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978-1-107-02299-7 - In Search of Power: African Americans in the Era of Decolonization, 1956–1974

Brenda Gayle Plummer

Excerpt

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Introduction

In late summer 1959 two aging generals and trusted staff members met for a series of candid conversations at a medieval fortress. The generals were also presidents, and the venue, the Château de Rambouillet, was the official summer home of French heads of state. Charles De Gaulle enjoyed receiving his foreign counterparts at the chateau, whose interior, resplendent with gilt and tapestries, and exterior, lush with formal gardens, reflected the grandeur of France. “Our guests,” he noted, “were made to feel the nobility behind the geniality, the permanence behind the vicissitudes, of the nation which was their host.”¹

De Gaulle’s guest this time was the president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, who on arriving in Paris received a hero’s welcome as the liberator of wartime Europe. While the shared experience of World War II united the two men, their talks were not limited to the past. The major powers had accepted the inevitability of decolonization by the end of the decade, but not without hand wringing. Eisenhower and De Gaulle bemoaned colonial peoples’ lack of preparation for independence. As an aide recalled the discussion, Ike declared that “often we were asked for tractors when the level of the economy required the ability to handle a plow and an ox. Many of these peoples were attempting to make the leap from savagery to the degree of civilization of a country like France in perhaps ten years, without realizing that it took thousands of years to develop the civilization which we know.” De Gaulle concurred. In spite of disagreement between the two as to how Western Europe might best be defended, they agreed that it was now vital that the West act in concert in handling the developing countries.² De Gaulle ultimately consented to a French withdrawal from Algeria and Eisenhower was the first American to be

¹ De Gaulle quoted in Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle, Ruler, 1945–1970* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 333.

² Memorandum of Conversation, September 3, 1959, Declassified Documents Reference System, hereafter DDRS. Note that the separate digitized and microfiche DDRS collections do not always overlap. See also Cyrus Sulzberger, *The Last of the Giants* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 75.

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so informed. Ike himself had little prior knowledge of Africa, and awkward mistakes compromised his administration's efforts to conduct normal relations with the new states.

Competition between the West and the Soviet bloc underwent transition after Stalin's death, becoming less dangerous to Europeans and North Americans but more lethal to emerging nations. The great powers had difficulty accommodating the democratic aspirations of their own ethnic minorities, and while they supported majority rule in principle, they sought to maintain patterns of social and political domination in previously colonized areas.

Across the Atlantic, a more modest meeting had taken place earlier in the season, also at a special site. The former summer home of the late Robert Russa Moton, who had presided over historically black Tuskegee Institute, was nestled in the Virginia countryside. Holly Knoll in Capahosic, Virginia, possessed rustic charm and lacked the luxury of Rambouillet but, like the chateau, served a manifest political purpose. Remodeling made it a conference center "where white and Negro leadership might convene and deliberate the important and crucial issues which must be faced in a spirit of understanding and goodwill," the Phelps Stokes Fund had argued in the proposal for funding it. The discussions held at Holly Knoll were not limited to domestic civil rights issues. "Responsible Negroes" and well-meaning whites worried about the impact of U.S. race relations on foreign publics and the lack of a coherent national policy toward African states.³

Earlier in the decade, while the Montgomery bus boycott was making the news all over the world, a group of prominent African-American figures met secretly at Capahosic. The clandestine all-male March 1956 conclave, sponsored by the Phelps Stokes Fund and paid for by the General Education Board, addressed the worries of conservatives who felt uncomfortable with the mass mobilization and popular participation that Montgomery represented. The list of participants read like a *Who's Who* of the black establishment of a decade before, minus Dorothy Ferebee of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). The contemporary observer notes the marked gender exclusion, but at midcentury, many Americans participated in mass organizations in which gender separation was the norm.

Men attending the meeting included UN official Ralph Bunche; President Rufus Clement of Atlanta University; Representative William L. Dawson of Chicago; Urban League director Lester B. Granger; federal judge William Hastie; Charles S. Johnson, president of Fisk University; President Benjamin Mays of Morehouse College; Frederick D. Patterson, president, respectively, of the National Negro Business League and the Phelps Stokes Fund; Willard

³ Proposal of the Phelps Stokes Fund to the John Bulow Campbell Foundation, September 1958, General Education Board Records, Phelps Stokes Fund–Holly Knoll Conference Center, Series 1.2, folder 3029, Rockefeller Archive Center, hereafter RAC; Frederick D. Patterson, *Chronicles of Faith: The Autobiography of Frederick D. Patterson* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1991), 163–4.

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Townsend, head of the United Transport Workers Union; New York state rent commissioner Robert Weaver; John H. Wheeler, president of the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company; and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) secretary Roy Wilkins.⁴

Conveners timed the conference to occur one day before a mass meeting on civil rights in Washington, D.C., organized by fifty-two organizations. The Capahosic gathering in contrast was “hush-hush,” speculated an Associated Negro Press correspondent, because participants wanted a gradualist entente with southern moderates and sensed that the deal-making, top-down leadership that characterized their *modus operandi* was becoming obsolete. Roy Wilkins recalled the meeting as unproductive, but it reflected fault lines in the black freedom movement that had already become visible by the late 1950s.⁵

One of these traversed gender. The NCNW and the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs had vigorously supported civil rights mobilization beginning with the Truman years (1945–52) and beyond. They were joined in activism by sororities and such local groups as the Women’s Political Council, which played a formative role in mobilizing the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott of 1954–5.⁶ The impressive credentials of these black women’s organizations did not entitle them, however, to an equal seat at the table where the shape of the coming freedom struggle was debated and where prestigious African-American men contemplated their positions vis-à-vis the newly emerging states of Africa and the Caribbean.

Capahosic gatherings were as select in their way as De Gaulle and Eisenhower’s meeting. During these years, the core group consisted of African-American college presidents and, as the specific topic would dictate, various experts. Vernon Jordan, a young Howard University law student who subsequently led the National Urban League and later advised President Bill Clinton, fondly recalled Capahosic as “the equivalent of a black Bohemian Grove, a unique gathering of members of the talented tenth.” In his account,

The atmosphere was very male, with conversations over poker games or while sitting on the porch drinking. We played tennis, went on long walks, and ate great Southern cuisine. I loved every minute of it. Most of these men had been at their business for many

⁴ F. D. Patterson, “Report on the Capahosic Conference, March 3–4, 1956”; Associated Negro Press [ANP] dispatch, [unpublished] March 12, 1956, Claude Barnett Papers, series G, reel 3 (Frederick, Md.: University Publications of America, 1985). Hereafter CBP.

⁵ ANP Press dispatch, March 23, 1956, in *ibid.*; General Education Board, Annual Report, 1956, p. 8, General Education Board, Phelps Stokes Fund–Holly Knoll Conference Center, Series 1.2, folder 3029, RAC; Barnett to F. D. Patterson, March 12, 1956 and June 7, 1958, and ANP dispatch, March 12, 1956, CBP, series G, reel 3; “Leaders Ask NAACP ‘Go Slow,’” Roy Wilkins to Percival Prattis, March 31, 1959, Box 144–10, Percival L. Prattis Papers, Moorland Spingarn Collection, Howard University, hereafter MSC.

⁶ V. P. Franklin and Bettye Collier-Thomas, “For the Race in General and Black Women in Particular: The Civil Rights Activities of African American Women’s Organizations, 1915–1950,” in *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights–Black Power Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 38.

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years. Wisdom, experience, and just solid information about the way the world worked was on almost constant display. I took in as much as I could.⁷

All these savants, whether commanding great powers or modest institutions, faced a world changing in ways that they could not always direct and often could not predict. Their common desire was the power to manage and modify the transitions. The heads of state wanted to inoculate themselves against the challenges to global order they believed decolonization would bring. All had a stake in the status quo. They believed in the maintenance of a world founded on core values whose unshakable stability would admit only incremental change. The black college presidents had learned to thrive in the restricted world of American segregation. In the mid-1950s, they had held anxious meetings with others from the world of black business, education, and the professions to worry about a civil rights movement that had spun beyond their control, boasting leaders they did not know and espousing goals they found threatening.⁸

In addressing the issue of decolonization, the educators, unlike Eisenhower and De Gaulle, did not think Africans were primitives who were unready for civilization. But they did want to project their own influence into the new relationship that Africans would have with the United States. They consequently signed on to the United Negro College Fund's (UNCF's) African Scholarship Program and a plan to fly African students to the United States to receive American educations at historically black colleges and universities. UNCF collaborated with the African Scholarship Program and Ithaca College's Cooperative African Scholarship Program of American Universities to solicit aid from private backers and the African-American Institute, which channeled funds to the project from the International Cooperation Administration (ICA).⁹

A September 1960 airlift from Nairobi, Kenya, carried some 250 students to New York, where they received red carpet treatment on their arrival. One of them was Barack Obama Sr., father-to-be of the future U.S. president Barack Obama. UN undersecretary Ralph Bunche, Nelson Rockefeller, New York governor Averell Harriman, Roy Wilkins, and the Reverend James Robinson, founder of the volunteer organization Crossroads Africa, scheduled meetings with the newcomers. "Everyone wanted to get in on the act," journalist Percival Prattis complained.¹⁰

⁷ Tina McCloud, "'Great People' Came to Moton" (Newport News, Va.) *Daily Press*, February 16, 1997, online, accessed September 2011; Vernon E. Jordan and Annette Gordon-Reed, *Vernon Can Read! A Memoir* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 212.

⁸ Patterson, "Report on the Capahosic Conference"; and ANP release March 12, 1956; Claude Barnett to F. D. Patterson, March 12, 1956; minutes of the June 1958 Capahosic conference, Box 4, Phelps Stokes Fund Records, Schomburg Center for Research on Black Culture, New York Public Library, hereafter SC; Roy Wilkins to Percival Prattis, 3, March 31, 1959, MSC; "NAACP Asked to Go Slow at Capahosic," *Amsterdam News*, March 10, 1957, p. 24.

⁹ William J. Trent Jr., "The United Negro College Fund's African Scholarship Program," *Journal of Negro Education* 31 (Spring, 1962): 205–9; Percival Prattis to Senator Hugh Scott, August 28, 1960, Prattis Papers, Box 144–12.

¹⁰ Ibid.; James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black America and Africa, 1935–1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 146–8; Herbert L. Wright to Ralph

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Why were these anonymous undergraduates significant to U.S. elites? To retain their places of influence and power, the leadership had to respond to colonial unrest and to the aspirations of minority peoples by supporting models of democratic process in the likeness of the West. For France, this meant sovereignty for Algeria. For the United States, it meant disseminating American political values to African and Asian elites-in-training.

Race is fundamentally embedded in every aspect of U.S. history and culture. For most of the republic's history, devices such as segregation permitted a direct recognition of its power and provided for a system of management that only partially contained its violence. As formal segregation became steadily untenable, so did a foreign policy that hampered U.S. objectives outside Europe. Socially and culturally the United States found itself on the threshold of a new era in which its formerly – and formally – isolated subcultures began to seep into the mainstream. Racial proscription and exclusion were under attack everywhere in the world as the 1960s began. “There had never been,” one scholar notes, “a decade rung in with such heady self-consciousness of high purpose.”¹¹

By the end of that decade, the mood had changed. Insurgents came to see the state as a barrier, rather than the guarantor of true emancipation. The rebellions of the 1960s represented the return of radical energies dormant since the early cold war era. Knowledge about race incubated in the marketplace as well as in the academy, where the prospect of economic opportunity could quicken cultural and intellectual leadership. Corporate and government interest in developing human capital in the United States and natural resources in Africa provided a fresh impetus for philanthropic support of black education and race relations projects.

Historically, framing U.S. race relations as first a southern problem, and later a domestic issue only, had blocked both global debate and external mediation. This changed when civil rights, anticolonialist, and human rights activists helped open spaces for nongovernmental actors to influence decision making; promoted contacts with foreign governments and other external agents; and, above all, explicitly linked racial reform and the United States' desired world order. Scholars have subsequently begun reconfiguring race in conventional histories.

Reconfiguration must address several key questions. As historians such as Carol Anderson, Thomas Borstelmann, and Mary Dudziak have demonstrated, national leaders in the cold war era unlinked the association commonly made between civil rights struggle and radicalism and attached civil rights to liberalism instead. Long after cold war purges neutralized the conventional Left, the desire to manage and contain insurgency continued. One must ask why. If race

Bunche, September 14, 1960, Ralph J. Bunche Papers, University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), Box 113, NAACP board. This study cites two separate collections of Bunche's papers, one at UCLA and the other at SC. Prattis to Scott, August 28, 1960.

¹¹ Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001), 50.

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was defused as a national security issue by legislative reform, why did a militant international racial discourse emerge before the ink on the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was dry? Why did it continue long after formal civil equality had been achieved?

Independence for colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean also raises questions. The stark polarities of white versus black, colonialism versus freedom, and racism versus tolerance resonated during the late colonial era. They grew ambiguous, however, in the era of self-rule. For historian James Meriwether, the friction between the African National Congress and the Pan African Congress in South Africa, and the civil war in the Congo, were the first indications that these questions could fracture African-American opinion on African issues. Blacks in the States “were faced now with the challenge of unraveling the meanings of a fragmented, complex Africa,” he wrote, without the benefit of a “ready-made cast of heroes and villains.” Rather than deal with these thorny issues, they focused instead on the remaining pockets of white resistance in southern Africa that could be more readily understood in binary terms. Pinpointing racial conflict helped keep the faltering domestic civil rights coalition together and allowed African Americans to “skirt the realities and intricacies of independent Africa.”¹²

The requirements of African nation-statehood meant that Americans were not the only ones who wanted either to suppress or to put a positive spin on events occurring in the United States. New governments needed U.S. aid and friendship but condemned Jim Crow to avoid censure from their constituents. They thus greeted with relief the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which at least put racial equality on the books. The law provided a way for Washington to distance itself from the racial violence that continued to wrack U.S. society and, most importantly, promised to relieve weak nations of a responsibility to confront the United States over the issue. That the national consensus on civil rights and race disseminated by federal information agencies was partly fictive did not matter, nor that ambivalence continued in policy circles. The most important consideration was that racism, while as real and destructive as ever, had been deprived of legitimacy.¹³ Whatever its staying power, Washington’s declared disavowal sufficed to let African leaders off the hook. Most relaxed their militant stand against U.S. domestic policies.

An assault on the notion that U.S. race relations were unique and could not be understood with reference to international experience played an important role in delegitimizing racism. Comparisons to other countries resulted in an analogy that likened inner-city minority communities to colonies engaged in wars of liberation against racially different oppressors. Michael Omi and Howard Winant, in *Racial Formation in the United States*, have documented the colonial model’s influence among 1960s activists who wanted to explain

¹² Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans*, 209, 229, 239–40.

¹³ John David Skrentny, “The Effect of the Cold War on African-American Civil Rights: America and the World Audience, 1964–1968,” *Theory and Society* 27 (1998): 272–3.

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and then correct the abuses of segregation and discrimination.¹⁴ As anticolonial struggles also had a vital cultural dimension, the recognition of the enormous power of culture to create and enforce hegemonies, and to forge national political communities out of regional ones, formed a major part of the national liberation experience. This liberationist model abetted the restoration, and in some cases, the fabrication of a national culture and constituted a critical weapon in the search for power.

The inability of African states to break through the barriers to development and stability kicked the props from under the liberationist model and the scholarship and policies predicated upon it. Even under the best of circumstances, once national liberation movements made the transition to ruling parties and state bureaucracies, the contrast between those who were majorities in their home countries and those who remained racial-ethnic minorities was plainly evident. Critics of the African states often scorned the petty bourgeois leadership, which they held responsible for many of these countries' failings. Yet once victorious, the liberation organizations hardly fared better. African peoples' quest for genuine freedom and power continued.

In spite of diaspora hopes, many African countries could not provide even rhetorical protection to overseas communities of African descent. Those hoping to effect practical Pan-African linkages, moreover, continue to face the resistance of nation-states to perceived infringements of their sovereignty. Although most countries have ratified United Nations instruments regarding human rights, many have rejected the principle that signatory status obliged them to implement these human rights provisions internally. Few are without disadvantaged minorities whose issues they wish to keep buried and off international dockets.¹⁵

No less important than the political changes marking the transition from colonialism to independence are the ways in which these experiences were understood. Desegregation in the United States and decolonization in Africa were both preceded by and accompanied by fundamental changes in knowledge structures that helped to normalize them. In an evolution traceable at least to the Universal Races Congress of 1911, sociobiological racism was gradually discredited, along with the political frameworks it had helped construct. A vigorous tradition of diaspora scholarship also challenged conventional racism. This learning was rooted in two branches: textual knowledge originally derived from moral suasionist antislavery literature and apologetics; and traditions preserved and communicated through the oratory of nationalist street speakers and preachers.¹⁶ The creation of a professional, scientific African-American

¹⁴ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁵ Henry J. Richardson III, "Black People, Technocracy, and Legal Process: Thoughts, Fears, and Goals," in *Public Policy for the Black Community*, eds. Marguerite Ross Barnett and James A. Hefner (Port Washington, N.Y.: Alfred, 1976): 179.

¹⁶ Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: African Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935–1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 230.

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history, pioneered at black colleges and universities and by lay historical societies, began to filter into the white ivy tower only when black students did, in the mid-1960s. Conflicts over the merits and legitimacy of African-American historiographic interpretation went to school with these students.

African and African-American studies, originally wedded, became divorced and developed distinct paths. African studies was taken up during and after World War II by foundations and historically white universities eager for the United States to supplant Britain as the hub of knowledge and resources on Africa for the Anglophone world. The field of African-American studies, in contrast, was never wholly detachable from specific domestic political agendas. The goals of both the U.S. civil rights movement and the wars for national liberation in sub-Saharan Africa promised a reunion of this pair in the 1960s and early 1970s that did not wholly succeed.

The disjuncture between Third World politics and ethnic politics in the United States proved even deeper. U.S.-based intellectuals failed to achieve clarity regarding the comparative affluence and cultural transparency of African Americans. On the latter point, it is important to remember that no geographic or impenetrable linguistic frontiers separated blacks from other Americans. The boundary marked by the inner city, once touted as the borders of a colony, proved both fragile and transient as the next forty years of urban restoration, renovation, and gentrification would suggest. Just as legislative and court-ordered integration provided blacks with some means to penetrate the mainstream, the same reforms opened the inner life of African-American communities to the ethnographic – and entrepreneurial – gaze of others.

In spite of the unanticipated difficulties that both failures and successes caused, the era was one of astounding creativity and imagination. Those who had been at ease in an earlier period struggled to keep their gains and interpret inevitable changes in ways that favored their position. Those who confronted elites developed an arsenal of weapons to challenge their political, economic, and cultural domination. Scholars have already addressed the competing historiographies of sixties declension and achievement. This reading leans toward the latter interpretation but suggests that the era cannot be understood simply as a matter of insurgents against the state who managed to have parts of their agenda incorporated into the status quo. Instead, political actors from a range of nations, classes, and ethnicities joined in the search to define, extend, defend, and legitimate their respective claims to power and authority.

Philosopher Cornel West has described the sixties “not [as] a chronological category which encompasses a decade, but rather a historical construct or heuristic rubric that renders noteworthy historical processes and events intelligible.”¹⁷ Those interested in the period have choices to make about its intelligibility and the relation of those choices to current political and cultural

¹⁷ Cornel West, “The Paradox of the African American Rebellion,” in *Is It Nation Time? Contemporary Essays on Black Power and Black Nationalism*, ed. Eddie S. Glaude Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 22.

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battles. Sixties historiography is a major theater in which these battles have been enacted. The periodization, which includes at least part of the succeeding decade, does not pertain so much to discrete chronological intervals as to ways to construct discursive arenas where stakeholders make truth claims about what the epoch means. Those who see the era as anarchic and destructive compete with those who champion it as a period of celebration, innovation, and reform that altered the course of history for the better. Both camps, with varying degrees of consciousness and sophistication, create the decades that they want. The epoch I want is the one that helps to write, as Foucault would have it, “the history of the present.”

It is easy to read the anarchy of the present into the past, emphasizing chaos as the cardinal feature of the “long” 1960s. Dissidents all over the world questioned and repudiated authority. Disruption became a daily occurrence and conventional pieties were contested everywhere. According to this interpretation, activist efforts to operate internationally succeeded only rhetorically because they failed to understand objective conditions, not only in foreign countries but in their own as well. In spite of the revitalization of conservatism in the United States during the era, popular narratives of the time continue to feature colorful exploits on the Left and among bohemians. Social history research has furthermore overly emphasized the role of college-educated youth. The study of working people, women, and other social orders during these years still presents opportunities. In the conventional story, few of the period’s troublemakers had constructive plans or a lasting impact on subsequent developments. As Max Elbaum observes,

The civil rights movement and the broad anti-Vietnam War movement have been extensively chronicled and receive much deserved scholarly and activist attention. But the dominant view even in progressive circles is that the young people who embraced revolutionary ideas after 1968 had essentially “gone crazy,” and that the early “good sixties” were replaced by a later “bad sixties” characterized by political madness.

The decade was followed, it is implied, by a chastened return to realism in foreign policy and a prioritization of stability over ideology. Like *The Tragic Era*, the historian Claude Bowers’s account of Reconstruction, this historiography debuts a decade that began with bright promise, closed with unrealistic expectations, and incurred certain repression.¹⁸

¹⁸ Winifred Breines, “Whose New Left?” *Journal of American History* 75 (September 1988): 528–45; Jefferson Cowie, “‘Vigorously Left, Right, and Center’: The Crosscurrents of Working-Class America in the 1970s,” in *America in the Seventies*, eds. Beth Bailey and David Farber (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004): 75–106; idem, “Nixon’s Class Struggle: Romancing the New-Right Worker, 1969–1973,” *Labor History* 43 (Summer 2002): 257–83; Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Max Elbaum, “What Legacy from the Radical Internationalism of 1968?” *Radical History Review*, no. 82 (2002): 3; Gerald J. DeGroot, *The Sixties Unplugged: A Kaleidoscopic History of a Disorderly Decade* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008); Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling*

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Some writers have suggested that the desire for freer cultural expression and political empowerment were competing ambitions,¹⁹ but each freedom required the other. That cultural intelligentsias and officialdom often encouraged change agents forms a significant but often neglected part of the story. Another part is the degree to which the meaning of justice and struggles for equality are embedded in the fabric of national history. African-American resistance to racial oppression, for example, originated in colonial times and did not disappear after 1968. The ideological framework that civil rights, antiwar, and anticolonial movements often shared may have been eclipsed in the dominant discourses of establishment media and policy making circles but hardly vanished. Critics continued to challenge America's dual identity as democratic abroad and racist at home. For those observers who root the "bowling alone" social alienation in the discontents of the 1960s, however, dissenters' rebelliousness, their idiosyncrasies, and their refusal to compromise laid the groundwork for today's problems.²⁰

Most historians do agree that combined pressures from social movements created a "crisis of governability." In Nikhil Pal Singh's words, "By the early 1970s, scholars and pundits closely associated with official orthodoxy and the state's interest" interpreted "the simultaneous emergence of newly assertive groups within the domestic realm and eruptions within the established cold war framework for managing international relations" as a threat to accustomed patterns of dominance. Key elements failed to accept the cold war's Manichean optic. "We can glimpse this in the international reporting of African-American newspapers of the period," Michael Curtin writes. "Unlike the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, black papers tended to be less concerned about the Soviet challenge and instead focused on race, a central concern in foreign policy deliberations."²¹

The African-American experience lies deeply embedded in the history of the United States: in its founding, in the manner in which it worked out its identity as a nation, and in its activities in the community of nation-states today.

of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s (New York: Harper & Row, 1984); William L. O'Neill, *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the Sixties* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971); John M. Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961–1974* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991); Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts about the Sixties* (New York: Summit, 1990).

¹⁹ Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

²⁰ David Burner, *Making Peace with the Sixties* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 2nd ed. (New York: Bantam, 1993); John M. Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961–1974* (New York: Norton, 1991); Peter Collier and David Horowitz, *Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts about the Sixties* (New York: Summit, 1990).

²¹ Nikhil Pal Singh, "Culture/Wars: Recoding Empire in an Age of Democracy," *American Quarterly* 50 (13) (1998): 511; Michael Curtin, *Redeeming the Wasteland: Television Documentary and Cold War Politics* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 229.