrators had against the American educational system was its forced uniformity. It was mandated that every student be taught the same values with the same methods everywhere across the country. Erika Huggins, director of the OCS from 1974-1982, argued that "the emphasis placed on indoctrinating school children with societies virtues and values" was detrimental to everyone everywhere, resulting in "children of the privileged classes receiving just as an inadequate education as Black and poor children."[49] In other words, in the Panthers' opinion, the predominant educational environment was training a generation of individuals who were blind to the true corruption of society. Newton himself believed "the true history of America or the real purpose of its mass education" was to "turn out good little soldier-workers to grease the wheels of capitalism" without any concern for the real needs of the people.[50]

A second and conjoined argument the Panthers had against the nature of public schools was the ongoing racist elements. Though busing played as a solution to the issues surrounding school segregation, Huggins called it "a racist, lazy, selfish decision" that was made without

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[49] Erika Huggins, "Community Control of Education" *The Commentator* March 1991, 4.
[50] Elaine Brown, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1992) 394.

much forethought.[51] It was a major concern for parents and activists in Black ghettos around the nation. While it transported children to stronger schools and better facilities than what was just around the corner, it was believed that busing instilled a sense of inferiority related to one's community – the "black-child – white-doll identity problem," as Newton described it.[52] The Panther solution for this was to demand more funding and improvement of existing schools where oppressed people lived. People in the community – parents, leaders or otherwise – should be obligated to ensure their children are given the tools to grow into able and confident adults. It is evident that the party was not against diversity, but forced integration by transporting young minds away from their homes was incorrigible.

With a new direction, the Black Panther Party sought to act on these criticisms. Their new school was to be local, free to all people, and aware of the uniqueness of every individual within a community. "The power structure has given up them integration, so-called community control, scholarships, fellowships, Black Studies, etc.," wrote a journalist at *The Black Panther* in early 1971, "but never complete and total control of the educational institutions."[53] The Black Panther Party was taking a chance at opening something that belonged to all that went. It was to be a new beginning in organization's existence.

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[51] Huggins, "Community Control of Education," 4.
[52] Brown, *A Taste of Power*, 394.
[53] "...Our Hope is Placed on You," *The Black Panther*, 27 March 1971, D.

The Huey P. Newton Intercommunal Youth Institute: OCS Beginnings

Newton's increased interest in working closely with the community manifested itself in the creation of the Intercommunal Youth Institute (later renamed the Oakland Community School). Established in January 1971, the school took elements from previous Black Panther Survival Programs, primarily the Free Breakfast and Liberation Schools, and incorporated them to run the new school.

The Intercommunal Youth Institute's beginnings were humble. Twenty-five pupils, primarily children of Black Panther Party members, attended classes at a North Oakland house for eight hours a day. Future director Erika Huggins explains the unusually young age range, from two-and-a-half to eleven, stating that the administrators "believe a child doesn't have to be 5 in order to form concept… they learn a lot of things from an early age."[54] Like all Survival Programs in the past, the IYI was free of charge to all families.

Though Panther Liberation Schools for elementary-age children had existed since the previous decade, the IYI's teaching methods extended the after-school format to full-time learning. Harkening back to the Freedom School program of the Deep South, survival and skepticism were key concepts in the classroom. The most often-cited reason for the creation and philosophy of the school was the inability of the Oakland Public School system "to educate Black and poor youth" and its failure to teach them to "participate and survive in our highly technological society." [55] This assertion is fitting in Newton's work to steer the party toward his

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[54] Charles E. Jones and Jonathan Gayles, ""The World Is a Child's Classroom" An Analysis of the Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School" *Teach Freedom: Education for Liberation in the African American Tradition,* ed. Charles M. Payne and Carol Sills Strickland (New York: Teachers College Press, 2008) 102-103.

[55] "The Samuel Napier Intercommunal Youth Institute Pamphlet" Black Panther Party Legacy & Alumni – It's About Time BPP,

doctrine of intercommunalism and away from armed resistance. Giving children the tools to make their own decisions and facilitating an analysis of their ever-changing world was a key aspect of education within the Black Panther Party.

In the first year of the IYI's existence, the student body more than doubled in size. Teachers and administrators found the original North Oakland base "totally inadequate," as "the living and classroom space [were] far too small."[56] David Horowitz, a white Marxist sympathizer and confidante to Huey Newton, took charge of raising money in order to purchase a church complex on East 14th Street. He garnered about $100,000 in donations from various private sources like film producer Bert Schneider and other Hollywood players. Horowitz found further funding for the new space from the church itself with the argument that the facility was going to be used for positive youth activities despite the Black Panthers' shaky reputation in the neighborhood among older, less politically active adults.[57]

With the help of outside contributions, sales from the newspaper, and party fundraising, the newly renovated and furnished Oakland Community Learning Center triumphantly opened in October 1973. The IYI moved into the large facility, expanding to 25 classrooms with a 350-seat auditorium, library, childcare center, and industrial kitchen. By this time, there were about 50 students, and the Party hoped to increase the number to 100 by the start of 1974.[58]

The Intercommunal Youth Institute's move to the OCLC was significant because it marked the Black Panther Party's continuing influence within the Oakland. The dedication ceremony was rather elaborate: local jazz bands, children's choirs and dancers performed for

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http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Oakland_Community_School/pdf/Youth_Institute.pdf, Accessed 15 October 2008.

[56] "Samuel L Napier Intercommunal Youth Institute Pamphlet"

[57] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 261.

[58] "Bobby Seale Dedicates New Youth Institute and Son of Man Temple to Community" *The Black Panther,* 27 October 1973, 3.

more than 500 people.[59] Bobby Seale spoke at the event, emphasizing "the Institute's role in providing meaningful, relevant and prideful education for its students, acknowledging the perceived demand for an alternative to under funded and mismanaged public schools.[60] The Panthers saw their project as something that could grow within Oakland and eventually transfer over to other communities across the country.

A further sign of the IYI's growth was the need to create of the Educational Opportunities Corporation. Although the school received financial support from the Black Panther Party, administrators there needed an alternative way to raise funds in order to pay staff salaries, purchase food and supplies, and take care of miscellaneous expenses. David Horowitz created the EOC, a 501(c)3 non-profit company, while fundraising for the Oakland Community Learning Center in 1973.[61] While records show that Huey Newton and Elaine Brown were the head chairs of the board, Phyllis Jackson served as chief administrator throughout its existence.[62] The EOC asked benefactors for donations, managed the school's finances, and essentially ran the non-academic side of the IYI. Party leaders asserted that the need to efficiently manage their educational entities was the inspiration behind creating the EOC, but Hugh Pearson asserts that they were "bypassing all the possible problems that association with the Panther name might have caused."[63] His statement holds credibility, as the Panthers had not yet shaken their old gangster image, despite crucial doctrine changes.

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[59] "Dedication/Celebration to Mark Opening of Youth Institute and Son of Man Temple" *The Black Panther,* 24 October 1973, 5.
[60] "Bobby Seale Dedicates New Youth Institute," 3.
[61] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther*, 261.
[62] "EOC Corporate Overview," July 22, 1977 Box 28 Folder 13, Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[63] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther,* 262.

What's In a Name?: The IYI to the OCS

The Black Panther Party's tiny school that started in a North Oakland home underwent serious transformations between 1973 and 1975. It became an entity with a considerable sized staff, significant budget, and its own governing body within the party. Though records show constant fluctuations of personnel, the IYI held about 20 paid staff members and 12-14 volunteers during the '74-'75 school year.[64] Bobby Seale and other Panther leaders pledged to add to their student body during the 1973 dedication ceremony and the school accordingly experienced considerable growth – it boasted about 110 pupils by early 1975.[65] Furthermore, the Central Committee of the Black Panther Party decided to rename the Intercommunal Youth Institute in 1974, providing it with its most noted title, the Oakland Community School.

While neither records nor any article published in *The Black Panther* provide an explanation as to why the Central Committee decided to rename the school, it is clear that the Black Panthers sought more legitimacy for their most successful project. Superficially, leaders wanted to attract non-Panthers. Erika Huggins, the director of the OCS, stated: "We wanted to be appealing to people. People were not going to understand the Intercommunal Youth Institute. It sounded exclusive."[66] The word "intercommunal" was, after all, a creation of Huey Newton. There was little chance that the average person who had not read and studied party literature would know what it implied.

Although the school was growing, trouble brewed within the world of the adult Panthers. By 1973, Newton was in serious trouble with the law again. The chairman's quick temper and growing addiction to cocaine pushed him to erratic and violent behavior. This ranged from

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[64] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 102.
[65] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 104.
[66] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 104.

small-scale pistol whippings to involvement in an all-out brawl at an Ike and Tina Turner concert.[67] Matters became worse when the he became embroiled in another murder controversy. Witnesses state that in August 1973, Newton shot and killed Kathleen Smith, a teenage prostitute, merely because she called him "baby."[68] The next year, he jumped bail and fled to Cuba in order to avoid jail time. Elaine Brown assumed his title as head of the Central Committee in Newton's absence, but it was obvious to most Panthers that he continued to regulate the Black Panthers through his comrade.

A more critical explanation of the sudden name change stems from the Black Panther Party's ongoing attempts to separate itself with sensational and shocking events surrounding its founder and captain. His exploits attracted a great deal of negative attention to the party and hindered prominent members' ability to fulfill their goals of community control through political leadership. For example, Bobby Seale ran for mayor of Oakland in 1973. In his autobiography, Seale explained that the Panthers "were trying to expound on and build the concept of community control… of the police department and all the city agencies and functions" in their attempts to work themselves into the system.[69] The Panthers pooled their resources and prepared for an entire year before the election, but Seale still came in second. Tom Nash, a journalist from the *Oakland Post*, contends: "The thing that kept Bobby from winning the election was his affiliation with the Black Panther Party" due to its reputation as a quasi-criminal organization.[70] Newton's troubles were extremely unflattering to the party and they concerned members who were interested in supporting the party's growth into a mature organization during the 1970s.

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[67] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther,* 260.
[68] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther,* 265.
[69] Bobby Seale, *A Lonely Rage: The Autobiography of Bobby Seale*, (New York: New York Times Book Co., 1978) 223.
[70] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 259.

Though unstated, evidence shows that the renaming of the Intercommunal Youth Institute resulted from the continuously bad press associated with Newton as the face of the Black Panther Party. Under Brown's leadership, grassroots campaigning and continuous community outreach worked against the negative publicity, building enough confidence in the public to secure the party's ability function.[71] The name change, as well as prominent party members' forays into electoral politics signified a desire to show outsiders that they were still potent despite critics' claims of irrelevance and corruption, and that their visions for a better world were for everyone, not just Black Panthers and their kin. As Seale stated, "we told each other the point was an educational campaign, getting the issues stated and known" – positive outreach was the Party's central goal.[72]

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[71] Angela LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job" 322.
[72] Seale, *A Lonely Rage,* 223.

Black Panther Education at its Peak: 1974-1977

Curriculum: "The World is a Child's Classroom"

While the adults surrounding the OCS were hard at work reworking the Black Panther image, the teachers and children played their parts in the classrooms, playgrounds, and in the streets of Oakland. The content taught at the Panther school is of special significance, not only because it was an extension of past experiments in African-American education for liberation, but it was a the fulfillment of the fifth point of the party's Ten Point Program, which called for a an education that exposes the "true nature of this decadent American society."[73] To the Black Panthers, knowledge was about more than facts – it was about experience, skepticism, and appreciation of diversity. The OCS's motto, "The World is a Child's Classroom," was a guiding principle and held true to the educators' interest in exposing an alternative view of American society.

Charles E. Jones' and Jonathan Gayles' comparison of Huey Newton's intercommunal approach to instruction and Paulo Freire's concepts in liberatory education is most helpful in initially describing the OCS's curriculum. The most essential points in Freire's philosophy are critical thinking, dialogue between the educator and the student, and the transformative nature of the learning process- using what one has learned to create change.[74] Active participation with the materials in which one is expected to learn is intended to challenge the student to actually find relevance and apply them to his or her life instead of simply memorizing the definition or task because it is expected. As opposed to adhering to a set lesson, the instructor receives input on what subjects should receive special attention from their pupils. The environment therefore

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[73] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 110.
[74] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 105.

encourages "the act of knowing," as the interest in opinion and expression establishes "that the learner is an active and able participant."[75]

The critical thinking skills and freedom to question reality at any turn in Freire's philosophy culminates in an interest in action outside the classroom. This important conclusion is the main component of liberatory education, as participants are able to extend their knowledge far beyond their individual self. Students are "situated as actors rather than subjects" in the world when liberated from conventional educational methods.[76] Newton used these principles when he ordered the creation of the school in late 1970, adding his theories of intercommunalism and dialectical materialism. These philosophies called for an interactive learning experience like Freire described, but with special modifications in consideration with the Black freedom struggle. Exposed to the true corrupt nature of society, children were encouraged to apply their knowledge and solve problems within Oakland and other places where Black and oppressed people lived. This concept – training community leaders – was one of the central purposes of the school.

Another significant aspect within the OCS was the definition of who were friends of the struggle and who were not. A problematic and false image that often plagued the party was that it was a rabidly anti-White organization, and it intended to teach children how to "kill whitey" and to disrespect age-old American values such as rugged individualism, Puritan work ethic, and fearing God.[77] Unbeknownst to the majority of television news viewers and consumers of printed media, the Black Panther Party clearly defined who the children were to organize against and why. A transcript from a Liberation School defines a "pig" as the children described him: "a

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[75] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 105.
[76] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 105.
[77] Rhodes, *Framing the Black Panther Party*, 70.

low-down person who can be any color who beats us up and tells lies…."[78] Those who defended the status quo in order to keep the minority population in fear and the poor in need, "the avaricious businessman pig, …the police pig, the president pig, and the National Guard pig," were specifically pointed out as groups who were not to be trusted.[79] A Black Panther-provided education was geared toward children understanding why the people needed to resist allowing the "pigs" to have more power and the importance of unifying with their comrades for a better life.

While the original curriculum at the IYI was far more traditional than what was at the part-time liberation schools of the past, there were several elements that were extremely unconventional. The first subjects taught at the OCS were as follows: math, science, English, history, health, physical education, and ideology of the Party. Instructors taught the subjects offered at the local public schools, ensuring children would matriculate successfully, but the alternative teaching methods encouraged them "to begin to define the phenomena around us and make all phenomena act in a desired manner."[80] In other words, children were not only taught that two plus two equals four, but they were shown how to explain why. With any concept, whether it was mathematics or history, students at the OCS had the choice to investigate every angle of a problem or theory before coming to a conclusion about the status of its being. Even if no conclusion was reached, educators treated the children as people "whose ideas and opinions are respected."[81]

A fascinating daily feature of life at the OCS in its early years was the children's direct involvement with party activities. Two days out of the week, students above the primary levels, at about five to eleven years old, attended an "ideology of the Party" class, where they learned

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[78] Jones and Gayles, "The World is Child's Classroom," 102.
[79] Jones and Gayles, "The World is Child's Classroom," 102.
[80] "…Our Hope Is Placed on You," D.
[81] "…Our Hope Is Placed on You," D.

history of the Black Panther Party, the status of their incarcerated comrades, and the significance of their education in the broader context of American society. This shines through in the May 1971 interview featured at the beginning of this paper. In the piece, the interviewer asked the children a series of questions about their knowledge of the party. Not only were they aware of the government repression the Black Panthers faced, they could identify and describe capitalism, dialectical materialism, and intercommunalism. One child described his and his comrades' mission as creating "a society where people can live together without fighting and without the pigs telling them what to do."[82] This is an example of values at the OCS. Though the "ideology of the Party" classes ended around 1975, instructors and administrators fed students information Black Panther beliefs, albeit subtly.

Unlike Freedom Schools and Liberation Schools of the past, OCS staff consisted of credentialed teachers A special board of advisers within the administration, the curriculum committee, was responsible for creating lessons, dictating teaching style, and setting evaluation guidelines. Dr. Bill Moore, who earned his degree from the History of Consciousness program at UC Santa Cruz, initially headed the group.[83] The rest of the curriculum committee comprised of volunteers and department heads within the school. In the later years of the OCS, administrators borrowed lesson structure for their lower level math and language classes from the Oakland Unified School district, fearing that the current one "lacks cohesiveness and continuity."[84] Panther educators constantly reshaped the curriculum throughout the school's existence in order to improve their service.

Director Erika Huggins also played a key role in shaping OCS structure. Instead of placing children in conventional grades, she suggested each individual subject should have a

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[82] "Students of the Huey P. Newton Institute," 11.
[83] Jones and Gayles, "The World Is a Child's Classroom," 107.
[84] Memo to Huey From OCS, December 26, 1977. Box 16 Folder 4. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

level. By 1977, the system had been solidified; she organized the school into 12 levels, and administrators determined placement by language and math skills, prior school experience, and age. There was often a three-year age gap between the youngest and oldest student in a class, due to the varying abilities of each person.[85] Instructors submitted a weekly written progress report about each of their pupils instead of issuing grades. From the teacher's observations, the curriculum committee determined whether the child should move up, move down, or stay the in the same level.[86] Thus, a child could be in a fourth level mathematics course and a first level English class depending on their skills. Elaine Brown boasted to Huey Newton that Huggins' system "has made it possible for us to guarantee that our students will graduate at about the standard ninth-grade level," even allowing them to skip junior high school.[87]

Though the professionally trained staff and unique learning system created a world of opportunities for OCS students, selection and retention proved to be a challenge for administrators. Most recruitment for teachers and volunteers occurred at Laney, Mills, and Merritt city colleges as well as UC Berkeley and CSU Hayward.[88] Though the sources of personnel were legitimate, party politics and mismanagement drove qualified people away, especially in the later years of the school. In November and December 1977 alone, the OCS lost two instructors and fired ten volunteers.[89] As it happened, a lack of qualified people willing to associate themselves with the Black Panther Party contributed to the ultimate decline of the

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[85] Oakland Community School Curriculum Homework and Evaluation Guide, September 22, 1977, Box 16 Folder 3. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

[86] Teaching Notes, Box 16 Folder 4, Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

[87] Brown, *A Taste of Power*, 392.

[88] OCS Weekly Reports to Huey (Memos) from Erika October 28, 1977, Box 16 Folder 4. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

[89] OCS Weekly Reports to Huey (Memos) from Erika December 12, 1977 Box 16 Folder 4. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

school in its final years. It must be emphasized, however, that despite this school's grassroots beginnings, the party made efforts to hire professional teachers to maintain credibility.

Outside The Classroom

Another interesting feature of the OCS that was incorporated in teaching ideologies of the party was the time set apart for pursuits outside of academics. In its early years, administrators scheduled time for fieldwork. This consisted of activities that were visible in the Oakland community such as the sale and distribution of *Black Panther* newspapers, speaking to youths outside the school about the struggle, and going to legal trials of political prisoners.[90] One of the most often-cited examples of this were the field trips to view the trials of the San Quentin Six, a group of Panther-affiliated prisoners who participated in a major riot in 1971. Throughout the existence of the OCS, field trips often complimented school-wide educational activities. In 1974, for example, the school-wide Environmental Studies Project, which focused on "the development of the students' 'internal environment'" through yoga, martial arts, and cultivation of self-discipline, inspired a number of outdoor activities away from Oakland.[91] These trips served as an alternative to normal outings to zoos or parks because they were meant to inspire children to behave in the classroom and to eliminate the need for conventional punishment. Fieldwork and outings embodied true aspects of liberatory education as it ensured the pupils utilized what they had learned from their time in the classroom.

During their free time at the OCS, the children pursued activities that interested them, learning what talents were natural to their personalities and which were not. This again had a

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[90] "…Our Hope is Placed On You," E.
[91] "Youth Institute's Environmental Studies Project an Educational Experience" *The Black Panther*, 5 January 1974, 5.

purpose toward obtaining freedom from the expectations of society: development of special traits both built children's self esteem and encouraged them to use their skills wisely. According to administrators, external work coupled with teaching party ideology instilled a "love of mankind" into the students, and they would "pass [knowledge] on to all those who will survive" within the harsh throes of capitalism.[92] The concept of allowing students to excel in things they liked with the expectation that they would pass it on popularized the slogan, "each one, teach one" within the school and the surrounding community.

Leadership opportunities within the OCS also gave children a chance to pass on education to their peers and control their education. The Youth Committee was a student governing council that performed several functions. Consisting of an elected representative from each elementary level, the group operated the youth store, released a regularly occurring newsletter, hosted KIDS (a public access radio program), and hosted meetings of the Justice Board.[93] Furthermore, the Youth Committee helped plan school outings and special events at the OCS. The newsletter, *The Bear Facts Newspaper*, featured poems, special editorials on topics like mediation, coloring pages, and even a sports section, all student-written. It was short, but provided an outlet for students' creativity and another mode of recognition.[94] The Justice Board, comprised of three older children, allowed them to provide input on school rules. Not only did this governing body give students a portion of control over their school, it showed that the adults wanted the students to evaluate why the rules were in place rather than simply enforcing them.

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[92] "…Our Hope is Placed On You," E.
[93] Jones and Gayles, "The World Is a Child's Classroom" 107.
[94] *The Bear Facts Newspaper* p. 1 Box 28 Folder 17. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

The Youth Committee and Justice Board gave participants a sense of belonging and responsibility and reinforced the OCS' philosophy of learning by doing.[95]

The Children's House also served as a way for OCS students to learn from their classmates and adult allies. Touting the slogan "The Children's House is just like being at home," Panther volunteers cooked, cleaned, cared for, tutored and drove the children to school Monday through Thursday during the school year.[96] Administrators believed that immersion into the world of the Black Panther Party was essential for their development as dialectical thinkers, claiming "the children cannot become full human beings without a collective experience."[97] This idea, sharing a space with people united for the same cause, was an important philosophy from the beginning of the Black Panthers. The lifestyle reflected a rejection of private property and an expectation to care for one's peers. Though the idea achieved some popularity to such an extent that "most of them [were] there even on the weekends – to play and eat," use of the Children's House decreased around 1978 due to declining quality of childcare and parents' desire to keep their children at home with them.[98] [99]

Creative Arts and Special Events: Cornerstones in OCS Life

As discussed, educators at the Oakland Community School encouraged children to use their knowledge of party ideology and to resist any force that stifled their beliefs. Students had

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[95] EOC Corporate Overview July 22, 1977 Box 28 Folder 13,Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[96] "*Oakland Community Learning Center News* Vol. IV No.3" November 1979. Box 16 Folder 13 Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[97] Meeting To Discuss Collective Life of the Children April 17 1978 Box 16 Folder 4. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[98] Brown, *A Taste of Power*, 393.
[99] "Meeting to Discuss Collective Life of Children," Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation Papers.

the opportunity to express themselves, to attain leadership within the school, and to build their self-esteem. Many of the children enrolled at the OCS came from extremely disadvantaged backgrounds, and their inability to succeed at regular schools was attributed to a lack of intelligence rather than disturbances at home. When discussing the school with Newton on a visit to Cuba, Elaine Brown explained that "by building this protected space for [the children]," the party was "keeping anybody from doing any more damage that has already been done."[100] Therefore, self-expression and allowing control of their surroundings were important parts of the OCS.

People's Art, added to the curriculum in 1973, was the first central component to the goal of modifying the learning experience. Emory Douglass, the famous illustrator responsible for the Black Panther logo, served as the first art instructor to the school. The classes were consistent with the emphasis on creation for self-fulfillment that existed since the early days of the Black Panther Party. "People's art is art that reflects the Black community," noted Douglass, "and all things that affect the Black community."[101] Educators at the OCS gave students implements for creation and told them to allow their imaginations to take the lead. Completed crafts received special attention as well; special art exhibits during events at the OCLC put people's art on display. Some creations were even sold for fundraising.[102] Presenting the students' work as significant and special was important to illustrating their worth to the Oakland Community.

The OCS also sought to display the talents of its students through performance art. A fascinating feature of the children's plays was their shockingly political overtones. Unlike conventional schools, students wrote and produced their performances and used the teachers for

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[100] Brown, *A Taste of Power,* 393.
[101] "Youth Institute Succeeding Where Public Schools Failed: Interview with School's Director Erika Huggins" *The Black Panther,* 2 February 1974. 4.
[102] "First Annual Winter Festival Celebrates Community Survival" *The Black Panther,* 25 December 1976. 1.

guidance.[103] Topics covered in OCS productions paralleled current events or pop culture items that pertained to the struggle for liberation against capitalist oppression. "Remembering Our Roots" tells the story of Blacks in the United States, from experiences within the Atlantic slave trade to the meteoric rise of Huey Newton. The play premiered a month after the hit television miniseries "Roots" took the nation by storm in 1977.[104] Mock-commercials appeared between acts, one of which a boy advertises "Love it Or Leave it Ozone Spray." He asks, "Are you tired of welfare, poor people, or niggers in general?" and promises his product will rid society of undesirable wretches to make room for productive people.[105] Upon spraying the product into the air, he kills his friends surrounding him, and coincidentally, himself.

"The Forgotten Halloween" takes a more playful approach to conveying the Black Panther message, but maintains effectiveness. The show premiered a week before Halloween itself, and sought to expose the pagan origins of the holiday as well as the negative aspects of private ownership.[106] The play stars Sir Glutton, a cruel and greedy landowner in a mythical land. He does not care about the happiness of his people and his extreme avariciousness even shocks his wife. When he proposes a new tax on breathing, his poor and overworked serfs stage a rebellion, "the soldiers join ranks with the people, and the play ends with the village celebrating their freedom."[107] Like "Remembering Our Roots," the themes of revolution and anti-capitalism are strong within "The Forgotten Halloween." The plays worked well to illustrate what OCS educators wanted their students to understand as freedom.

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[103] "The Forgotten Halloween Exposes a Historical Error" *The Black Panther*, 22 Oct 22 1977. 14.
[104] "'Remembering our Roots' Celebrates Black History" *The Black Panther*, 26 February 1977. 1.
[105] "'Remembering our Roots'," *The Black Panther*, 6.
[106] "The Forgotten Halloween," *The Black Panther*, 14.
[107] "The Forgotten Halloween," *The Black Panther*, 15.

Performance art at OCS also focused on global current events, especially those pertaining to the African continent. "A Brighter Tomorrow" tells the story of South African children and their participation in their country's liberation struggle in 1976. The production consisted of a combination of traditional South African songs and a short three-act play. Thoko Mondlase Hall, sent to the flourishing school through Governor Jerry Brown's California Arts Council Program in 1976, wrote and directed the musical portion, while the children used their lessons in history to create the play.[108] The second half features South African children rebelling against European influence, protesting the use of Dutch Afrikaans language in textbooks and classrooms. They boycott Soweto schools, convince their parents and adult friends to rebel, and take to the streets to march. In attempts to suppress the insurrection, police shoot into the crowds of protestors and kill hundreds, mostly children.[109] While the scene is unusually violent for an elementary school play, it reflects activism at its best and worst. With Hall, the OCS hosted several other performances with an African theme such as "Bride Price 11 Cows" and "Come to Me, Let's Be Friends," all celebrating the African heritage of the predominantly Black school.

Arts at the OCS were significant in a number of ways. First, they provided an outlet for the students' creativity. Allowing the children to take control of their activities provided them with a sense of power they might have never had at home or in a traditional school. Their work, whether drawn, written or performed, was put on display for the whole community to enjoy and admire. Second, encouraging children to participate in the arts allowed them to grasp Black Panther Party principles and embody them. Through creation and imagination, the OCS presented the fifth point of the Ten Point Program to the next generation.

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[108] "'A Brighter Tomorrow: Courageous Children Joined In Common Bond," *The Black Panther,* 5 February 1977, 14.
[109] "'A Brighter Tomorrow," *The Black Panther,* 14.

Sisters in the Struggle: Women in the Black Panther Party

Female leadership in the Black Panther Party was pivotal to the success of the Oakland Community School and the organization's shift away from radicalism. Although the name Black Panther Party somehow became synonymous with masculinity, women played a pivotal role in performing many of the same functions their male counterparts from the day the first female member, Tarika Lewis, demanded to join in 1967.[110] They attained their peak of prominence through the creation and administration of the Oakland Community School, however. Despite inter-party turmoil, lingering sexist attitudes, and Huey Newton's erratic behavior, prominent and rank-in-file women stayed dedicated to their cause of improving their community and their children. Though some experts date the Black Panther Party's time of death within the 1970s, female participation and efforts to carry on Newton's intercommunal message truly extends its life until the end of the school in 1982.

There are some important points to keep in mind when beginning a discussion on Black Panther women. First, not every experience was the same. There was a wide range of diverse backgrounds with regards to the "type" of person to become involved with the party. Some, like teenaged Tarika Lewis, saw in-person what Newton, Seale, and others were doing within Oakland in the name of community protection. Some were college graduates with families, and others were high school dropouts living in extreme poverty.[111] Whatever the case was, the calls for action and change that rang through the 1960s drew these women to the ranks of the Black Panther Party.

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[110] LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job," 307.
[111] Alkebulan, *Survival Pending Revolution,* 52.

A second point to consider is the fact that male leaders expected women to perform the same tasks as their brothers in action in the early years. According to Kathleen Cleaver, a major contributor to the Black Panther Party in its early years, leaders divided tasks by skill and need, not gender.[112] Women took to the streets selling newspapers, lining up in protest during rallies and proselytizing the Black Power message all around the country. Not only were female members politically active, they often exposed themselves to the more dangerous aspects of being a Black Panther. Like all of the male members, Tarika Lewis and the women that came after her had to attend weapons training. Learning how to use a gun with accuracy and safety was important to fighting police brutality and party leaders required all members to participate in defending the community.[113] Some women like Erika Huggins and Kathleen Cleaver found themselves in jail as political prisoners.

Despite the swelling ranks of female Black Panthers and high expectations of their involvement, male members sometimes subjugated women to lesser status and even used Black Power rhetoric as justification. The politically charged atmosphere of the 1960s opened a whole new world for feminist activism, but there was no room for the fight for gender equality in the Black Panthers. Co-founders Newton and Seale took pride in their male-centered organization and argued that a woman's role in the revolution was to build and reinforce black manhood in a society where it was stifled and feared.[114] Women led a double life – one as a revolutionary, dodging bullets on the streets and receiving threats from COINTELPRO and the other as a passive creature who stood behind her men and set her needs aside for the cause of Black

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[112] Kathleen Cleaver, "Women, Power and Revolution," *Liberation, Imagination and the Black Panther Party: A New Look at the Black Panther Party*, ed. Kathleen Neal Cleaver and George Katsiaficas, (New York, Routledge, 2001) 125.

[113] Robyn Ceanne Spencer, "Engendering The Black Freedom Struggle: Revolutionary Black Womanhood and the Black Panther Party in the Bay Area, California." *Journal of Women's History* 20:1 (2008) 95.

[114] LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job," 309.

liberation. Though required to train with guns and learn self-defense techniques, female Panthers often worked in offices or performed classifiably domestic tasks such as cooking for the Free Breakfast Program and working in the collective daycares for party member's children.[115] It is important, however, to remember diverse experiences while considering the idea of sexist task assignment within the Black Panther Party as well as opinions on women's roles in American culture at large. The expectations placed upon some female members to use their domestic skills as well as their revolutionary energy was progressive for the 1960s, at least.

Disrespect from male comrades also plagued women's experiences during their involvement with the Black Panther Party. Panthers themselves, like Kathleen Cleaver, argue that sexism within the organization was not as prevalent as it was within all of society at that time. "When women suffered hostility, abuse, neglect, and assault…" she wrote in a rejection of the media's treatment of Panther men, "that's what was going on in the world" – it was taboo to protest it.[116] The Panthers set up rules and corresponding punishments that forbade males from verbally abusing, beating, or sexually assaulting their female comrades, but they did not prevent these inappropriate actions from becoming a reoccurring problem. Though it is impossible to assert that a majority of women endured male chauvinist behavior in order to express their political beliefs, physical and verbal abuse were consistent issues. Little could be done, as "women who did not have high organizational rank or were not tied to powerful Panther men had less recourse in addressing gender discrimination."[117] Reports of mistreatment within the Black Panther Party did not entirely drive away female membership, however; by 1969, Bobby Seale

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[115] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 97.
[116] [116] Kathleen Neal Cleaver, "Women Power and Revolution," 126.

[117] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 102.

estimated that about two-thirds of rank-in-file members were women, a sign that their work kept the organization up and running at the lowest levels.[118]

Though sometimes marginalized and abused, female Black Panthers recognition came for their work and loyalty in the face of oppression from COINTELPRO and local police during the first years of the organization's existence. During Huey Newton's great renovation of the party during the first years of the 1970s, the Women's Lib movement and female equality were two of the first topics he addressed. "There has been some uncertainty about how to address these movements," he wrote in 1970, but he and his party had to "gain security" in themselves "and therefore have respect and feelings for all oppressed people."[119] In hopes of gaining as much support as possible, he officially observed feminism and expelled members like Eldridge Cleaver for holding sensational and offensive views on how a woman should be treated.[120] The move was pragmatic, especially due to the declining number of rank-in-file Panther men. Either victims of police brutality, in prison for long sentences, or simply tired of participating, the disappearance of male Panthers was a process that was ironically accelerated by the culture of female exclusion within the party.

Newton's strategy of "survival pending revolution" heavily depended on female Panther participation. His choice to concentrate the party's resources into community control and abandoned armed revolution essentially put what was deemed as "women's work" to the forefront. The intensification of his community services which included free ambulance rides, free food giveaways and the new full-time youth institute required staffs that were proficient in

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[118] Cleaver, Women, Power, and Revolution" 125.
[119] Newton, ""the women's liberation and gay liberation movements: August 15, 1970" 57
[120] Trace Matthews, "'No One Ever Asks, What a Man's Place in the Revolution Is': Gender and the Politics of the Black Panther Party 1966-1971" *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered* ed. Charles E. Jones (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998) 279.

more skills than handling guns and intimidating police.[121] His great experiment was to start in Oakland, a decision that led to the closure of numerous party chapters all across the country. Though scores of affiliates chose to leave the Black Panthers due what appeared to be mass abandonment, hundreds relocated to the Bay Area within three years after the party's revitalization. Women were a large part of this migration as they made up half of the membership base in 1973.[122] Remaining Panther men had to accept the growing importance of their female comrades.

Power in the Hands of Women: Successes and Failures

With the creation and growth of the Oakland Community School, women became the heart and soul of the Black Panther Party. Newton remained the face and figurehead, but female members bore the brunt of his community outreach plan and carried it in devotion to the people they served.

Elaine Brown's ascendance to power in 1974 was an event that changed gender relations in the Black Panther Party. As mentioned, Newton's criminal behavior forced him into exile in the mid-1970s. Brown was not a popular choice for chairman of the Central Committee; several Planning Committee members "described Elaine as a crazy woman," sending in letters of resignation as she took the reigns.[123] She acquired that reputation from her continuing close relationship to Newton, as well as her confrontational attitude toward organizational male chauvinism. Brown had experienced sexism firsthand in her seven years with the party and knew taking a tough stance against it was necessary to establish her authority.

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[121] LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job," 316.
[122] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 103.
[123] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 270.

Under Brown's leadership, the Black Panther Party made some of its largest strides within the Oakland community. Through careful image control and networking with some of the city's most powerful political players, the Panthers garnered elected positions on the West Oakland Model Cities governing boards and the Berkeley antipoverty board.[124] Brown lent party support to political candidates in larger-scale California elections as well. She sent a delegation of Panthers to advise gubernatorial candidate Jerry Brown during his successful campaign in 1974.[125] Governor Brown remained an ally to the party after his victory and even made a special appearance at the OCS in 1977. Chairman Brown's campaign to separate the party from Newton's explosive reputation also reached prominent local officials. Lionel Wilson, Superior Court Judge and board member of the party's Educational Opportunities Corporation, became the first African-American mayor of Oakland with the help of Panther registration drives and aggressive voter awareness campaigns.[126] Brown herself served on Wilson's transition team, securing the appointments of several Panthers to his permanent staff. The lady chairman saw the party's future as a legitimate aboveground association of community leaders, and her actions reflected those visions.

Leadership at the OCS was another clear sign pointing to the importance of female Black Panthers in the 1970s. Women occupied most of the important positions throughout its existence. The school opened under the guidance of Brenda Bay and thrived throughout her tenure until her resignation from the school and the party in 1973.[127] Erika Huggins and Donna Howell took control as co-directors after Bay's departure and labored to keep thriving. Huggins was a long-time party member like Brown and worked tirelessly to improve the school. In order to attract positive attention and interest to the OCS, she used the very same media that was notorious for

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[124] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 108.
[125] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 108.
[126] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 274.
[127] LeBlanc Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job," 317.

misrepresenting the party for years. She allowed television and documentary crews onto the campus in order to promote the Black Panther model of education and to show the world that the organization was still relevant to a post 1960's world. In an interview with the *Montclarion,* Huggins explained that her school combines "freedom with discipline" because they "know that children can't make all the decisions about learning."[128] Though educators at the OCS took a liberal stance on education, legitimacy in the eyes of the public was a central goal.

Other aspects of the party depended female members' continued devotion to the Black Panther cause. By 1975, every program except for the newspaper had a woman at the helm.[129] The *Black Panther* finally came under female control in 1978 with JoNina Abron as editor until it ceased publication in 1980. Newton's departure also inspired women in the Black Panther Party to address past injustices. The years of mistreatment and abuse spurred an increased vigilance against sexist behavior from the remaining male members. Brown joined forces with three other prominent Panther women, Huggins, Evon Carter, and Gwen Goodloe, forming the Clique. The group vehemently rejected the past trend of abuse and discriminatory attitudes, asserting their freedom at home, in the streets and in the bedroom.[130]

While women did several positive things for the Black Panther Party and the OCS through fundraising and political activities, Brown's hunger for power eventually detracted from their success. To gain the allegiance of party members after Newton's exile, she utilized his band of gangster bodyguards who called themselves the Squad. The all-male group usually answered only to the ex-chairman, but he essentially "lent" them to Brown in his absence.[131] Because she depended on the Squad's ability to enforce cooperation within the party, she needed Newton's

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[128] *The Montclarion* May 12 1976 16 Folder 1. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[129] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 270.
[130] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 107.
[131] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 270.

approval for almost everything the Black Panthers did while he was away. Both Erika Huggins and Brown were required to send weekly memos about the OCS, community programs, and Oakland politics to the founder. Correspondence between headquarters and Newton's home in Cuba reveal that he had a great deal of control of the party despite his distance.[132] Though women like Huggins and Brown were important as the face of the Black Panther Party during Huey Newton's absence and had some agency in reforming the organization, they did not and would never gain complete control.

Brown's tenure produced several positive results for the Black Panther Party but she herself engaged in some questionable leadership in order to establish herself. Her reputation as "crazy" was not unfounded: she used her political networking skills to gain inside influence within Oakland's judicial system. This allowed the Squad to continue their clandestine activities that included embezzlement, drug dealing, and threatening with the use of physical force with limited police interference.[133]

The most egregious example of Brown's ruthlessness was her alleged involvement in the murder of bookkeeper Betty Van Patter. A white Berkeley liberal, Van Patter admired the Panthers and was delighted at the opportunity to work with them. Her relationship with the acting chairman soured after she found several discrepancies within party financial records. Brown admitted that she was "scared of her getting into my [city council] campaign books and other stuff… she started asking about where the money was going..."[134] Van Patter disappeared in mid-1974. Brown claimed to have terminated her employment a few days before she went missing, but witnesses state that the bookkeeper was working in the Panther offices after the date she provided. Five weeks after her disappearance, authorities found Van Patter's mutilated and

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[132] Pearson ,*The Shadow of the Panther,* 270.
[133] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther,* 273.
[134] Kate Coleman with Paul Avery "The Party's Over," *The New Times Magazine,* July 10, 1978, 41

waterlogged body near San Francisco Bay. Police "were convinced" Brown and the Squad played a part in the murder, especially because of her insensitivity toward the news of Van Patter's disappearance, but they never acted on their suspicions for a dubiously unclear reason.[135] Though Brown worked to make the party seem legitimate from the outside, her attitude toward power spawned a sort of regulated corruption.

Women in the Black Panther Party played a major role in its image as a service organization in the 1970s. Brown's behavior as chairman, though ethically questionable at times, displayed what a woman could do at the helm of the organization. Other women benefited from her intolerance for gender discrimination, despite her true lack of control in the party. A deficit of effective male members, as well as their devotion to children at the OCS kept women loyal to their projects and carried the Black Panther name. As we will see, the party could not survive without its female leaders

[135] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 272

"You May House Their Bodies But Not Their Souls:" The Demise of the OCS with the Black Panther Party

The title of this final chapter is from the Kahil Gibram poem "On Children." The piece, often featured in Oakland Community School pamphlets and newsletters, highlights the importance collective childrearing and the role of adults involved in a child's life as egalitarian nurturers.[136] It is also relevant to the status of the Black Panther Party from 1977 to its final collapse in 1981. Lingering members, most of whom had devoted five or more years to preaching intercommunalism, community action, and sticking up for the poor and oppressed, had very little energy by the time Huey Newton returned from exile in Cuba in 1977. Although the OCS was thriving at this time, the Black Panther Party itself was starting its final decline. The former chairman's disregard for the progress the organization made in his absence in favor of his drive for power in his old stomping grounds greatly frustrated devotees and drained them of the last ounces of their revolutionary energies. Loyalty to the school kept a majority of members active until ongoing party corruption drove them away or the school ran out of resources and had to close in 1982. School personnel were there to serve, but their interest in helping the children greatly overshadowed their loyalty to the party after Newton's rise to power.

By 1977, Erika Huggins and other OCS staff had much to be proud of. They had reached their highest enrollment total yet; the school hosted 159 students as of that October.[137] Many of these children were not from Black Panther families either, a telling sign that outreach and image-building activities during the Brown years were somewhat successful. The state also

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[136] "On Children" by Kahil Gibram from OCS yearbook 1979-1980. Box 16 Folder 13, Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

[137] "Oakland Community School Enrollment Totals Sept. 1977-Jan. 1978" Box 16 Folder 7. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

recognized the hard work of educators at the OCS. In 1976, the school qualified for the California Arts Council Program and received the services of Thoko Mondlase Hall for their performance arts lessons. Its exceptional work with children qualified the OCS for government grants as well. The Office of Child Development and the Office of Child Nutritional Services provided monies for the Children's House and their on-campus meals.[138] The EOC and OCS staff came to depend on this source of income, using fundraising efforts to supplement it.

Success came in the form of official recognition as well. The Alameda Board of Supervisors awarded the Black Panthers for their work with the poor and oppressed in 1976.[139] In summer 1977, California assemblymen Tom Bates and John Miller awarded the OCS with a commendation on the steps of the state capitol building, an ironic image to anyone who remembered the famed demonstrations the Black Panthers held at the same site ten years previously. Some members and politicians saw the honors as proof that the party was better off without Newton and his exploits.[140]

Though the OCS was a visible positive force within the Oakland community and reflected the Panther's desire to help their neighbors, the fallout from Newton's return from Cuba in July 1977 overshadowed its importance. With their commander back, the Squad quickly dropped their allegiance to Brown and put Newton back into full command of the party. One of their first orders of business was to silence Crystal Gray, a witness to the 1974 murder of Kathleen Smith. Not only did the Squad fail to murder their target, their botched operation attracted more negative press than ever before.[141] Much of the work Brown did to attract attention to the Black Panther's legitimate activities and to cover up their shady dealings was undone. The media fallout resulted in a severe blow to public support. Politicians who once

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[138] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 110.
[139] Jones and Gayles, "The World is a Child's Classroom," 111.
[140] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 274-275.
[141] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 280.

expressed admiration for the OCS and congratulated the Panthers on their fine educational model withdrew their endorsements. Even Oakland Mayor Lionel Wilson, who received a great deal of support from the party during his campaign, had to distance himself. In his letter of resignation from the Educational Opportunities Corporation, said his involvement with the Panthers presented a conflict of interest with his mayoral position and he could not "accept responsibility for any activities of the corporation other than the OCLC."[142]

Brown's resignation and departure was the first deathblow to the OCS and the Black Panther Party. Furious with Newton and the Squad for undermining her work, the former chairman's dedication to the party began to wane. Though she never provided a single reason for leaving, an act of brutality reminiscent of old-Panther style chauvinism pushed her over the edge. Donna Howell, the co-director of the OCS, resigned from her post and the party after enduring a brutal beating and a broken jaw from a male member when she criticized the quality of his work.[143] Newton's approval of this action disgusted Brown. Disillusioned and weary of working toward a goal that seemed unattainable due to the brutality of the Squad, she departed.

There are two versions of Brown's defection. In her autobiography, she writes that she left in the middle of the night without announcing her dissatisfaction with the party. Other Panthers are quick to deny this, however. Party members close to her claim Brown departed after she confronted Newton about his attitude on the continued mistreatment of women, an event which resulted in a severe beating for the former female chairman.[144] In any case, she did leave a handwritten note for Newton that sums up the source of her dissatisfaction. She felt that the party "seemed too much of a man's world" for her, expressing her disappointment that "after 10 years

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[142] Lionel Wilson Resigns from the EOC, November 11, 1977. Stanford Special Collections Box 21 Folder 13. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[143] LeBlanc-Ernest, "'The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job,'" 324.
[144] Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther*, 281.

of everything – that this could stop me (us)."[145] A large portion of the Black Panther Party's credibility left with Elaine Brown in late 1977.

These events created even more turmoil for the OCS, as support halted and donations dried up. Erika Huggins did the best she could to continue operations as normal, but the party collapsing around her interfered with her duties as director. Newton's highly publicized illegal activities and Brown's resignation offended and disheartened many former sympathizers whose donations the OCS depended on to operate. One letter from Dr. Jay Freidman provides the most prominent reason why people decided to cancel their monthly support. He came to the realization that the Black Panthers failed to "broaden its roots in the community" and could not "retain the support of its own membership without cults and purges, etc."[146] With operational expenses at about $22,000 per month, the Educational Opportunities Corporation and remaining OCS administrators soon found themselves in dire straits.

Another deathblow came in April 1979 with the announcement of a new tuition system at the OCS. Until that point, the meals, field trips, transportation, dormitories, and every other service the school provided was free of charge. An original intention of the Panthers was to open the opportunity to receive an exceptional education to the poorest members of the Oakland community. Bad press had hindered the EOC's ability to fundraise, however, forcing them to ask parents to pay ten percent of their incomes in order to keep the school open.[147] The Children's House, unpopular as it was amongst OCS parents, began charging $25 a week and opened its services to all people in the Oakland community. Enrollment steadily declined after 1977, but the

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[145] Elaine's Departure Note to Huey, Box 41 Folder 5. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[146] From the Office of Dr. Jay Freidman Dec 11, 1977, Box 41 Folder 5. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[147] "OCS Memo" March 9, 1979, Box 16 Folder 4 Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

tuition request caused a sharp dive in student numbers. Interparty memoranda reveal that the number of pupils at the OCS fell from 132 to 122 two months after the EOC started charging for its services.[148]

The Black Panther Party was having a difficult time transitioning into the 1980s. With Brown gone and Newton participating in various illegal exploits while working on his doctoral dissertation at UC Santa Cruz, progress came to a standstill. All survival programs except for the OCS ceased operation by the end of 1980. Remaining party members employed at the school waited for Newton to formally disband the party but he never made the call.[149] Huggins, who had invested a great deal of time and energy into administering the OCS, refused to give up hope. She responded to a rash of break-ins at the OCLC from that started in November 1979 and continued through the beginning of the 1980s with cries for justice. In an article in one of the last issues of *The Black Panther* entitled "There is a Conspiracy to Destroy the Oakland Community Learning Center," Huggins complained that the "forces who oppose our school," citing ongoing government harassment as a possible cause, "have used this period of our financial crisis to increase their efforts against us."[150] When she informed the police of the continuous vandalism at the OCS, they did nothing. The Black Panther Party had run their course with authorities in Oakland – to help them was political suicide to any political figure.

The final cause of the demise of the OCS came with Huggins' resignation. Fundraising for the school had dried up by 1981. In order to stay afloat, the EOC arranged the sale of Panther properties around Oakland as well as other assets, using the proceeds to pay the mortgage, salaries, and miscellaneous expenses. Although the OCS was the party's last functioning

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[148] OCS Memo June 1, 1979, Box 16, Folder 4. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.
[149] LeBlanc-Ernest, "The Most Qualified Person to Handle the Job," 325.
[150] "There is a Conspiracy to Destroy the Oakland Community Learning Center," *The Black Panther* 7 July 1980, 5.

program, Huggins could not work with the school's share of the profits. After falling out with Newton on the issue, she resigned as director and defected from the Black Panthers.[151] Her departure was the last of the women who gained prominence during the Brown years.

The OCS never recovered after Huggins quit. Because she was the only person who knew how to deal with the school's finances, the EOC endured a crippling series of audits.[152] Bill Schuford, a teacher and activist, replaced Huggins in February 1982, but the school's financial problems were beyond repair at the time of his arrival. The new director discovered mass discrepancies in enrollment totals, employment data, and other financial totals. When he questioned Newton about all of these inconsistencies, the chairman admitted that he was using state grants and EOC funds to support himself.[153] Schuford immediately resigned and contacted the FBI about the illegal activities surrounding the OCS. The state of California charged Newton and some of his associates in the Squad with numerous counts of grand theft and embezzlement.[154] State prosecutors garnished the remaining assets of the EOC. Educational officials cancelled all grants to the OCS following the scandal; remaining staff had no choice but to close the school during the summer of 1982. The less than fifty students still enrolled were forced to attend local public schools. The Black Panther Party's vision ended with the death of the Oakland Community School and the irreparable controversy surrounding it.

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[151] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther*, 297.
[152] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther*, 297.
[153] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther*, 298.
[154] "People of the State of California vs. Huey Percy Newton, Mark Alexander, Clifford. Steven Long, and Ralph Leon Moore" Box 28 folder 14. Dr. Huey P. Newton Papers, Stanford Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Palo Alto, California.

Conclusion: What Was and What Is

Frequently overlooked in popular memory of African American history, the Black Panther Party's Oakland Community School was not only an institution that redefines the organization, it places the group into a continuum of other educational efforts within the broad scope of the Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century. Empowerment is a constant theme that connects post-slavery education, Citizenship Schools, Freedom Schools, and the OCS. Though political agendas varied by era, philosophers, activists and instructors used their talents to inspire African Americans to rethink the status quo and assert their rights in a country that built its foundations on egalitarianism. The history of the OCS and its educational goals not only force us to reevaluate the popular memory of the Black Panther Party, but it provides an extension of the mainstream Civil Rights Movement through the 1980s.

The Oakland Community School presented a nurturing side of the Black Panther Party, a surprise considering their less-than-dazzling reputation at the end of the 1960s. The school produced images of adults truly caring for youths that drew parallels to traditions of collaborative childrearing and extended family care within the African American tradition. Party member James Abron summed the idea up in a neat package, stating that "Monday through Friday, we would teach 'em, feed 'em, take 'em to our dormitories and wash 'em, help them with their homework, put 'em to bed, clean their clothes, wipe their butts and then the process would start all over again."[155] This is a far cry from the gun-toting, leather-clad revolutionary that has come to represent the Black Panther Party. Abron's experience was consistent with several party members' lives within the last years of the organization's existence. Teaching and nurturing connects the OCS with past educational experiences unexpectedly and rightly so.

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[155] Spencer, "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle," 106.

The study of gender within the context of the Oakland Community School also changes out ideas of the Black Power movement. Administration of the school put women at the forefront of the Black Panther Party. Though often overlooked in favor of male leaders' interest in conveying a frighteningly bold image of masculinity, female members proved to be instrumental to the existence of the school and its organization. The swift decline of the OCS after its most influential women departed is a clear sign of their importance. Elaine Brown found moderate success in transforming the Black Panther Party into a progressive grassroots organization. Her dedication to image building attracted the attention of community members and local government, factors which led to celebration of the OCS during its most successful years. With Brown and Huggins running the public relations and financial aspects of the party until the early 1980s, the school met and exceeded its goals. Their subsequent departures proved to be fatal blows to the OCS, however, as remaining members lacked the skills necessary to manage remaining Panther assets.

Dedication to the OCS amidst the chaos of the collapse of the party represents the ongoing flaw of the Black Panthers. From its inception, leaders preached messages of change, anti-establishmentarianism, and justice for the oppressed on a global scale. Their vision and hope for a brighter tomorrow greatly influenced the party's interest in children's needs and the resulting free breakfasts, educational programs and the creation of the OCS. Aspects of life within the Black Panthers defied the positive ideologies so beloved by the faithful, however. Shootouts, shakedowns, and illicit activities were what the public saw and the media reported. Even though the party tried to redefine itself during Brown's tenure as chairman, Huey Newton achieved the status as a false prophet in the eyes of people from all over the political spectrum through his exploits. His ambivalence toward powerful women in the later years of the Black

Panther Party, though equally despicable in its heyday, made him seem like more of a monster than a visionary.

Though it is hard not to blame Newton for the demise of his own political project, it is important to realize that the world changed around the Black Panther Party between the '60s and the '80s. The OCS started during Nixon's presidency, continued through the end of the Vietnam War, and floundered under Reagan's neo-conservative revolution. Though the Black Panthers matured as an organization during the 1970s and achieved a degree of political prowess, the Black Power message did not resonate with revolutionary youth in its later years as it had previously. Newer party recruits like Betty Van Patter and Bill Schuford joined out of admiration of Newton's philosophies from the 1960s but became disillusioned once they saw the real Panther lifestyle. The party founder's inability to control his megalomania and drug addiction was a significant factor in the destruction of the Black Panther Party, but its status as a sensational political outliers as well as changing trends over the years contributed to the organization's fade into irrelevance and the death of the OCS. Newton's flaws also inevitably led to his death at the hands of crack dealers in August 1989, a fact which the remaining few adherents to his cult of personality still contribute to a government conspiracy on his life.[156]

Although the OCS and the original Black Panther Party are gone forever, former members stayed politically active and involved with education. After her departure in 1977, Elaine Brown continued to work on activist causes while traveling the world. In 1995, Brown founded Field of Flowers, a nonprofit educational organization focused on improving impoverished schools in the Atlanta area.[157] Still organizing, she works with the poor and oppressed in Brunswick, Georgia and advocates for prison reform whenever she can. Erika

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[156] Pearson, *Shadow of the Panther,* 315.
[157] Elaine Brown, "Elaine Brown Online," http://www.elainebrown.org/, Accessed 10 March 2009.

Huggins also continued her work in alternative learning. Throughout the 1990s, she acted as the main educator at the Body/Mind Institute, an affiliate of Harvard Medical School. Her field of interest was researching the use of yoga and stretching techniques and their effects on reducing stress in the classroom. Currently, Huggins is a professor of Women's Studies at CSU East Bay. She still lives in Oakland to this day.[158] Other former Panthers keep in touch and utilize the political education and organizing skills they learned during the party's glory days. The core philosophies of the Black Panther Party live on through their work.

A final question remains. What did the Oakland Community School students take away from their experiences at the Black Panther school? A touching example of how the OCS influenced those who went there is contained in a short essay by alum Gregory Lewis. Born into poverty to a teenage mother, he acknowledges that the Black Panthers inspired him to take a critical stance on the media and government. As he looked down at his newborn son, he vowed to continue questioning the world, a behavior he learned as a boy. He spent eight years of his childhood "within the comfortable confines" of the school and "the organization that birthed it," calling the Black Panther Party "one of the most controversial and necessary political movements in America."[159] While the party was long gone by the start of his son's life, he wanted the child to understand the world's injustices as he did in his youth. To Lewis, the baby represented a fresh mind, a clean slate - images that motivated the Black Panther Party to support local youth. The Oakland Community School and its unconventional legacy lives on in its former students and their hope for a better tomorrow.

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[158] Erika Huggins, "Biography (Continued)," http://www.erickahuggins.com/bio_contd.html, Accessed 10 March 2009.

[159] Gregory Lewis "Power to the Children: Writing from the Life of a Panther Cub." http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Children/Children_index.html, Accessed 15 October 2008.

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