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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

___X____ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing African Americans in California, 1850-1974 **DRAFT**

B. Associated Historic Contexts
(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)
Making a Nation
Making a Democracy
Making a Living
Making a Life

C. Form Prepared by:
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D. Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

_____ _____ _____
Signature of certifying official Title Date

_____
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____ _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Name of Multiple Property Listing State

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Section E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

The African Americans in California Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) establishes the framework for the identification and designation of properties associated with the African American community in the state. The history of the African American community in California is a rich and nuanced experience that both ties into larger forces shaping African American life in the United States while also being unique to the state. African Americans have been integral to the growth and development of California since before statehood, and their contributions have been wide-ranging and multi-faceted. African American communities can be found throughout California – from large cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento, to smaller rural and suburban communities throughout the state.

Document Overview

A Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) serves as a cover document for nominating significant properties associated with a particular theme or period.[1] It is organized according to guidelines laid out in *Bulletin 16B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*. This MPDF does not represent a comprehensive history of African Americans in California. Rather, it serves as a starting point for listing properties in the National Register of Historic Places. It lays out historic contexts associated with the history of the African American community in California as well as property types that represent those historic contexts. It covers a period from approximately 1850 to 1974. The historic contexts are organized into themes and sub-themes, which are outlined below.

Overview of Themes

The themes in this MPDF cover a variety of topics which represent the breadth of the African American experience in California in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Each theme is broken down into multiple sub-themes.

The Making a Nation theme covers the ways in which African Americans in California have been a part of broader forces that have shaped the state and the ways those trends affected the Black community. This includes settlement and migration patterns, including nineteenth century migration into the state, and the development of African American communities.

The Making a Democracy theme explores the role that African Americans in California have historically played in the quest for civil rights and equality. From California's founding as an enslavement free state; through the passage of restrictive racial legislation and practices that reinforced institutionalized racism; and the failure to enforce laws regarding equality in education, economic empowerment, access, and education, the theme traces the effects of these practices on the built environment. The theme also discusses the role of African American voices in women's rights and LGBTQ rights.

The Making a Living theme examines the role that African Americans have historically held in the state's workforce. This includes several distinct sectors of the economy, such as labor, civic employment, business, military, and professional work. The theme includes discussions of the limited opportunities for African Americans, mostly as a result of discrimination by white labor unions, as well as the sectors of business in which they prospered, and the emergence of "race businesses," or African American-owned and operated businesses.

The Making a Life theme discusses the multi-faceted ways that African Americans in California have built lives across the state. It focuses on the development of churches, the Black media, and social organizations, as well as

[1] National Park Service, National Register *Bulletin 16B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form* (Washington, DC: United States Department of the Interior, 1991, rev. 1999), 2.

their role as centers for Black civic, social, and political life. It also explores African American contributions to the arts and sports.

Overview of Terminology and Language

The terms used to refer to individuals and groups of people carry meaning and power. They can convey positive or negative attitudes towards people or a group of people. Racism and discrimination influence the language used both in the past and today when referring to groups of people, especially those who have been historically disenfranchised.

This document endeavors to talk about race with inclusivity and respect. Several sources related to the usage of inclusive and sensitive language were consulted, including the American Psychological Association's (APA) style guide on race and ethnic identity and the Diversity Style Guide.[2] The authors also consulted the National Archives' "Statement on Potentially Harmful Content," which provides guidance on the presentation of materials or sources that reflect outdated, biased, or offensive views and opinions.[3]

Since this MPDF addresses issues of race, racism, and discrimination, as well as historic attitudes towards race, sensitive terminology does appear. This includes language utilized in the past but now regarded as derogatory and offensive, particularly in primary source materials or when referencing place names, organizations, or entities that historically made use of these terms. If such language is used, it is included in quotation marks, either on its own if necessary to provide context or *in situ* within a primary source quotation. It is not included to perpetuate or excuse it, but to honestly convey historic attitudes towards race and ethnicity.

The APA notes that while care must be taken to avoid perpetuating biases and demeaning attitudes about people, at the same time, "historians and scholars writing analyses of past events or times or of historical figures must be careful not to misrepresent the ideas of the past in an effort to avoid language bias." Alterations to language may result in changes to the ideas conveyed in a primary source, and "the best approach is to retain the original language and to comment on it in the discussion. Quotations should not be changed to accommodate current sensibilities."[4]

Terms for racial groups are proper nouns and are therefore capitalized (African American, Black, and White). Please note that terminology is highly personal and not uniform across a particular group of people. There are a variety of reasons that people may prefer one identifier over the other. Every effort has been made to use terminology in a respectful manner.

Theme: Making a Nation

People of African ancestry have played a role in the history of California since its origins as part of Spain's empire in the "New World." Their presence was found throughout California, initially in small numbers that increased, slowly at first and then more rapidly in the early twentieth century. The Making a Nation theme covers the ways in which African Americans in California have been part of the broader forces that have shaped the state and in turn, how trends in the state have affected the Black community. The Settlement and Migration sub-theme discusses Black population movement into and within California before and after statehood. This includes urban and rural migration patterns, including one of the most significant forces to affect settlement in the state – the Great Migration. It also discusses African diaspora immigration to the state, though most African immigration to California post-dates 1974 and thus is not discussed extensively in this document. The African American

[2] These can be found at https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language and https://www.diversitystyleguide.com/.
[3] The National Archives' "Statement on Potentially Harmful Content" can be found here: https://www.archives.gov/research/reparative-description/harmful-content.
[4] "Historical Context," American Psychological Association, accessed June 8, 2023, https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/historical-context.

Residential and Commercial Development sub-theme provides an overview of development trends and patterns in California in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It discusses patterns of neighborhood building, the development of African American and multi-racial neighborhoods, the forces that drove this development (such as employment patterns, restrictive covenants, and redlining), and changes in development patterns once neighborhood integration became possible in the post-World War II period.

Sub-theme: Settlement and Migration

Spanish and Mexican Periods (1770s-1848)

The first people of African ancestry in what is now California were likely enslaved people who arrived on European ships – in 1579, three Black men and one Black woman were with English explorer Sir Francis Drake when he made a stop in Northern California; they were likely captured from Spanish or Portuguese vessels in the Caribbean or South America.[5] This short stay aside, the earliest patterns of migration and settlement of Black people in California began with Spain's conquest of the Aztec Empire, much diminished by smallpox and other European diseases, in 1521. Spaniards of African and mixed-race ancestry, commonly descended from the Muslim Moorish people of North Africa, were among the colonizers who arrived in the New World at this time.

After enslaving much of the Indigenous population in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Spanish colonizers began importing enslaved Africans to colonial New Spain to augment the declining labor force; the enslaved population commonly labored in silver mines or on ranches or haciendas (large-scale farming operations), and totaled an estimated 100,000 to 500,000 people.[6] The existing free Black and mixed-race Spanish population was also augmented at this time by Moriscos (Moorish Muslims and their descendants) fleeing the Spanish expulsions which culminated between 1609 and 1614. Many of the newer arrivals settled in northern Mexico.[7] Population intermixing meant by the early 1800s many Mexicans were of mixed African as well as Indigenous/Spanish ancestry, constituting an integral component of Spanish colonial society. New Spain's census records indicate over ten percent of the population had African ancestry by 1810, and one estimate notes people with African ancestry comprised at least 20 percent of the population of Baja California (today the farthest northwest state of Mexico).[8]

The Spanish increased exploration and colonization into Alta California (New Spain's "Upper California," today's state of California) in the 1760s-1770s, with expeditions led by Gaspár de Portolá, Father Junípero Serra, Father Juan Crespí, Juan Bautista de Anza, and others reaching as far north as San Francisco Bay. Black and mixed-race Afro-Latino individuals, primarily from the Baja California region, were part of many of these expeditions and some settled in what is now California.[9] More followed as Spanish colonizers established presidios (military fortifications), missions (religious centers), and pueblos (civilian settlements), leading to an early Black presence in locations from San Diego to San Francisco. The Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciúncula (Los Angeles) exemplifies this pattern; at least half of the initial group of settlers who established

[5] Rudolph M. Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 2.
[6] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of Santa Barbara, August 2022, 19; Tim Kelley Consulting, et al., "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of San Francisco, May 2019, 9; Herbert G. Ruffin II, "North from Mexico: The First Black Settlers in the U.S. West," BlackPast, February 8, 2022, accessed March 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/north-from-mexico-the-first-black-settlers-in-the-west/; Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 30.
[7] Carlos Manuel Salomon, "Early Afro-Mexican Settlers in California," (video of presentation at the California Historical Society, San Francisco, May 20, 2015), accessed October 2023, https://www.c-span.org/video/?326031-1/early-afro-mexican-settlers-california.
[8] Jack D. Forbes, "Black Pioneers: The Spanish-Speaking Afro-Americans of the Southwest," *Phylon* 27 (1966), in Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California,* 2.
[9] Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, 32-34; Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 19-20.

the pueblo in 1781 had African ancestry.[10] Santa Barbara, established as a presidio in 1782, enumerated 19 percent of its 1785 population as having African ancestry, and by 1791, 24 percent of San Jose's population comprised people with African ancestry.[11] During both the Spanish era and the Mexican era to follow, people of African and Indigenous origins experienced lower status in a racially hierarchical society, but in general racial and social status in New Spain/Mexico was more fluid than in the British colonies (and later United States). Intermarriage between ethnic groups was very common and, after the abolition of enslavement with Mexican independence in the 1820s, opportunities to change economic and social standing expanded for members of the Afro-Latino community – including in the northernmost reaches of Mexico.

After Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821, Alta California became the northernmost territory of the new Republic of Mexico. The new nation's constitution abolished the enslavement of Black people, though it was not until 1829 that it was outlawed across most of the country and was not fully abolished until 1837.[12] Over the next several decades, small but significant numbers of enslaved people in Texas and other parts of the American South found freedom by escaping south to Mexico. Some enslaved African Americans who had been brought to the American West as laborers and servants escaped to find freedom in Alta California.

The transition from Spanish to Mexican rule also led to the secularization and decline of Alta California's once-powerful missions in the 1820s and 1830s. The Mexican government began subdividing mission lands among private citizens, increasing the power of individual owners of large parcels of land and leading, in turn, to greater foreign trade via shipping. As the Mexican population of Alta California grew steadily between 1821 and the early 1840s, existing settlements expanded and new ones were established in the vast rancho lands of the territory. The region's Black population grew in tandem, as individuals traveling over land and sea arrived to become Mexican citizens. As historian Rudolph M. Lapp summarized, "In the years between 1823 and the American conquest of 1846, California with its antislavery Mexican constitution, its great open spaces, and its sparse population of usually friendly, brown-skinned peoples must have looked attractive to North American blacks."[13] Of particular note were the Black whalers, merchant sailors, and laborers on military vessels who jumped ship upon landing on the shores of California. African American mountain men also visited, and occasionally settled, in California via overland routes from the east. The first overland party to reach California, led by Jedediah Smith in 1826, included "man of color" Peter Ranne or Ranee; Smith's second excursion on the same journey the next year included mixed-race frontiersman Polette Labross.[14] Black mountain man, trapper, explorer, and scout James Beckwourth was the most famous to have visited California, making multiple excursions in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1850, he discovered the pass through the Sierra Nevada range that would bear his name, establishing a popular route to the goldfields upon which he led groups of migrants from the east. Beckwourth briefly ranched and lived just west of the Sierra Nevada mountains, in the area now containing the town of Beckwourth, California.[15]

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[10] Lawrence B. de Graaf and Quintard Taylor, "Introduction: African Americans in California History, California in African American History," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 6; GPA Consulting and Alison Rose Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," SurveyLA Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, prepared for the City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, February 2018, 8; Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 2.

[11] Ruffin, "North from Mexico"; Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 22.

[12] Slavery remained legal in northern Mexico – what is now Texas – until the revolution that led to the Republic of Texas in 1836, and eventually to Texas joining the U.S. as a slave state; Nakia D. Parker, "Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War," African American Intellectual History Society, January 28, 2021, accessed March 2023, https://www.aaihs.org/runaway-slaves-to-mexico-and-the-road-to-the-civil-war/; Alice L. Baumgartner, *South to Freedom: Runaway Slaves to Mexico and the Road to the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 2020).

[13] Lapp, Blacks in Gold Rush California, 3-5.

[14] Jack D. Forbes, "The Early African Heritage of California," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 86.

[15] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 6; Forbes, 87; de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 7.

Set on expansion, the United States declared war on Mexico in 1846 and by war's end in 1848 had claimed a vast swath of Mexican territory in the West, including what is now California. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ending the war was signed in February of 1848, mere weeks after the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in the foothills east of Sacramento. The stage was set for the U.S. to solidify its hold on California – albeit within the fraught environment preceding the Civil War.

Early Statehood (1848-1880)

California was admitted to the Union in September 1850, its population already ballooning with the thousands of "49ers" arriving to take their chances in the Gold Rush. Would-be miners came from diverse backgrounds and origins. Free, enslaved, and formerly enslaved Black people were among them. They faced a daunting social context, new to this region but tediously familiar, as Mexican territory became American. Jack Forbes notes:

> The experiences of Africans in California fall into two distinct periods: before and after 1848. Before the U.S.-Mexican War, Spain and Mexico tended to accommodate, absorb, and sometimes erase Africanness. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the more racially conscious United States sought to enforce a stricter system of classification. Seemingly overnight, people of African descent arriving in California entered a society where their rights were denied, their opportunities were limited, and their social position was set firmly apart.[16]

Slavery, the Compromise of 1850, and Other Early Legislation

Despite its far western location and its recent history as a Mexican territory where slavery was illegal, California's place in the U.S. was shaped by the growing conflict between free and slaveholding states – a conflict that intensified when Congress began to debate whether the territories newly acquired from Mexico would allow slavery. California's representatives requested admission as a free state, which would upend the existing balance between slave and free states. In 1849, delegates to the California constitutional convention voted unanimously that "neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude, unless for the punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this state."[17]

California's successful 1850 admission to the U.S. as a "free" state was part of the Compromise of 1850, a series of bills resulting from intense Congressional debate regarding the balance of slave and free states. These five laws resolved, among other things, that California would be subject to the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850: escaped enslaved people found in California could be captured and returned to enslavement regardless of the state's slavery laws, and they would be denied a trial by jury. In 1852, California passed a companion law to the federal Act, the California Fugitive Slave Act. Beyond requiring all residents' cooperation in the re-enslavement of Black escapees, it rendered anyone who had arrived enslaved prior to 1850 statehood an immediate "fugitive from labor," and threatened imprisonment for anyone who hid, helped, or rescued a fugitive.[18] Through enforcement of this legislation as well as a general unwillingness to challenge White enslavers who brought enslaved people with them to California, state and local officials gave tacit approval to the ongoing practice of slavery in the nominally non-slave state.[19] It is cautiously estimated that at any given time in the early 1850s, around 300 enslaved Black

[16] Forbes, 89.
[17] California Constitution (1850), Article 1, Section 18, accessed March 2023, https://www.visitthecapitol.gov/artifact/first-constitution-california-1849#:~:text=%22...Neither%20Slavery%20nor,be%20tolerated%20in%20this%20State.%22; Enslavement of many forms was in fact a reality in California for decades to come, as discussed in sources including Stacey Smith, *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).
[18] Jean Pfaelzer, "None But Colored Testimony Against Him: The California Colored Convention of 1855 and the Origins of the First Civil Rights Movement in California," in *The Colored Conventions Movement: Black Organizing in the Nineteenth Century,* eds. P. Gabrielle Foreman, Jim Casey, and Sarah Lynn Patterson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 336.
[19] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 9.

people were working in the goldfields;[20] an unknown number were working as domestic workers and laborers across California.

California's "free" state status did not mean its legislators aimed for racial parity; the same constitutional convention that outlawed slavery also passed a motion to exclude Black immigrants from California entirely, but later repealed the provision after concerns arose that the U.S. Congress would reject California's application for statehood because of it.[21] This failed provision presaged the many instances of racially discriminatory state and local legislation that would pass between California's statehood and the Civil War. Between 1850 and 1860, new state laws prohibited Black Californians from voting, homesteading, marrying Whites, serving on juries, and testifying in court. On the local level, public transportation and schools were segregated in San Francisco and other cities.

From earliest statehood, members of California's African American community actively fought for their denied rights and were "willing to employ both legal and extralegal means to ensure the freedom of those enslaved."[22] As discussed in more detail in the Making a Democracy theme, this diverse population worked individually and communally to assert their humanity and demand their rights as citizens. By 1850, California's Black population of nearly 1,000 people was "the broadest representation of Afro-Americans in the western hemisphere," hailing from all regions of the U.S. and the West Indies, and many parts of Central and South America.[23] The result of all this intermixing of origins and perspectives was "a community willing and able to protect its interests."[24] Individuals from Biddy Mason in Los Angeles to Mary Ellen Pleasant in San Francisco (and many others) used their personal wealth and influence in this endeavor, bringing court cases against discriminatory laws and sheltering enslaved people in their bids for freedom.

The most potent responses to California's exclusionary laws in the 1850s came about through the California Colored Conventions, following a well-established model for political organizing. The first national Colored Convention, held by Philadelphians in 1830, was followed by numerous other national and state conventions into the 1890s. These gatherings of Black Americans focused on community-based action to organize not only for civil rights, but for establishing and funding schools, starting civic groups and societies, and otherwise providing for the community (discussed further in the Making a Democracy theme).

Convention-cultivated campaigns for civil rights continued to grow and had their first legal victories in the late 1850s; in 1858, faced with increasing public pressure, the state legislature allowed the testimony ban to lapse. In the same year, the legislature again considered a measure to outlaw Black immigration into California. These came soon after the devastating Dred Scott decision in 1857, in which the U.S. Supreme Court found people of African descent were not American citizens. Together they proved the last straw for about 400 Black Californians, including some of San Francisco's most prominent activists, who immigrated to Victoria, British Columbia and did not return.[25]

Black Californians' political organizing for civil rights continued through the Civil War, resulting in victories like the successful overturning of segregated streetcars in San Francisco (through the Charlotte Brown and William Bowen cases). Nationwide political shifts after the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) and the war's end in 1865 accelerated some of the changes Black Californians had long fought for, bringing suffrage for Black men, the end

[20] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California,* 65. The author cautions that accurate estimates from primary records are very difficult given the fluidity of Gold Rush populations.
[21] "Multi-Ethnic Legal Discrimination in California," Colored Conventions Project, accessed March 2023, https://coloredconventions.org/california-equality/life-and-politics/multi-ethnic-legal-discrimination/.
[22] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 9.
[23] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 49.
[24] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 10.
[25] Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, 92.

of *de jure* segregation in the state (*de facto* segregation was, and is, a longer-lived issue), and other civil rights advances.

The Gold Rush and Early Mining Communities

In January 1848, James Marshall discovered gold flakes at John Sutter's sawmill on the American River in Coloma. When the news leaked out, a massive migration to the gold-bearing lands along the Sierra Nevada range ensued; by the end of 1849, the non-Native American population of California had inflated from about 14,000 to almost 100,000, and by the Gold Rush's peak in 1852, there were around 250,000 (mostly new) Californians.[26] Intrepid Black individuals and families were among the tens of thousands of people who flocked to the goldfields. Men predominated, but women were also present in smaller numbers; crossing the desert just east of the mountains, emigrant Margaret Frink observed an African American woman "carrying a cast-iron bake stove on her head, with her provisions and a blanket piled on top…bravely pushing on for California."[27] Encampments blossomed along the full length of the massive "Mother Lode" extending for 400 miles along the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, generally originating in proximity to Marshall's original discovery and soon extending north and south.

A little over half of California's Black population in the early 1850s gravitated to the rural counties of gold country, drawn by the promise of wealth.[28] Enslaved people arrived along with free-born or formerly enslaved people; some were able to buy their freedom, and that of their families, through mining. Best-known is the story of Alvin Coffey: he came to California from Missouri with William Bassett in 1849, forced to leave behind his pregnant wife and their two children. Coffey mined $5,000 in gold for Bassett and earned another $700 by doing laundry and other work, but when the two men returned to Missouri, Bassett took Coffey's earnings and sold him to someone else. The new enslaver let Coffey return to California to earn his freedom, and through mining around Red Bluff and Redding between 1854 and 1857, he gained freedom for himself and his family. They settled in Red Bluff in Tehama County.[29] Many free Black miners from across the country chased wealth in the goldfields, encouraged by leading African American newspapers like Frederick Douglass' *North Star* and William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*.

The new population of "49ers" was ethnically diverse and included those of European, Chinese, Indigenous, Mexican, African, mixed, and other ancestry scrambling to claim promising locations. However, as discussed in the Making a Democracy theme, the Gold Rush's overlap with California's new statehood brought both racial intolerance and discriminatory legislation. For reasons of safety and economics, many people of color grouped together, both in the goldfields and in the nearby cities of Sacramento and San Francisco. Free Black miners sometimes also sought protection by partnering with white miners from New England or other anti-slavery areas.[30] Early gold country communities with substantial African American populations included Lancha Plana (Amador County); Downieville (Sierra County); Black Miners Bar (originally Negro Bar, Sacramento County), in close proximity to Negro Hill, Little Negro Hill/Negro Flat, and Massachusetts Flat; and others. The relatively high occurrence of "Negro" names on historic maps of gold country may indicate not just the presence of Black miners but also their success; historian Sucheng Chan asserts "when a mining camp was named for a particular ethnic group, it generally signaled the luck that miners of that ethnicity had had at that spot."[31]

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[26] "Gold Rush Overview," California Department of Parks and Recreation, accessed May 2023, https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1081.
[27] Margaret A. Frink, *Adventures of a Party of California Gold Seekers* (Oakland: Ledyard Frink, 1897), 92.
[28] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 8.
[29] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California,* 69-70; Angela Reiniche, "Alvin Aaron Coffey," National Park Service, accessed May 2023, https://www.nps.gov/people/alvin-aaron-coffey.htm.
[30] National Park Service, "The Underground Railroad: The Quest for Freedom Moves West 1848-1869," Brochure accessed October 2023, http://npshistory.com/brochures/ugrr/western-quest-for-freedom.pdf.
[31] Sucheng Chan, "A People of Exceptional Character: Ethnic Diversity, Nativism, and Racism in the California Gold Rush," *California History* 79, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 68.

Few 49ers found wealth in the crowded placer mines,[32] and by the mid-1850s most were decamping to larger urban centers (discussed below) or coalescing into smaller settlements along the Mother Lode, typically turning to other occupations to make a living. Black Californians were among those who found success and stability in these smaller communities; places like Beaver Valley, Rough and Ready, Folsom, Woodland, Fiddletown, Sutter's Creek, Cash Creek, Mariposa, Suisun City, Gold Hill, Coloma, Sonora, Truckee, Strawberry Valley, Colusa, and Princeton all had Black residents in the 1850s.[33] Grass Valley and Placerville had notable numbers of Black residents who established institutions like Grass Valley's African Methodist Episcopal Church (1854).[34] Grass Valley's African American population grew from just six in 1850 to 62 in 1860, while Placerville's grew from 21 to 67 in the same years.[35] In 1919, historian and journalist Delilah Beasley noted many other communities with Black residents during the 1850s, including Chico, Petaluma, Oroville, Red Bluff, San Jose, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Vallejo, Visalia, Redlands, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, San Diego, and El Cajon Valley.[36] While California's African American population was small in comparison with other groups, it was clearly distributed statewide from an early date.

Nancy and Peter Gooch are illustrative of this early community. Born into slavery, the couple arrived in the Placerville area around 1852 and found freedom; Nancy worked as a cook and laundress for local miners while Peter did odd jobs and construction work, making enough money to buy the freedom of their son Andrew Monroe. Peter Gooch died in 1861. Monroe and his family migrated from Missouri in 1870 to join his mother in Coloma, where four more children were born and raised. The Gooch/Monroe family homesteaded adjoining properties in Coloma and acquired more land over the years, making their living cultivating fruit orchards and supplementing farming with other work. The Monroe family's land, eventually almost 400 acres, came to include the very site where gold was discovered in 1848. In the 1940s, descendant and prominent Coloma resident Almariah "Pearley" Monroe conveyed the discovery site to California State Parks, where it is now part of Marshall Gold Discovery State Park. The State forced the land transfer through eminent domain proceedings after Monroe turned down many offers for his property; the State paid Monroe $3,000.[37] "I consider the state took it away from me," Monroe recalled ca. 1962, "But that's history, too, now."[38] At least one of Monroe's buildings (the 1925 Monroe House in the State Park) and a family orchard remain extant in Coloma.

As discussed further in the African American Development sub-theme below, San Francisco and Sacramento were the two main feeder cities to the goldfields, and in the early 1850s they had the largest urban Black populations in California. At the peak of the Gold Rush in 1852, that was 464 people in San Francisco and 338 in Sacramento.[39] Historians Lawrence de Graaf and Quintard Taylor observe the relatively small numbers understate those cities' "significance as points of arrival for newcomers destined for the gold country, as winter quarters, as entertainment centers for black miners, and as potential areas of retirement for both successful and unsuccessful argonauts. The goldfields provided a temporary home for African American miners, but black urban residents created permanent communities."[40]

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[32] Placer mining uses water to separate minerals from the surrounding sediment in streams. A variety of techniques can be used, including panning.
[33] Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (1919, reis., San Francisco: California Historical Society, San Francisco Negro Historical, and Cultural Society by R and E Research Associates, 1968), 103.
[34] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 91-92.
[35] Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, 89.
[36] Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 102-103.
[37] "Sutter Mill Trial Nears," [publication unknown] June 6, 1940; "Gold Discoverer Prominent in Recollection of Former Schoolboy in El Dorado County," [publication unknown], c. 1962; Gooch/Monroe family information comes from these and other clipped articles from Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, along with several research narratives and family histories, provided by Dawn Basciano.
[38] "Gold Discoverer Prominent."
[39] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 11.
[40] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 11.

San Francisco's Black population continued to grow at a relatively rapid rate after the frenzy of the Gold Rush cooled, reaching 1,176 in 1860, while Sacramento's was 394 and continued to grow more incrementally for the rest of the nineteenth century.[41] Some of the discrepancy may be explained by the fact Sacramento's African American residents tended to have less wealth and education, being much more likely to have been born into enslavement than San Francisco's population.[42] The 1860 census data indicates that 41 percent of San Francisco's Black residents had come from northern states, while 37 percent came from the South, and a sizable percentage of the remainder were foreign-born.[43]

Like the White population of gold rush migrants, California's early Black population was overwhelmingly male; the 1860 census enumerated 2,827 Black men and 1,259 Black women. While Black women were found throughout the widely scattered communities of the Mother Lode, they "concentrated in urban areas in larger percentages than either black men or white women."[44] As Black urbanites established community organizations and found economic stability, the population in some places shifted to be close to equal – in some neighborhoods of San Francisco and Sacramento, the 1860 populations of men and women were almost the same.[45]

Other Gold Rush-era cities besides Sacramento and San Francisco had sizable Black populations in the 1850s, with Marysville and Stockton third and fourth in numbers respectively. Marysville was the Yuba County seat and served as a trading hub for the northern mines; Stockton, the seat of San Joaquin County and located on the San Joaquin River, played the same role for the southern mines. By 1860, Marysville had 118 Black residents and Stockton had 88; Stockton's population came to eclipse Marysville's in the 1870s as the importance of gold mining declined.[46] Most of Stockton's early Black residents lived in the original part of town, bounded by Commerce, Washington, and Beaver (later changed to Madison) Streets.[47] Marysville's Black community seems to have been scattered throughout town (and in some cases farming on the outskirts), though its commercial district was more concentrated: city directories and the 1860 census indicate a number of Black-owned barbershops were located on what was known as "Barber Row" on D Street.[48] Illustrating occupations open to (and financially attractive to) Black Californians during that time, city directories and the 1860 census suggest nearly 20 percent of Marysville's Black residents either owned or worked in barbershops.[49] The city also had at least one Black pressman, George Stockton at the white-owned *Marysville Express* newspaper.[50]

Thanks primarily to the draw of the Gold Rush, California's African American population grew by over 310 percent between 1850 (92,591) and 1860 (379,994).[51] Though its growth would never again reach that rate, it would continue steadily throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth – the years between the dramatic migration bursts of the Gold Rush and the Great Migration. As Reconstruction followed the Civil War and Jim Crow laws institutionalizing discrimination were formalized in the South, formerly enslaved people and their descendants began looking west as well as north for new opportunities.

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[41] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 12; U.S. Census data cited in Page & Turnbull and Damany M. Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," prepared for the City of Sacramento, October 2022, 14.
[42] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 14.
[43] Willi Coleman, "African American Women and Community Development in California, 1848-1900," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 101.
[44] Coleman, 102.
[45] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*,117.
[46] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*,111.
[47] Stockton 1856 city directory, cited in Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California,* 115.
[48] Jana Noel, "The Creation of the First State-Supported Colored School in Marysville, California: A Community's Legacy" (paper presented at the 2004 Annual Conference of the History of Education Society, November 3-7, 2004), 5-7.
[49] Noel, "Creation of the First State-Supported Colored School," 5.
[50] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 112.
[51] James A. Fisher, "The Political Development of the Black Community in California, 1850-1950," *California Historical Quarterly* 50 No 3 (September 1971): 262.

Later Nineteenth-Early Twentieth Century Migration (1880-1914)

In the second half of the nineteenth century, California's African American population grew from 4,086 to 21,645 and remained about one percent of the total state population during that time period (see table below).[52] This slow but steady increase reflects migration from both the North and, after Emancipation, the South; Black Californians were drawn by economic opportunities and in some cases by the prospect of living in a place with less overt racism. Familial and community networks proved the most influential lure, as many moved to the state to reunite with family and friends who had migrated earlier, or moved as part of a larger family or group of new migrants. This pattern would accelerate greatly in the Great Migration to come (between about 1915 and 1970), but it had its roots in late nineteenth and early twentieth century migration and settlement patterns in the West and California in particular.

Black Population in California, 1850-1950

Year	Total Population	Decade Increase	Black Population	Percent of State Total	Decade Increase
1850	92,591	--	962	1.0	--
1860	379,994	310.4	4,086	1.1	326.0
1870	560,247	47.4	4,272	0.8	4.6
1880	864,964	54.3	6,018	0.7	40.8
1890	1,213,398	40.3	11,322	0.9	88.3
1900	1,485,053	32.4	11,045	0.7	2.4
1910	2,377,549	60.1	21,645	0.9	95.9
1920	3,426,861	44.1	38,763	1.1	79.0
1930	5,677,251	65.7	81,043	1.4	109.3
1940	6,907,387	21.7	124,306	1.8	58.3
1950	10,586,223	53.3	462,172	4.4	271.5

Source: James A. Fisher, "The Political Development of the Black Community in California, 1850-1950," California Historical Quarterly *50, no.3 (September 1971), 262.*

Rural areas remained a lure for some Black Californians, though the desired locations were more agriculturally focused than in the Gold Rush years, leading to Black settlement in areas like the Central Valley and the Inland Empire (and scattered as individual farms and ranches across the entire state). In an unusual and well-known example, around 20 enslaved African Americans arrived in Southern California in 1852 with a group of Mormons, founding what is now San Bernardino. The San Bernardino Mormon community was called back to Salt Lake City in 1858, but most of the Black residents opted to stay; in 1860, there were still 18 Black residents in that community (seven of whom were children born there), while others had moved to nearby Los Angeles.[53] Black migration to rural areas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is addressed in more detail below.

As in earlier years, the majority of African Americans migrating to California gravitated to urban centers. The growth of Sacramento's Black community leveled out after the 1850s, staying at about 400 individuals through

[52] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 14; Fisher, "Political Development of the Black Community," 262.
[53] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 119-120.

the turn of the century while the city's total population continued to grow from 13,785 in 1860 to 29,282 in 1900.[54] With the frenzy of the Gold Rush over, Sacramento offered few incentives to new Black migrants; economic opportunities dwindled and discriminatory practices restricted most Black Sacramentans to low-paid service work.[55] Both here and in other urban areas, new White labor unions excluded Black workers from membership and the growing pool of industrial jobs, in favor of immigrants from Europe. New African American migrants to the state began looking elsewhere, and places like the greater Bay Area and Southern California saw much more growth than Sacramento starting in the 1880s.

San Francisco's Black population remained relatively static through the turn of the century but in many ways remained the cultural heart of California's African American community through the establishment of churches, schools, literary and arts societies, and other community organizations. The population became somewhat more physically concentrated than it had been during the Gold Rush; by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, "one-third of the city's Black population lived in a six-block area bounded by Stockton Street, Kearney Street, Washington Street, and Broadway" with residents of other ethnicities.[56] However, the majority of San Francisco's Black residents were generally dispersed throughout the city; a 1904 newspaper article cited J.S. Francis, editor of the *Western Outlook*, explaining the lack of a "negro quarter" was due to "the fact that there is no strong color line drawn in this city."[57] The generational wealth passed down from many of San Francisco's early Black residents ensured the perpetuation of an economically stable and well-educated elite class, joined by working class Black San Franciscans employed at the waterfront and the hotels and railroads south of Market Street.

The completion of transcontinental rail service in 1869 had a profound effect on California, bringing the state into reach of the eastern United States and enabling people of all races and ethnicities to strike out in search of new lives in the west. With the end of the Civil War in 1865, many formerly enslaved persons who were able left the South via the railroad, either as employees or as paid passengers. The railroad had a corollary effect of accelerating the economy of California, shifting from what had largely been the single industry of mining, focused geographically in the northern portion of the state, to a multi-industry economic powerhouse with growing cities, towns, and settlements from its southern tip to its remote northern regions. African Americans faced myriad challenges in fully reaping the promises of this new California, but were ultimately able to build communities throughout the state during this era.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the quickest growth in California's African American population occurred in communities where jobs in the state's fast-growing railroad sector were available.[58] Oakland soon eclipsed San Francisco in terms of sheer numbers of Black residents. Founded in 1852, Oakland saw an increase in its Black population as housing costs rose in San Francisco and as the 1869 completion of the transcontinental railroad established the young city as a crucial industrial hub. By the 1890s, many new African American migrants were settling in Oakland instead of San Francisco.[59] In 1904, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted "Many of the negroes in this city have built homes across the bay. Property is so much more reasonable over there that all the suburban towns have a colored population, though Oakland is far in the lead in this respect. Among the commuters that cross daily there is a fair sprinkling of brown faces, fathers of families who have employment on one side of the bay and homes on the other."[60] This trend accelerated after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, which temporarily displaced thousands of San Franciscans; many residents of all ethnicities

[54] Census data cited in Page & Turnbull with Fisher, 14.
[55] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, 15.
[56] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," DRAFT, prepared for the City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, May 2019, 25.
[57] "San Francisco Has No Regular Negro Quarter, But She Has a Peculiar Negro Colony," *San Francisco Chronicle,* February 7, 1904.
[58] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 26.
[59] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 18.
[60] "San Francisco Has No Regular Negro Quarter."

opted to resettle in Oakland and other communities on the other side of San Francisco Bay, from Richmond to San Jose and as far north as Santa Rosa. Between 1900 and 1910, Oakland's Black population jumped from 1,026 to 3,055, while San Francisco's dropped from 1,654 to 1,642.[61] The Black San Franciscans who opted to stay largely relocated to the unscathed Western Addition.

By the 1890s, a new urban center had arisen as a destination for African American migrants: Los Angeles. A small Black population had been present for decades before California statehood, but Southern California did not see the Gold Rush influx that so shaped Northern California in the mid-nineteenth century, and only 66 Black Angelenos were enumerated in 1860. Between 1880 and 1900, a time of great growth for the city in general, the Black population jumped from 102 to 2,131; by 1910, it had risen to 7,599 – well above Oakland and San Francisco's totals combined.[62] Newly arriving African Americans were drawn in part by the prospect of railroad work as Los Angeles became a major rail and shipping hub; almost 2,000 arrived in 1903 alone, when the Southern Pacific Railroad brought Black laborers in to break a strike by Mexican American workers.[63] In a trickle that would become a flood in the Great Migration to follow, more migrants followed from Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and other Southern states of their own accord. They were attracted to Southern California by the potential of work, the reputed lack of racism, and the increasing pull of familial and community networks.

The perception of Los Angeles as a less racist place to live played a part in early twentieth century migration, influenced by W.E.B. DuBois's visit to the city in 1913 hoping to recruit more Black Californians to the NAACP. While acknowledging it was not a utopia ("the color line is there and sharply drawn"), he was still impressed: "Los Angeles is wonderful. Nowhere in the United States is the Negro so well and beautifully housed, nor the average efficiency and intelligence in the colored population so high…Out here in this matchless Southern California there would seem to be no limit to your opportunities, your possibilities."[64] Jefferson L. Edmonds, editor of the local *Liberator* newspaper, felt the same way and used his platform to espouse the advantages of moving to Los Angeles.[65] While housing restrictions and exclusionary practices limited opportunities, Black migrants to the city did find housing and employment there, and many began settling around Central Avenue between 8th and 20th Streets, southeast of downtown. The Central Avenue corridor would blossom into the heart of Black Los Angeles in the 1920s.

Some African American newcomers chose to settle in the independent community of Watts, founded in 1903 and attractive to all ethnic groups for its low housing prices; it was a rare case of a Los Angeles suburb where Black individuals could purchase homes and small farms without restrictions.[66] Others were able to buy homes in the oceanfront city of Venice, in the Boyle Heights neighborhood, in sections along W. Temple Street and Occidental Boulevard, in some neighborhoods west of the University of Southern California campus, and in the Furlong Tract (between 50th and 55th Streets, Long Beach Avenue, and Alameda Street).[67] Both Watts and Venice became part of the City of Los Angeles in the 1920s. African American communities also developed in Santa Monica and Pasadena. Several African American communities existed in Santa Monica after the turn of the twentieth century, including Ocean Park and the Belmar Triangle (today occupied by portions of the civic center).[68] African Americans began settling in Pasadena in small numbers in the 1880s and 1890s. By 1900, it had an estimated

[61] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 15.
[62] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 15.
[63] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 19.
[64] As quoted in *Crisis,* August 1913, 192-193, 195; cited in Lonnie G. Bunch III, "'The Greatest State for the Negro': Jefferson L. Edmonds, Black Propagandist of the California Dream,'" in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 129, 143.
[65] Bunch, "The Greatest State for the Negro."
[66] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 25.
[67] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 20-21.
[68] Alison Rose Jefferson, "Reconstruction and Reclamation: The Erased Experience in Santa Monica's History," prepared for the City of Santa Monica, Belmar History and Art Project, 2020, 46-48.

population of 250 African Americans. The community increased significantly after the turn of the century, growing to 1,094 by 1920.[69]

Other areas of Southern California saw notable African American migration in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century as well. By 1890, San Diego had at least 289 residents with African ancestry, many of whom lived in the "new" downtown south of the original location of the presidio founded in the late 1700s.[70] Like Los Angeles and Oakland, the completion of railroad lines (in this case the 1885 completion of an AT&SF subsidiary) created employment opportunities. The city's small Black community slowly spread east of downtown and to new suburbs like Logan Heights to the southeast.[71] Nearby communities including Julian and Little Klondike (near Barona Mesa and southeast of Ramona) also gained substantial Black populations in the late nineteenth century. Julian grew out of a gold discovery by Black prospector Frederick Coleman in 1869 and soon had a notable Black presence. Its 1902 Hotel Robinson (now the Julian Gold Rush Hotel), established by Albert and Margaret Robinson, survives as one of the nation's oldest hotels owned and operated by African Americans; it was an important hub for Julian in general and its Black community in particular. Even Coronado Island had a distinctive African American community, with most residents from Henderson, Kentucky, by the late 1880s.[72]

Agricultural regions of the state, notably the Central Valley and the Inland Empire (encompassing most of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) experienced a slow influx of African American migrants during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As elsewhere in the state, many of the newcomers gravitated toward urban centers; in these regions, the cities were smaller than Los Angeles or Oakland but offered new opportunities growing from railroad expansion and the subsequent connection of these regions to larger economic networks. Communities like Fresno, Visalia, Bakersfield, San Bernardino, Redlands, Riverside, and others joined those like Stockton and Sacramento as destinations for new Black Californians. As in larger cities, Black residents quickly established institutions and businesses as well as residences; Redlands and Riverside, for example, both had AME and Second Baptist churches, fraternal organizations including Masonic lodges, and multiple Black-owned businesses by 1910.[73]

Beyond the urban centers, African American homesteaders, laborers, farmers, and ranchers settled throughout the rural regions of California on an individual and group basis. By 1910, they were represented everywhere from the Mojave Desert to the redwood forests of Siskiyou County. Some were laborers recruited by large companies to work in lumber camps or for seasonal employment harvesting crops in places like Fresno County (discussed further in the Making a Living theme), while others were homesteaders who managed to acquire their own land and stay for the long term. One example is the story of Gabriel Moore, who was homesteading in Fresno County by 1857 and ran a successful ranch and farm with his wife Mary in Centerville on the Kings River; Moore was the first African American cattle rancher in the Central Valley, an early pioneer in fig ranching, and one of the first settlers to successfully divert water from the Kings River via its first rock dam and canal system.[74] Other remote

[69] "Report of Survey Findings: Ethnic History Research Report," March 1995, 19, 23.
[70] Mooney & Associates, et al., "Centre City Development Corporation Downtown San Diego African American Heritage Study," prepared for Centre City Development Corporation, December 2004, II-5.
[71] Mooney & Associates, II-6.
[72] Mooney & Associates, II-4; Kevin Ashley, "Solomon Johnson and the Genesis of Coronado's Black Community," The Coronado Black History Project, accessed May 2023, https://kevinashley.substack.com/p/solomon-johnson-and-the-genesis-of.
[73] Catherine Gudis, "Claiming Our Space" Storymap, September 25, 2022, accessed October 2023, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e441b082dd8646cfa48fd5017730e7e9; Jesse Wims and Jennifer Tilton, "Black Redlands 1910: Making a Vibrant Community Visible" Storymap, August 1, 2023, accessed October 2023, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e097c88e98554634ab58c15d58fb8870; Jennifer Tilton, "Redlands Black Community 1920-1960" Storymap, May 12, 2022, accessed October 2023, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/da4a80f08ee7477fa5ce7cecad391cde; Jennifer Tilton, unpublished research on San Bernardino and Riverside County African American history, shared with project team via Google doc August 2023.
[74] Caroline Collins, "When Do You Stop Arriving? The Project 'We Are Not Strangers Here: African American Histories in Rural California,'" *California History* 99, no. 4 (Winter 2022), 58-60.

nineteenth century homesteads included that of Alvin Coffey in Tehama County, as discussed above; Wiley and Lucy Hinds, and Edmond and Penecia Wysinger, in Tulare County; Nathan Harrison in San Diego County; John Ballard and his daughter Alice Ballard in Los Angeles County; and many others.[75] These early settlers formed important social networks with other African Americans, though distance often precluded the establishment of shared physical spaces.

African American communities, both intentional and *ad hoc*, appeared outside the urban centers of California. Many were in the Central Valley (in particular its southern portion, the San Joaquin Valley), Mojave Desert, Imperial Valley, Yolo County's Capay Valley, and elsewhere. The goal of rural settlement by formerly enslaved people in California took root in the 1860s, part of the "Exoduster" movement that aimed, in the words of *Pacific Appeal* editor Peter Anderson, to provide land opportunities and "infuse into the minds of these freedmen the importance of agriculture, that they may become producers."[76] Anderson and others hoped that both formerly enslaved African Americans and western states would benefit from this agricultural movement. Exoduster ideals were expressed in some of the more intentional rural Black communities at this time.

By the 1880s, African Americans were a sought-after minority group to do this labor, due to Native American relocation campaigns, the Chinese Exclusionary Act of 1882, and the availability, post-Civil War, of skilled Black laborers who could work in California's emerging cotton industry.[77] Once arrived, some African Americans settled in established rural mixed-race and mixed-ethnicity areas, while others settled in a number of new all-Black communities. Land was available during this time as many large landholders were subdividing and selling land, in a system that would come to be known as the California Colonization Program and which led to the development of scores of small agricultural towns throughout the Central Valley.[78] Historian Michael Essinger has researched and recorded the presence of over a dozen rural Black enclaves in the Central Valley. He classifies California's rural African American communities from this time period, along with White and ethnically mixed communities, as either colonies or townships (though some do not neatly fall into either category). Colonies were intentional and established by founders or developers; in the case of African American colonies, they were Exoduster-inspired, Black-founded settlements where residents "could not only avoid clashes with the larger white population, but where they could build showcase communities to demonstrate what the 'race' could accomplish without external interference."[79] Townships, on the other hand, "just happened," growing from specific necessity, location, and circumstance.[80] Black-majority townships often appeared at the edges of existing towns and were influenced by housing restrictions, migration patterns like the "family stem migration" of family and community members, and other factors like proximity to employment opportunities based on location and crop. Multiple examples of both colonies and townships sprang up in central California as the large-scale landowners who possessed most of the Central Valley "sought to realize profits from selling, rather than

[75] Collins; "Homesteading in California," National Park Service, accessed May 2023, https://www.nps.gov/home/learn/historyculture/homesteading-in-california.htm; "The Nathan 'Nate' Harrison Historical Archaeology Project," San Diego State University, accessed May 2023, https://nathanharrison.sdsu.edu/harrison.htm; "CSUN Alum Uncovers Early Homestead Owned by African American Woman in Santa Monica Mountains," *CSUN Today*, accessed May 2023, https://csunshinetoday.csun.edu/alumni/csun-alum-uncovers-early-homestead-owned-by-african-american-woman-in-santa-monica-mountains/.

[76] *Pacific Appeal*, February 14, 1863, cited in de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 14.

[77] Michael Eissinger, "Re-Collecting the Past: An Examination of Rural Historically African American Settlements across the San Joaquin Valley" (PhD diss., University of California, Merced, 2017), 34.

[78] Michael Eissinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road: Historically Black Settlements in Central California,"4, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, Seattle WA, August 2011, accessed May 2023, http://meissinger.com/uploads/3/4/9/1/34919185/growing_on_the_side_of_the_road.pdf.

[79] Michael Eissinger, "African American Communities in Central California," 2008, 10-11, accessed May 2023, https://meissinger.com/uploads/3/4/9/1/34919185/african_american_communities_in_central_california.pdf.

[80] Eissinger, "African American Communities in Central California,"10-11.

maintaining and exploiting, the land."[81] This spurred inward migration among people of all ethnicities, including African Americans, as they sought to obtain a piece of the rich agricultural region.

One of the best-known examples of an African American colony from this period is Allensworth. In 1908, a small group of Black Angelenos headed by Colonel Allen Allensworth founded the California Colony and Home Promoting Association and purchased 800 acres in Tulare County with the intent to establish a self-governed African American colony. The resulting town of Allensworth, with about 200 residents at its peak, never met with the desired success due to alkali soil, an insufficient water supply, and the decision of the Santa Fe Railroad to bypass Allensworth in favor of a spur line to nearby Alpaugh. A small number of Black farmers remain in Allensworth to this day, with the original townsite itself a state park.

Though the most famous, Allensworth does not appear to have been the first majority-African American settlement in rural California. The area in and around Fowler (Fresno County), including Bowles and Monmouth, had a notable number of Black farmers as early as 1900, many of whom were encouraged to migrate there by early settler Julia Bell.[82] A group of African Americans were homesteading around Guinda in the Capay Valley of Yolo County by this same time, in a settlement marked by the "Owl Rock" sandstone boulder bearing engraved names.[83] The Los Angeles-based Homeseekers' Colony Company also began a quest to create the African American homestead colony of Bell Mountain in the Mojave Desert's Victor Valley in 1904; while the company did not last long, Black Californians (mostly from Los Angeles) began filing homestead claims and the community saw success as a recreational destination several decades later.[84] Farther east in the Mojave, another group of African American homesteaders from Southern California filed homestead claims in Lanfair Valley (within what is now the Mojave National Preserve) in 1910-1911 to create the colony of Harts Townsite.[85] Most of the farming attempts failed due to insufficient water.

There are likely many other examples of early African American rural communities from this time period. Some of the rural California settlements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were not founded by Black settlers but would go on to gain an African American majority in the next several decades. In the San Joaquin Valley, these communities included Fairmead and the South Dos Palos and Midway areas of Dos Palos.[86] Many other Black majority communities, urban as well as rural, would join these during the Great Migration to come.

The northernmost part of California remained very rural during this era; the 1910 census showed 40 African Americans living in all of Humboldt County, with 19 living in the county's largest town of Eureka.[87] With little new opportunities for employment, most Black residents of the far north were descendants of Gold Rush era settlers who lived and worked in an integrated manner in Eureka and other small towns.

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[81] Eissinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road."
[82] Anna Moreno Keithley, "'Securing Satisfaction': African American Community Building in Fowler, California from 1890-1930" (M.A. thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2015), 27-31; Beasley, 151-153.
[83] Eleanor M. Ramsey and Janice S. Lewis, "A History of Black Americans in California: Farming," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California*, Office of Historic Preservation, December 1988, accessed April 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2d.htm.
[84] Jennifer L. Thornton, "Remembering Bell Mountain: African American Landownership and Leisure in California's High Desert During the Jim Crow Era" (PhD diss., University of California Riverside, 2018), 103-108.
[85] Thornton, "Remembering Bell Mountain," 94-95; "Mojave National Preserve Lanfair Settlement Archive," National Park Service, accessed May 2023, https://www.nps.gov/places/california-mojave-national-preserve-lanfair-settlement-archive.htm; "Plan Negro Colony for Rich Section of Desert," *The Evening Index* (San Bernardino), January 8, 1911.
[86] Eissinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road," 6; Eissinger, "Re-Collecting the Past", 51-83.
[87] Dennis O'Reilly, "The Black Experience in Humboldt County," a monograph, Winter Quarter, 1971, 40; Susan J. P. O'Hara and Alex Service, "Champions of the Rodeo," North Coast Journal of Politics, People, and Art, July 19, 2018, accessed May 13, 2023, https://www.northcoastjournal.com/humboldt/champions-of-the-rodeo/Content?oid=10085177.

The First Phase of the Great Migration (1915-1942)

Beginning around 1915, Black Southerners began migrating to the North, Midwest, and West in greater numbers than ever before. They were drawn by new economic opportunities in the years prior to World War I and driven by Jim Crow laws that enforced a harsh racial caste system and put Black lives at constant risk. The failures of Reconstruction allowed the return of discriminatory laws and practice, reinforced by the U.S. Supreme Court's 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision that "separate but equal" accommodations were constitutional. African Americans left by the thousands and, eventually, the millions, to find new lives across the country. Most went to the urban centers of the North and Midwest during the first wave of the Great Migration (1915-1930s), but a sizable amount made the longer trip to the West Coast; most of the migrants were bound for California. In this first wave, Black migrants flocked to both urban and rural parts of the state and greatly increased the existing African American population. As in earlier years, family and community members migrated west to reunite, but the pattern intensified with the sheer numbers of people leaving, meaning some groups left their old home to purposefully re-create it together in a new place.

California's urban areas continued to receive the greatest number of new Black residents, leading to expansion and maturation of the community in places like Oakland (and increasingly other Bay Area cities), Los Angeles, San Diego, Bakersfield, and Sacramento. New arrivals typically ended up living in existing African American neighborhoods, which in the 1920s and 1930s expanded as far as they were able to accommodate the growing population. Oakland's Black population coalesced primarily in West Oakland, with a distinctive commercial district on 7th and 8th Streets. In Los Angeles, the Central Avenue corridor blossomed into the vibrant heart of the Black community during the city's boom years of the 1920s and supported a growing population shifting farther south from downtown. In some cases, new enclaves were established; in Riverside, for example, the Eastside Neighborhood attracted Black residents in part because of a large, newly available housing tract subdivided by African American carriage house company owner Frank Johnson.[88] In San Bernardino, the small Black community established on the city's westside in the 1910s grew quickly in the 1920s and established businesses, churches, fraternal organizations, and other institutions.

Due to formal and informal discriminatory housing practices, including redlining, restrictive covenants, and realtor actions, Black neighborhoods became more densely populated and fewer areas outside them were available to new Black residents (restrictive covenants are discussed further below in the African American Development sub-theme). Existing neighborhoods became more self-sufficient as residents established businesses to serve the community and the bonds of community grew. Across the state, cultural differences between new Californians from the rural South and native-born urbanites from diverse backgrounds bred conflict but also opportunity, as regional characteristics blended to create new forms of expression and commerce.

Although increasingly oppressive housing practices limited opportunities for Black homeownership in California as everywhere else in the country, Los Angeles' "bungalow boom" drove comparatively high levels of Black homebuying in the state; by 1924, African American realtors were advertising Los Angeles as "having one of the nation's highest percentages of homeowners."[89] The neighboring community of Watts, for example, saw continued growth of its Black population due to the availability of housing; its population was 14 percent African American by 1920, and over the next 20 years the minority became the majority.[90] While a few other parts of the Los Angeles region provided opportunities for suburban Black home ownership – Pasadena, Altadena, Sierra Madre, and Santa Monica among them – most Black Angelenos lived in the Central Avenue district.

[88] IS Architecture, "City of Riverside African American Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Statement (1870-1976)," prepared for the City of Riverside, Community and Economic Development Department, August 2022, 30.
[89] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 24-25.
[90] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 24-25.

African American migrants also settled in smaller urban centers and in the rural areas of California during the first wave of the Great Migration, often finding work as agricultural laborers. Existing majority-Black neighborhoods expanded in small cities, especially those adjacent to agricultural worksites - a highly visible pattern in places like the Central Valley and the Inland Empire. In Redlands (San Bernardino County), the existing urban community scattered throughout downtown and the north part of town grew and coalesced around Stuart Avenue, which included the new (1928) Second Baptist Church.[91] North Fontana (San Bernardino County) was a more rural enclave, where former urban Angelenos and new migrants from the South alike sought out larger parcels that provided a calmer, more open feel and sufficient space for small farms and animal husbandry.[92] In several areas, the Imperial Valley in the state's southeast corner in particular, farmers experimented with growing cotton and needed skilled workers experienced with that crop.

In the heavily forested northern region of Siskiyou County, a significant number of Black workers migrated from the South to find work in logging camps and lumber mills; concentrated in McCloud and Weed with smaller numbers in work camps and places like Shastina, these workers came largely from pine lumber operations in Louisiana, Arkansas, and elsewhere. By the mid-1920s, Weed had "one of the largest African American communities in the rural West," with approximately one thousand Black residents out of its total of about six thousand (see the African American Development sub-theme for more).[93] Small Black communities also existed in other Northern California lumber towns of McCloud, Quincy, Mt. Shasta, and Westwood.[94] Closer to the coast, Eureka and other towns of Humboldt County continued to support a small Black community during this era, including 31 residents in Eureka in 1920 and 37 residents in Eureka in 1930.[95]

New African American migrants to California were able to achieve landownership in some cases, both scattered across the state and in concentrated communities. On the eastern side of the city of San Bernardino, a developer subdivided his land into two to five acre lots for small-scale farms (truck farms) in 1918. The Valley Truck Farms subdivision carried no racial restrictions and so drew African Americans from urban areas (primarily Los Angeles) who were looking for more space and independence. It became a predominantly Black community by the 1940s.[96] Some Black farmers and ranchers were able to establish larger operations in the Central Valley and elsewhere, and existing communities like Fowler, Bowles, Fairmead, and South Dos Palos grew.

The town of Fairmead was established in 1912 as an agricultural town under the established pattern of the California Colonization Program; located in Madera County between Madera and Chowchilla, the town's White settlers thrived for about eight years, until the groundwater dried up and the founding development company closed their offices.[97] African Americans began moving to Fairmead in the early 1930s, primarily exiles from the Dust Bowl who came to California to work in the cotton industry. Both Madera and Chowchilla had racist exclusionary practices in places that prohibited Black settlement within these towns; Fairmead offered available housing with no racial restrictions. African Americans purchased land, farmed, and constructed homes there, eventually establishing businesses and churches to round out the community. Fairmead attracted more Black settlers through the period after World War II. Additional predominantly African American settlements from this era include South Dos Palos and Midway, located in Merced County. Dos Palos was established in the late nineteenth century as a California Colonization Program

[91] "Redlands Black Community" Storymap.
[92] Theresa Walker, "The 'Race Line' Blurs in Fontana," *San Bernardino County Sun* August 3, 1986.
[93] Geoff Mann, "Race, Skill, and Section in Northern California," *Politics & Society* 30, No. 3 (September 2002), 467-468.
[94] James Langford, "African Americans in the Shadow of Mt. Shasta: The Black Community of Weed, California," BlackPast, March 15, 2021, accessed May 19, 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/african-americans-shadow-mt-shasta-black-community-weed-california/.
[95] O'Reilly, "The Black Experience in Humboldt County," 40.
[96] Samara Herrick and Carl Holmes, "The Valley Truck Farms," Storymap, ed. Jennifer Tilton, accessed May 2023, https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/caf8835de4db495eb357784967ebd5dd?item=1.
[97] Essinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road," 10.

townsite; a handful of African American families settled in the town in the 1920s and early 1930s, farming or working in dairies or as farm laborers, and establishing businesses and churches.[98] As the African American population increased, White residents and businesses moved out of the town, establishing a racially restricted townsite several miles to the north, which retained the name Dos Palos, renaming the original townsite South Dos Palos. The area between the two townsites became known as Midway, where many African American families also settled.[99]

Bakersfield continued to serve the surrounding agricultural region during this era, but by the mid-1910s, most African Americans in Bakersfield were employed by the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads.[100] African Americans continued to migrate to Bakersfield during the Great Depression, drawn by the availability of agricultural work, specifically cotton harvesting. However, Bakersfield mostly barred African Americans from living in the city limits, the Sunset-Mayflower Tract (also known as Cottonwood) southeast of town became the de facto Black settlement. It lacked city services but was proximal to the cotton fields where many residents worked, and they were able to construct their own modest homes and build community with each other.[101]

After the stock market crash of 1929, the ensuing Great Depression had a major impact on Black Californians as it did on most people across the country. Hard-won financial progress ceased or reversed as people lost jobs, homes, and savings. Residents in urban and rural communities across the state made do by consolidating households, taking in boarders, tightening belts, and seeking any work available. As discussed further in the Making a Living theme, a few Black Californians found employment through federal New Deal programs later in the Depression. These camps and details were segregated after 1935, ostensibly to prevent tensions between Black enrollees and White Southerners. About 50 young Black men from Los Angeles were among the original 1934 enrollees of multiple ethnicities at the Civilian Conservation Corps' Camp Santa Rosa (later renamed Camp La Purisima) in Lompoc, but were transferred to a different camp after recruits from Virginia arrived and began mistreating them.[102]

Black Southerners were among those during the Dust Bowl era who sought work in the agricultural industry of places like the San Joaquin Valley settled in labor camps, some of which spawned more permanent settlements like Teviston, Sunny Acres, and Home Garden. A few independent camps grew up near agricultural operations; in 1938, Black preacher and labor contractor James Freeman and his wife Otie Freeman established the tent city of Freemanville south of Teviston in Tulare County and recruited Black families from the Midwest.[103] The independent camps and Black neighborhoods like Teviston (near the White settlement of Pixley) and South Dos Palos had fewer resources than neighboring White towns and typically had to rely on the infrastructure and resources of these segregated communities.[104]

World War II and the Second Phase of the Great Migration (1942-1950)

In contrast to the comparatively modest population gains in California during the first phase of the Great Migration, World War II and the second phase of the Great Migration had a cataclysmic impact on California, remaking the character of the state in the second half of the twentieth century. All Western states witnessed an explosive growth of their African American populations during World War II, but the impact was particularly strong in California. By 1940, California's Black population had reached 81,048 – an increase

[98] Essinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road," 15-16.
[99] Essinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road," 16.
[100] Historic Resources Group, "City of Bakersfield Citywide Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of Bakersfield, April 2023, 60.
[101] Historic Resources Group, "City of Bakersfield Citywide Historic Context Statement," 81.
[102] "La Purisima Mission State Historic Park: Twin CCC Camps – Lompoc CA", The Living New Deal, accessed May 2023, https://livingnewdeal.org/projects/la-purisima-mission-state-park-twin-ccc-camps-lompoc-ca/.
[103] Eissinger, "Re-Collecting the Past," 85.
[104] Collins, 66-67.

of 109 percent since 1930.[105] This jump reflected the increasing pull of the state, but paled in comparison to the population explosion that would take place in the Great Migration's second wave starting during World War II. When the United States entered the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, existing defense industries exponentially ramped up operations across the country; workers were suddenly needed, and as enlistments shrank the available pool of working-age men, employment opportunities opened for people of color. In California, jobs in aircraft manufacturing, shipbuilding, and ancillary support on and around military bases and defense plants beckoned workers from around the country and proved the catalyst for the second, massive wave of the Great Migration. This trend is discussed further in the Making a Living theme.

African Americans, primarily from the South, began migrating to the state in larger numbers in the spring of 1942 and continued to arrive with great rapidity. Most gravitated to large cities, where most of the defense industries were located; Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, and San Diego were the primary recipients of the newcomers. By mid-1943, Los Angeles alone was receiving 10,000 Black migrants a month.[106] Between 1940 and 1946, the cumulative Black populations of these cities grew from 81,225 to 215,546.[107] These numbers do not even include the new Black populations of cities that had previously been mostly White, like Richmond in the East Bay. With new residents drawn by shipbuilding operations, Richmond's African American population grew from 270 in 1940 to 10,000 in 1945; neighboring Oakland's grew from 8,462 to over 37,000.[108] In Long Beach, which presented employment opportunities in the shipbuilding and aircraft industries, the African American population grew from approximately 600 to over 4,000 residents between 1940 and 1950.[109]

The rural parts of California saw significant increases in their Black populations during wartime as well, as some new migrants found work in agricultural areas like the San Joaquin Valley and the Inland Empire. Still excluded from majority-White towns and cities, in most cases newcomers joined existing communities of color on the outskirts, like Fairmead and South Dos Palos, or formed new ones. These continued to lack a unified infrastructure system and depended on services in nearby White communities. By the mid-1940s, the Sunset-Mayflower Tract (Cottonwood) outside of Bakersfield had an estimated 3,500 African American residents, mostly farm laborers living in substandard housing; thanks to the work of local activists, the neighborhood was annexed to the city in 1951 but lacked city electrical, sewer, and garbage services for decades longer.[110] Other migrants lived in the kinds of work camps that large growers had already established across the Central Valley, primarily in tents or small cabins with limited services.

The Postwar Period (1950-1974)

Between 1940 and 1950, California's African American population grew from 124,306 to 462,172, a 272 percent increase.[111] By war's end in 1945, the state's African American enclaves, already squeezed by racist housing practices (discussed below), were bursting at the seams. Homeowners rented out available rooms and built new ones wherever they would fit; multi-family properties like rooming houses became increasingly common out of necessity across the state and remain visible in groupings in places like West Oakland. The influx of migrants continued, including many Black men who had served in the military overseas and hoped to capitalize on the

[105] Fisher, "Political Development of the Black Community," 262.
[106] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 27.
[107] Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930-50" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1962), cited in de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 27.
[108] Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization, Urban Poverty, and African American Community Mobilization in Oakland, 1945 through the 1990s," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 343.
[109] Historic Resources Group, "Historic Context Statement: Suburbanization & Race, City of Long Beach," prepared for the City of Long Beach Development Services, January 2022, 25.
[110] Historic Resources Group, "Bakersfield Citywide Historic Context Statement," 109.
[111] Fisher, "Political Development of the Black Community," 262.

hard-won gains of African Americans on the home front and abroad. The 1948 *Shelley v. Kramer* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court found racially restrictive housing covenants unconstitutional, and the population makeup of predominately White suburbs such as Inglewood and Compton in Los Angeles County began to shift as African Americans were able to move there. Some Black residents were able to establish homes in new areas both within and outside of established enclaves, particularly as Black developers and realtors were able to gain a foothold in the industry. However, the population remained constrained.

The wartime boom extended into the 1950s and 1960s for many White Californians, but ended almost immediately after the war's end for Black Californians. Defense industries began laying off workers, and as Black migrants had been predominantly employed in these industries, the effect was immediate and disproportionate – by the end of 1946, for example, a third of all African Americans in the Bay Area were unemployed.[112] Racism in the civilian workforce and housing restrictions also continued, limiting access to jobs and preventing Black Californians from living where they chose – including areas close to industries that might have hired them.

In the immediate postwar years, manufacturing industries that had employed African Americans began relocating out of urban centers in search of cheaper land, fewer zoning restraints, and lower taxes. At the same time, new residential development shifted to new suburban neighborhoods, driven by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) subsidies, and commercial establishments relocated to provide services to the suburbs – all part of the suburbanization phenomenon that was largely restricted to White people. The routing of new freeways, usually through multi-racial, working class neighborhoods, gave new suburban residents "the choice of commuting to jobs on the urban fringe or retaining jobs in the central city" while simultaneously dividing (and in some cases destroying) established residential and business areas.[113] In places like Oakland and Los Angeles, Black residents were confined to the urban core, prevented by restrictive housing practices and local government policies from relocating to outlying areas where the jobs were located.

Some former defense workers sought work beyond their urban enclaves, moving from places like Long Beach and Richmond to smaller cities and rural areas in search of agricultural work. The Great Migration continued well after World War II, as Black Southerners kept seeking better lives in the West. This added pressure to strained Black communities like the Sunset-Mayflower Tract/Cottonwood, but also expanded opportunities on an individual level; some former shipyard and aircraft factory workers had enough money saved to purchase property in Black settlements, or, in more remote areas, to establish farming operations of their own. New communities like Lanare and Cookseyville emerged as postwar African American enclaves, while places like Fairmead and South Dos Palos solidified their identities.[114] Cookseyville is named for its founders, Richmond residents Sid and Olevia Cooksey, who moved to Merced County in 1945 and were joined by multiple family members from both California and Arkansas over the next decade. By 1956, the community outside of Atwater comprised about 100 people, a market, and a church.[115]

Dispersal across the state aside, the majority of Black Californians remained in urban centers, and many faced declining economic circumstances. Historian Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo summarized the situation in the context of the Bay Area's formerly booming Black neighborhoods: "In the East Bay and in other former defense centers across the nation, the postwar black ghetto began to take shape, characterized by overcrowded, substandard housing, declining employment opportunities, and a sharp rise in poverty among former migrants and their children."[116] This pattern repeated itself in cities throughout California. By the time Black residents could realistically expect to gain entry to formerly segregated suburbs, in the 1970s,

[112] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 32.
[113] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 348-350.
[114] Eissinger, "Re-Collecting the Past," 73-75.
[115] Eissinger, "Re-Collecting the Past," 79-82.
[116] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 345.

many of the industries that had moved to these areas in the 1950s were closing or moving to other parts of the country.[117] After about 1970, migration from the South declined rapidly, and while California's African American population continued to grow, it was at a much slower rate.

Immigration

Some of the earliest African immigrants to the Americas were enslaved people brought here against their will as early as the 1500s – as discussed in the Pre-Statehood section above, the Spanish began enslaving Africans for labor in colonial New Spain after conquering the debilitated Aztec empire in 1521. The Black populations of the West Indies and Central and South America, later to become major feeders of voluntary immigration to the U.S., also originated primarily in the slave trade. Acknowledging enslavement as the first and most consequential migration event in the history of African Americans, an event which brought between 10 and 20 million people to this country, this section will focus on the later, self-motivated and voluntary immigration of Black people to California from other nations of the African diaspora.

As discussed in the Pre-Statehood and Early Statehood sections above, Afro-Latinos were among the first explorers and settlers of Alta California in the late 1700s and constituted notable parts of the early populations of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Diego. California's African descendent population was augmented over the next half-century as sailors, whalers, laborers, escaped slaves, and free Black people arrived, increasing in numbers when the new nation of Mexico abolished enslavement in the early 1800s. Those with maritime occupations represented a particularly broad swath of the African diaspora, coming from all over the Caribbean, parts of Latin America, and even Africa's Cape Verde (though few Cape Verdeans are known to have settled in California, instead establishing distinctive enclaves in New England).

The Gold Rush attracted people from all over the world, including Black gold-seekers from Latin America and the islands of the Caribbean as well as all regions of the United States; as a result, California's Black population in 1850 was broadly diverse in terms of places of origin.[118] Black immigration to the U.S. in general increased after the abolishment of slavery and the end of the Civil War. Of the thousands of Black immigrants to arrive in the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, most hailed from the Caribbean and Latin America, and the majority came after the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898, when the U.S. increased its political control in these regions. Post-Gold Rush California was not a major destination. Instead, most Black migrants gravitated to the more proximal Southeast (particularly Florida, along with Georgia and Louisiana) and the urban centers of the Northeast. Many of the Caribbean and Latin American workers who had built the Panama Canal between 1904 and 1914 settled in New York, and other laborers migrated to places like Florida in response to demand for fruit harvesters.[119] Immigration from African nations was low in comparison at this time; between 1891 and 1910, only 7,718 people migrated from Africa to the U.S. (and most were from Egypt and South Africa, likely not identifying as Black).[120]

California saw only a trickle of Black immigrants during the late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, as individuals and family groups, mostly from the West Indies and Latin America, arrived and put down roots. Like Black migrants from other regions of the U.S., newly arrived African Americans typically settled in urban centers like the Bay Area and Los Angeles. They were often – though not uniformly – highly educated members of the elite class who could afford to immigrate. Some became prominent leaders in their new communities; one example is the Bahamian-born E. Burton Ceruti, who immigrated with his family at age four, moved to Los

[117] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 356.
[118] Lapp, Blacks in Gold Rush California, 49.
[119] Jane Lorenzi and Jeanne Batalova, "Caribbean Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute 2022, accessed May 2023, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/caribbean-immigrants-united-states.
[120] April Gordon, "The New Diaspora – African Immigration to the United States" *Journal of Third World Studies* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1998), 84.

Angeles after law school, and was admitted to the California bar in 1912.[121] He went on to be a successful attorney and community leader who was one of the founders of the local NAACP branch. Jamaican-born John A. Somerville immigrated to California in 1902 and earned his D.D.S. from USC in 1907; his wife Vada Somerville (born in Pomona) also earned her D.D.S. and they ran their practice out of an office attached to their home in Los Angeles.[122] The Somervilles were also founders of the local NAACP branch, and constructed their Hotel Somerville (later the Dunbar Hotel) on Central Avenue in 1928 to provide a venue for the national NAACP convention. Immigrants who had previously settled in the South were among the many people who participated in the Great Migration starting around 1915; they were typically well integrated into their communities and as likely as native-born Black migrants to resettle in California as part of family/neighborhood chain migration.

Starting in the 1910s as World War I increased immigration to the U.S., Congress passed a series of restrictive laws greatly limiting migration from outside the Western hemisphere, including much of the African diaspora.[123] The legislation culminated in the Immigration Act of 1924 (also known as the National Origins Act and the Johnson-Reed Act), which completely excluded immigration from Asia, and used quotas and requirements to limit it from most other nations except those in Western and Northern Europe (Canadians were also allowed). It set the quota for each nationality to two percent of that nationality already living in the U.S. as of 1890, as enumerated in that year's census; given the comparatively low rate of immigration from the African diaspora prior to 1890, this resulted in low numbers of Black immigrants allowed to migrate after 1924.

Some exceptions were made for countries in the Western Hemisphere and skilled English-speaking immigrant workers, particularly during the post-World War II economic boom when U.S. companies heavily recruited contract workers from the West Indies (primarily Jamaica, the Bahamas, and Barbados) to fill crucial jobs in agriculture and health care.[124] As formerly colonized African nations began gaining independence in the 1950s, immigration from the continent began to increase, doubling in the 1950s from the previous decade and then doubling again in the 1960s.[125] Many of these immigrants came for an education in U.S. universities and returned to work in their countries of origin, but a few remained to create new anchors for immigrant communities in the decades to come. Black African countries were better represented in this mid-twentieth century phase, with more significant numbers of people from Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda – but as before, a relative few were able to come, and even fewer had California as their destination.[126] Additional waves of Black immigrants seeking refuge from political instability in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba arrived in the U.S. at this time, diversifying the Black immigrant population beyond the skilled professional class to include working-class people and reunited family members.[127] As in earlier years, relatively few of the new Americans settled in California or on the West Coast in general, and those that did tended to put down roots without the benefit of a well-established immigrant community like those in the cities of the East and Southeast.

Immigration to the U.S. from the nations of the African diaspora increased dramatically, along with immigration from all previously restricted nations, with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This legislation ended Asian exclusion and began phasing out the national origin quota system that had limited non-European migration since 1924, instead allowing in a set number of immigrants from any one country and establishing preference categories related mostly to family ties, skill, and need for political asylum. Coming into

[121] Kevin Leonard, "E. Burton Ceruti (1875-1927)," BlackPast, accessed June 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/ceruti-e-burton-1875-1927/.
[122] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement," 154.
[123] These were far from the first exclusionary immigration laws. Earlier legislation targeting Chinese immigrants, most notably the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the subsequent Geary Act (1892), had long excluded or dramatically restricted immigration from China.
[124] Lorenzi and Batalova, "Caribbean Immigrants."
[125] Gordon, "The New Diaspora," 84.
[126] Gordon, "The New Diaspora," 84.
[127] Jane Lorenzi and Jeanne Batalova, "Sub-Saharan African Immigrants in the United States," Migration Policy Institute, accessed June 2023, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/sub-saharan-african-immigrants-united-states.

full effect in 1968, the Act still carried some restrictions but was instrumental in a new cultural diversification of the U.S. as it opened doors to many new migrants from developing countries.

California saw a major influx in Black immigrants for the first time since the Gold Rush, with foreign-born Black populations increasing in urban centers through the 1970s and 1980s. Los Angeles, San Diego, the Bay Area, and the Inland Empire drew most new Californians, though California in general lagged behind states like New York, Florida, and Georgia in terms of immigrant numbers. As before, most new immigrants came from the West Indies and Latin America **-** over 60 percent of California's Black immigrants came from the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America - but now they were joined by growing numbers of people from the nations of sub-Saharan Africa.[128] A notable number of Ethiopians and Eritreans arrived in California as refugees after the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974, coalescing largely in the East Bay Area (primarily Oakland) and Los Angeles. Los Angeles' Little Ethiopia, a stretch of Ethiopian American businesses and institutions on Fairfax Avenue, emerged in the late 1980s after Fekere Gebre-Mariam moved his restaurant there and worked to make it the center of the city's Ethiopian community.

Immigration to California continued, aided by the Refugee Act of 1980 and the Immigration Act of 1990. Since much of the history of Black immigration into California post-dates the period included in this document (ending in 1974). Thus, the section above provides a general overview but is not meant to be comprehensive. Additional research on this history, its associated settlement patterns, and individuals will be needed at a later date to accurately assess their significance.

Sub-theme: African American Residential and Commercial Development

Spanish and Mexican Periods (1770s-1848)

As discussed in the Settlement and Migration sub-theme, the population of what is now the state of California during the Spanish and Mexican periods included people of European, Indigenous, and African ancestry (a legacy of African enslavement in New Spain territories), many of whom were of mixed heritages.[129] This mixed ethnic and racial group comingled in the expeditions that spread though Alta California, and settled in the presidios and surrounding pueblos and villas that were established at San Diego, Monterey, San Francisco and Santa Barbara. While persons of primarily Spanish ancestry typically enjoyed the highest social standing with the greatest rights and privileges, members of other racial and ethnic groups were able to gain considerable economic wealth and political stature. In this intermingled environment, residential settlement was notably not racially segregated, and during the subsequent rancho era, some persons of partial or full African ancestry became large landholders and settled throughout what had been formerly mission lands.[130] During the Mexican period, several dozen formerly enslaved persons (both escaped and free) are known to have settled in the developed areas of San Francisco (then called Yerba Buena); similar but smaller populations settled in Los Angeles and other geographic nodes associated with former Spanish settlement.[131] Research suggests that due to their small numbers, those of African ancestry did not live in racially segregated residential enclaves during this era. Rather, deducing from the pattern of residential settlement that is known to have occurred in immediately subsequent decades, they likely lived near each other but generally intermingled with neighbors of other races.

The Gold Rush and Early Statehood (1848-1880)

[128] Opal Tometi, *The State of Black Immigrants in* California, 10, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, 2018, accessed March 2023, https://stateofblackimmigrants.com/.
[129] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 9; Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, 22.
[130] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 23.
[131] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 10; GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 8; Mooney & Associates, "Centre City," II-2.

New arrivals to California were drawn by the discovery of gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada in 1848 and came primarily to the territory's northern cities and settlements. African Americans came to California as freed men and women, and, less frequently, as enslaved persons, usually brought by White enslavers to do the labor of gold mining.[132] Smaller numbers of people of African descent came to the region from Latin America, Europe, and Africa. In 1850, the year of statehood, California counted a Black population of near 1,000, a decade later, that number had risen to over 4,000, slightly more than one percent of the total population of the state.[133] During the Gold Rush and early statehood periods, San Francisco was the largest settlement in California since its large harbor and proximity to the Sierra Nevada goldfields made it a natural arrival destination for most gold seekers. In contrast to cities elsewhere in the United States, San Francisco and California generally presented a more socially fluid environment, wherein people of diverse racial and economic origins were able to make large and quick individual fortunes in the goldfields or the service industries that grew up around the mining industry.[134] However, the city's burgeoning Black population experienced an abrupt decline in the early part of this period; in 1858, approximately 200 Black residents of San Francisco departed the city for British Columbia, after receiving word of good prospects for Black people in Canada.[135] These original departures were followed by an unknown number of additional departures once the first group was settled and confirmed their comparable prosperity and safety.

At this time, most cities in California did not have official legal restrictions dictating where African Americans could and could not live due in large part to their relatively small populations. In San Francisco, for example, the small number of African Americans in these early decades were not perceived as a threat to White elites, and financially successful African Americans were able move into homes of their choosing.[136] In general, the African American population settled in as close proximity to sources of employment as possible. The community was heavily represented in maritime and hospitality industries, and many African Americans lived near the waterfront at Yerba Buena Cove (now proximate to Fisherman's Wharf); around the base of Telegraph Hill; in an area known as "Chili Hill," now part of North Beach, where many immigrants from Chile and Peru lived; and around the north perimeter of Chinatown.[137]

While the general pattern of Black residential settlement was not strictly segregated into racial enclaves, new Black migrants were most likely during this era to settle near other Black residents and usually in areas that already supported some level of racial diversity. Historian Arnold R. Hirsch notes that prior to the Great Migration, Black people in cities outside of the South tended to live in small clusters, and shared their broader neighborhood with other racial groups including Whites.[138] Choices of where to settle were more individualistically drawn, based on income and employment rather than being shaped by federal and other government policies and hardening perceptions of race.[139] However, even during this period, Hirsh points out that Black people were more likely to settle close to other Black people, rather than base their choice of residence strictly on proximity to employment.[140] Nevertheless, Hirsch stresses the rapid disappearance of

[132] Rudolph M. Lapp, "The Negro in Gold Rush California," *The Journal of Negro History*, 49, No. 2 (April 1964), 83-84.
[133] Lapp, "The Negro in Gold Rush California," 81-82.
[134] Those who arrived with existing wealth and with access to capital were almost exclusively White males and it is these people who profited most systemically and lastingly during this period of intense extraction and speculation.
[135] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 23.
[136] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 26.
[137] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 24-25.
[138] Arnold D. Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow: Black Residential Segregation in the United States," in *Urban Policy in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Arnold R. Hirsch and Raymond A. Mohl (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 69.
[139] Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow," 65.
[140] Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow," 71.

the "voluntary" component of this pattern, and that the affinity for living near other African Americans should not be used as a rationale for what would become a century of enforced residential segregation.[141]

While just a fraction of the size of San Francisco, Sacramento had the distinct advantage of proximity to the goldfields of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and like San Francisco grew exponentially in the decade immediately following the discovery of gold. While many pursued wealth in the gold fields, others recognized ancillary economic opportunities in providing services such as barbershops, bath houses, and restaurants to the area's miners and travelers. City directories from this period indicate that Black businesses and residences were located primarily along 3rd Street and adjacent intersections in what was known historically as the "West End" neighborhood (what are now portions of Old Sacramento and Sacramento's downtown core). In a similar pattern as San Francisco, Black residences were most likely to be located in areas that already supported some level of racial diversity, which in Sacramento was mostly Chinese and Mexican households.[142] However, unlike these ethnic groups, Sacramento's Black population had relative gender parity; the presence of a higher percentage of Black families is believed to have contributed to the establishment and longevity of Sacramento's Black community through the decades after the mining boom was over.[143]

As Black populations grew in these cities, they founded schools, churches, and other organizations meant for newcomers as well as current residents. In 1849, Black San Franciscans organized a Mutual Benefit and Relief Society that encouraged African American migration to California with a notice in the Boston abolitionist newspaper *Liberator*, noting "We are making from one hundred to three hundred dollars per month" and "there are colored people in San Francisco."[144] Black Sacramentans founded the first African American-controlled religious institution, the Methodist Church of Colored People of Sacramento City (soon renamed St. Andrews African Methodist Episcopal Church), in 1850.[145]

The African American population in the rest of the state remained small during this period. In 1852, for example, around 45 Black and African American people lived in Santa Clara County, and its largest settlement San Jose, and worked as farmers, laborers, and cooks; by 1860, the Black and African American population was close to 100, and almost all of the population worked as laborers (both farm and day), with a handful of service workers such as cooks and washers.[146] Unlike other California cities and towns that saw population stagnate in the immediate aftermath of the Gold Rush, the population of Santa Clara County continued to increase through the 1860s, likely due to the area's agricultural economy and its early access to rail service, which arrived in 1863; by 1870, the number of Black people in Santa Clara County had risen to close to one hundred and fifty people, employed in a broader range of occupations including porter, barber, hair dresser, well borer, dress maker, and nurse.[147] By the 1870s, the Black population of Santa Clara County lived primarily in single-family homes on the on the northern outskirts of San Jose, in a semi-rural area known as the Northside.[148] Other California cities including Oakland, Santa Barbara, and San Diego were less impacted by the Gold Rush and counted only a handful of Black residents during this era. However, these cities and many others throughout the state would see significant changes in subsequent decades with the arrival of the railroad.

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[141] Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow," 70.
[142] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 13.
[143] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 14.
[144] *Liberator,* February 15, 1850, cited in Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 95.
[145] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 14.
[146] Edith Smith, "Some Early African-American Settlers in the Santa Clara Valley," Sorrisseau Academy for State and Local History (San Jose State University, 1994), 4-7.
[147] Smith, 8-10.
[148] Herbert G. Ruffin II, "The Search for Significance in Interstitial Space: San Jose and its Great Black Migration, 1941-1968," in *Black California Dreamin': The Crises of California's African-American Communities*, eds. Ingrid Banks, Gaye Johnson, George Lipsitz, Ula Taylor, Daniel Widener, and Clyde Woods (Santa Barbara: UCSB Center for Black Studies Research, 2012), 21.

Transcontinental Rail and Related Settlement (1880-1914)

As the western terminus of the Central Pacific Railroad's transcontinental service when it was completed in 1869, Oakland experienced rapid population growth, and the West Oakland neighborhood built on its existing diverse population to become the city's densest Black neighborhood. As in previous decades, African Americans during this period were most likely to live in multi-ethnic, multi-racial rather than racially segregated neighborhoods; West Oakland included a mixture of Italians, Portuguese, African Americans, Mexicans, and eastern Europeans, and evidence suggests that a small cluster of African Americans lived in the vicinity of 7th Street between Wood and Cedar Streets even prior to the arrival of the railroad.[149] The unifying thread amongst these disparate neighbors was blue collar employment, including not only rail employment but work at rail-associated industrial plants that were arrayed along the city's waterfront. In Oakland, as in other California cities that experienced an increase in African American population, this era saw the development of more concentrated African American residential enclaves; these enclaves were in turn supported by African American commercial enclaves, including businesses that served their community rather than the White or broader multi-ethnic working-class community. In Oakland, Pullman porters, men who worked in service roles aboard the luxury Pullman railcars, were required to live west of Adeline Street, contributing to the concentration of Black residents living in West Oakland south of 7th Street between Grove Street (now Martin Luther King Jr. Way) and Union Street, and the development of a Black commercial enclave along 7th and 8th Streets.[150]

Following the completion of railroad lines in San Francisco in the 1870s, railroad work became the primary source of African American employment in the last decades of the nineteenth century, both directly in the rail yards and in the many hotels and other passenger-serving commercial establishments that opened in neighborhoods surrounding the rail stations. African American residential settlement shifted south of Market Street closer to this employment, and census records from the 1880s and 1890s record clusters of Black families living along Minna, Tehama, and Natoma Streets, in what was a racially and ethnically diverse working-class neighborhood.[151] Additionally, wealthy African Americans did not experience codified obstacles to purchasing homes during this era, while their population in California's cities remained comparatively low; as such, a small number of wealthy African Americans lived throughout San Francisco, buying homes wherever they pleased and were able to afford. One notable African American enclave in San Francisco during this era was within the Presidio, where four regiments of Black infantrymen, known as the Buffalo Soldiers, were stationed starting in 1899 and remained for several decades. These soldiers were stationed in segregated barracks within the Presidio and developed a small community in the adjoining neighborhoods of Presidio Heights and Pacific Heights.[152]

San Francisco was literally rent asunder by the Earthquake and Fire of 1906, which leveled much of the city, including the densest African American settlements both north and south of Market Street. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, many African Americans relocated to the growing East Bay cities of Oakland and Berkeley, which were relatively unscathed by the quake and also offered rail-related employment. African Americans who decided to stay in San Francisco competed for scarce housing, particularly in the Western Addition, where many working-class residents of all races sought refuge. African Americans who were able

[149] Marilynn S. Johnson, "Urban Arsenals: War Housing and Social Change in Richmond and Oakland, California, 1941-1945," in *Pacific Historical Review,* 60, No. 3 (August 1991), 288; Mary and Adian Praetzellis, eds., "Putting the 'There' There: Historical Archaeologies of West Oakland," prepared for the California Department of Transportation in advance of the Cypress Freeway Replacement Project, 2004, 39.

[150] Jenifer Soliman, "The Rise and Fall of Seventh Street in Oakland," FoundSF: the San Francisco Digital History Archive, 2015, accessed May 10, 2023, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=The_Rise_and_Fall_of_Seventh_Street_in_Oakland; Praetzellis, eds., "Putting the 'There' There," 19, 39.

[151] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 26.

[152] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 28-30.

to find housing moved primarily in to flats along Bush, Pine, Sutter, and Post Streets, and rooms above storefronts along Divisadero and Fillmore Streets.[153] This nascent settlement pattern formed the root of what would in following decades become San Francisco's first true African American residential enclave in the Western Addition.

Los Angeles emerged as a major destination for new African American settlement at the end of the nineteenth century. While still representing only a small percentage of Los Angeles' total population, the rise in African American population, along with changes in land use patterns and the rise of the streetcar system, contributed to the emergence of Los Angeles' first African American residential and commercial enclaves. At the start of this era, African Americans followed existing settlement patterns, living in rooming houses, apartments, and older houses in the multi-ethnic neighborhood adjacent to the rail yards that eventually became Little Tokyo. The earliest African American commercial district was centered around the "Brick Block" at 1st and 2nd Streets, between Los Angeles and San Pedro Streets. Prior to the turn of the twentieth century, the district included restaurants, a hotel, grocery and furniture stores, and a barbershop. As private and social clubs in the district emerged as a perceived nuisance, some African American businesses owners moved few blocks away to 4th Street and Central Avenue, starting the ascent of Central Avenue as what would become the center of African American life in Los Angeles.[154] African Americans business owners continued migrating south, towards Central Avenue between 8th and 20th Streets, and by 1915, the area was referred to as the "Black Belt of the city."[155] By 1919, 185 African American-owned businesses existed in Los Angeles, with one quarter located on Central Avenue or within a few blocks. These businesses acted as a powerful enticement for Black home seekers, and the residential blocks in the area saw increased Black ownership and occupancy.[156]

Los Angeles' financially successful African Americans accrued land ownership, and in some cases, acted as real estate developers, building houses, apartment buildings, and hotels that served the African American community. Texas migrant Harriet Owens-Bynum was a successful real estate agent who in the 1890s and early 1900s bought land in Boyle Heights; sold more than 65 houses and lots; and rented to African American families in Boyle Heights and in other areas around the city.[157] Owens-Bynum's son John Wesley Coleman continued his mother's achievements with additional real estate and business ventures, running restaurants, hotels, an employment agency for African American arrivals to the city, and apartment buildings, all within the Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights neighborhoods.

Settlement patterns in California's smaller cities mirrored those of its larger urban centers. Driven by the arrival of the railroad, Santa Barbara's African American population quadrupled between 1900 and 1910, growing from 20 to 77 people.[158] Reflecting the discriminatory hiring practices of the era, the primarily literate and educated Black population of Santa Barbara was nonetheless largely restricted to service positions within the city's many hotels, and, matching settlement patterns in other cities from this era, largely rented small single-family houses in the ethnically and racially diverse working-class neighborhoods within walking distance of State Street, between the waterfront and Anapamu Street. A color line emerged by the first decade of the 1900s prohibiting African Americans from living in the predominantly White residential neighborhoods north of Carrillo Street, unless they were living within homes where they were employed as domestic servants.[159] Pasadena's African American population also grew as a result of the completion of rail service at the turn of the century. While the town

[153] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 57-58.
[154] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 20.
[155] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 22.
[156] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 22.
[157] GPA Consulting with Jefferson, "Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement," 17.
[158] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 33.
[159] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 35.

registered only two known African American families in the early 1880s, by 1900 the population of African Americans in Pasadena had risen to an estimated 250 people.[160] Following the common pattern of the era, African Americans settled in a multi-ethnic neighborhood, centered on South Vernon Avenue between Colorado Boulevard and Del Mar Avenue. Some properties in the area were purchased by the wealthy residents of Orange Grove Boulevard known as Millionaire's Row to house their domestic staff; other homes in the area were owned and occupied by African Americans.[161] Racist attacks against the homes of Black people were recorded in 1909, when White residents burned two homes on Cypress Avenue and another on Waverly Drive; doubtless this environment of racist intimidation contributed to the concentration of African American residential settlement in Pasadena, with South Vernon Avenue becoming a nearly all-Black district between 1900 and the start of World War I, and a second African American residential enclave developing in the northwest area of the city, off the Lincoln Avenue and North Fair Oaks corridors south of Washington Boulevard.[162]

In San Diego, a multi-ethnic and multi-racial squatter's village developed around the new Santa Fe Depot at Kettner Boulevard and D Street (now West Broadway). Other African Americans rented downtown properties open to Blacks, often with a high turnover rate. Those who worked in domestic service often lived with employers on their property. Black-owned and Black-serving businesses also emerged in San Diego at this time, including barber shops, blacksmiths, a laundry, and a watch shop.[163] As was true in other cities with relatively small African American populations, wealthier African Americans were able to settle in more expensive neighborhoods, specifically east of downtown neighborhoods including Logan Heights.[164]

In Sacramento, the number of Black residents leveled out after the Gold Rush and started to decline by the end of the century.[165] The city offered little to draw new Black residents, as discriminatory practices kept most Blacks confined to menial work, and White labor unions began to bar Chinese and Black Americans from long-held industries including hospitality, restaurant, and craft trades. Although many Black residents left Sacramento for growing cities like Oakland and Los Angeles, by 1900 Sacramento had developed a distinct African American enclave, located in the multi-ethnic West End district, bounded roughly by the Sacramento River waterfront east to the Capitol on 10th Street, and from the Southern Pacific Railroad depot on the north to Y Street (now Broadway) on the south.[166] J and K Streets emerged as Sacramento's main commercial streets, including hotels, restaurants, saloons, grocers, barbers, and other businesses, with industries along the riverfront and rail employment in the workshops of the Southern Pacific Railroad. Proximity to employment drew a racial and ethnic mix of working-class residents to the area, and the West End was home to Black, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, and White residents and businesses.

Overall, rural settlement by African Americans during this era remained generally rare, as many White settlers in the Central Valley and other rural areas of the state had come to California from the American South and brought with them racist attitudes and impulses towards racial violence. Historian James W. Loewen describes this era as the start of a phenomenon known as the "Great Retreat," in which African Americans were driven out of small towns where many sought safe homes after the Civil War and into urban areas where they could experience safety in numbers.[167] Succeeding decades saw increased African American population in all areas of California, and with it an increase in residential racially discriminatory practices and segregation.

The First Phase of the Great Migration through the New Deal (1915-1942)

[160] Ethnic History Research Project, "Report of Survey Findings, March 1995," The Ethnic History Research Project, 1995, 18-19.
[161] Ethnic History Research Project, "Report of Survey Findings, March 1995," 20.
[162] Ethnic History Research Project, "Report of Survey Findings, March 1995, 23.
[163] Mooney & Associates, "Centre City," II-6
[164] Mooney & Associates, "Centre City," II-7.
[165] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 12.
[166] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 16-17.
[167] James W. Loewen, *Sundown Towns, A Hidden Dimension of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2005), 23, 84.

The state's African American population steadily increased in the decades between the first phase of the Great Migration and the start of World War II; and patterns of residential settlement, commercial development, and displacement were impacted by a broad array of social, economic, and legal factors.

While African Americans had certainly not been immune to individual and group practices of racism in the housing market prior to this period, this next period brought with it the calcification of racist exclusionary practices in the residential sector. In 1917, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case Buchanan v. Worley struck down the legality of prohibiting the sale of real estate to Blacks in White-majority neighborhoods; however, the ruling did not address restrictions based on private agreements, which enabled homeowners and developers to use legally enforceable racially restricted covenants.[168] Racially restricted covenants were legal clauses written into property deeds, which dictated that the property could only be sold or rented to "Caucasians," otherwise the owner could lose rights to the property through legal action. In some covenants, the excluded groups were mentioned by name, and invariably included African Americans, Mexicans, Asians, and occasionally Jews.[169] A typical covenant lasted between 20 and 50 years; covenants became common in housing developments constructed during the residential building boom that took place during this period, and set the pattern of racial segregation that came to characterize California's cities and suburbs and has a legacy that continues to the present day.

Restrictive covenants prevented middle-class and wealthy African Americans from moving into newer, higher-status areas even as new housing developments were constructed in urban areas during this period. Some African Americans were able to move into homes in older middle-class neighborhoods like the Richmond and Sunset districts of San Francisco; however, even this movement was curtailed in the 1930s when government policies enacted by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) made loans available for the construction and purchase of single-family homes only if they explicitly forbade purchase or occupancy by African Americans.[170]

Federal policies, when combined with practices in the private sector, geographically bound African Americans even as their population numbers increased. The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and FHA were products of President Roosevelt's New Deal policies. They were intended to provide emergency relief for home indebtedness and make homeownership financing more attainable to Americans who the government considered to be low financial risks. Relying on the expertise of realtors, the HOLC developed a system of rating neighborhoods as security risks for home loans that loaded racial assumptions into their formulas. This system influenced the more long-lived FHA.[171] The HOLC's appraisal system assigned a rating to every neighborhood across the U.S. The ratings were: A-green, B-blue, C-yellow, or D-red. This system used racial considerations, among others, to assess whether neighborhoods were deemed financial security risks. Neighborhoods that were White, middle class, low density, zoned residential, and distant from industry, received the highest ratings. Neighborhoods deemed unworthy were non-White, denser, closer to industry or other "odious" threats, or demographically and socioeconomically unstable. Often, race was the most determining factor in a neighborhood's grade. Middle- and upper-income neighborhoods, if they were occupied by African Americans, were often assigned a D-red rating, solely based on race. By blacklisting (or "red-lining," in real estate parlance) non-White or integrated neighborhoods, HOLC's rating system entrenched the idea that these

[168] Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow," 73.
[169] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 41.
[170] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 62.
[171] Kenneth T. Jackson, "Race, Ethnicity, and Real Estate Appraisal: The Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Federal Housing Administration," *Journal of Urban History* 6 (August 1980), 419-452; Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), ch. 11. Ryan Reft, "Segregation in the City of Angels: A 1939 Map of Housing Inequality in L.A.," Lost LA, KCET, November 14, 2017, https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/segregation-in-the-city-of-angels-a-1939-map-of-housing-inequality-in-l-a.

areas, African American neighborhoods in particular, were financially untrustworthy and doomed to deteriorate.[172]

The HOLC appraisal system was later adopted by the FHA, which became the most important program for homeownership in the nation. The FHA's mortgage insurance program guaranteed loans granted by private lenders. These included low-interest loans to homeowners and construction loans to builders. The adoption of these policies by the FHA denied residents in diverse, inner-city neighborhoods like Sacramento's West End access to credit and insurance that could be used to improve housing and contributed to an ongoing decline in the condition of Black residential neighborhoods. Some African Americans were able to find housing in unrestricted areas, such as Oak Park and Del Paso Heights in Sacramento, where restrictive covenants were not strictly enforced.[173] However, these instances were met with general hostility and did not lead to significant Black settlement in these neighborhoods.[174] In general, Black Californians continued to be confined by discriminatory housing practices during this period. These policies led to a pattern of racial segregation in urban areas that had not existed in previous eras. Other federal policies denied financing to African Americans for home improvements, and housing shortages during the Great Depression contributed to overcrowding. These factors all led to physical deterioration in Black residential areas, setting the stage for devastating municipal interventions in these neighborhoods in the succeeding decades.

In Los Angeles, which continued to have the state's largest African American population during this era, African Americans had some latitude to choose their residential neighborhoods, but that choice was largely confined to the east side of the city, generally defined as east of Main Street, where racial restrictions on housing were less prevalent. White resistance and discrimination bound the African American community's gradual expansion southward down Central Avenue, south of downtown.[175] An African American commercial district solidified during this era, centered as it had been in the previous era on Central Avenue. The 1928 opening of the Hotel Somerville at 4255 Central Avenue, built in part to host the annual meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), anchored a decisive shift south for Los Angeles' African American cultural and commercial community.[176] Smaller numbers of African Americans moved to other areas including the Furlong Tract in South Los Angeles; Boyle Heights; south of the city's border in Watts, which consolidated with Los Angeles in 1926; and west of the city's borders in Venice, which consolidated with Los Angeles in 1925.[177]

The African American population in Northern California's cities also increased. In San Francisco, the city's small African American population began to increase during World War I, reflecting national trends as well as shifts in the global economy, as many new arrivals were West Indians who worked as cooks and stewards on coastal steamers after previously contributing to the construction of the Panama Canal.[178] The Western Addition became home to much of the city's African American population. By 1930, about half of the city's African American population lived on the Western Addition blocks bounded by McAllister, Webster, Sutter and Divisadero Streets, and nearly 80 percent of the city's Black population lived either in or near to the

[172] Nightingale, *Segregation is Everywhere*, chapters 11 and 12; Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Hirsch, "With or Without Jim Crow"; Nicolaides and Wiese, eds., *Suburb Reader*, chapter 8. Prevailing scholarship has emphasized the degree to which the HOLC redlining maps influenced postwar FHA policy. However, emerging research suggests that the FHA independently implemented its own redlining policies in the 1930s, using data gathered from the federal census. These would reinforce disinvestment in communities of color in the postwar period. For more, see Price V. Fishback et. al, "New Evidence On Redlining by Federal Housing Programs in the 1930s," NBER Working Paper Series, National Bureau of Economic Research, September 2021.
[173] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 25.
[174] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 26-27.
[175] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 21.
[176] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 25.
[177] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 21.
[178] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 59.

district.[179] A concentration of Black-owned and Black-servicing businesses developed on Fillmore Street between Sutter and McAllister Streets formed the commercial district of the emerging African American neighborhood, an area increasingly referred to by its inhabitants as "The Fillmore." Due to discriminatory housing practices, African Americans found themselves shut out of housing opportunities across the city. Many new housing developments were constructed on the west side of San Francisco during this era, all of which included racially restrictive covenants barring African Americans, Asians, and other non-White ethnic groups. Restrictive covenants prevented middle-class and wealthy African Americans from moving into newer, higher-status areas of the city, further concentrating the city's Black population in the Western Addition.

In nearby Oakland, improved electric rail service in the 1910s and 1920s hastened the diffusion of residential settlement away from West Oakland and into new subdivisions throughout the city; African Americans were excluded from these new subdivisions through the use of restrictive covenants, and remained largely settled in West Oakland through this era and into the 1930s.[180] Varied industrial employment was available in West Oakland, and many African Americans worked in rail related jobs. The area became predominantly Black during this era, as Whites moved out to new subdivisions and fewer working-class European immigrants arrived due to the war and restricting legislation. Concurrently, Black migrants arrived steadily from the South, drawn by employment opportunities and the presence of existing Black residential enclaves.[181] The economic downturn of the Great Depression impacted aging building stock in places like West Oakland and Sacramento's West End, where African Americans continued to be constrained by housing discrimination. These neighborhoods often became overcrowded as the population continued to increase. In West Oakland, several residential blocks were condemned by Oakland city planners at the end of the decade, with homes bulldozed and prepared for construction of new public housing in the 1940s.[182]

In rural communities like Weed, which had a population of 1,000 African American residents by 1920 out of a total population of around 6,000, residential segregation led to the creation of distinctive neighborhoods. Weed's neighborhood, known as The Quarters (along with other outdated race-identifying monikers), was located at the northwest corner of the town along Railroad Avenue.[183] Accommodations in The Quarters included boarding houses, one-room cottages and, when housing supply became tight, tents. Black workers and their families developed a self-reliant community in response to exclusion from White-serving institutions in Weed; all of the town's retail business and community venues were owned by the lumber company, and Black people were either barred or expected to quickly complete their business and depart. In this environment, African Americans established a brothel, barber shop, pool room and lunch counter, and a Baptist church.[184] Similar patterns of segregation occurred in the nearby town of McCloud, where the McCloud River Lumber Company had hired over 500 African American lumber workers by around 1920, living in a segregated company-owned town.[185]

World War II and the Second Phase of the Great Migration (1942-1950)

Most African Americans arriving during World War II worked in shipyards and general war related industries; however, due to the lack of legislation prohibiting housing discrimination, African American arrivals were confronted with formal and informal exclusionary practices. The primary result of these practices was the further concentration of Black residents in established Black residential and commercial enclaves, and further calcification of the pattern of racial segregation throughout the state. During the

[179] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 60-61.
[180] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 40-41.
[181] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 41.
[182] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 44.
[183] Langford, "African Americans in the Shadow of Mt. Shasta."
[184] Mann, "Race, Skill, and Section in Northern California," 470.
[185] Langford, "African Americans in the Shadow of Mt. Shasta."

1940s, concentration of Black residents in cities, paired with lack of access to capital and poverty related to employment discrimination, led to a pattern of disinvestment and "blight" in Black residential enclaves; these conditions laid the groundwork for redevelopment and the pattern of institutionalized displacement that characterized the Black residential experience in the decades following World War II.

In Los Angeles, for example, most arrivals moved into the city's established Black residential enclave in the Central Avenue corridor, which by 1950 was home to 75 percent of the city's Black population.[186] Others moved to smaller Black enclaves in mixed-race and multi-ethnic neighborhoods of Boyle Heights and Watts.

In a pattern that was repeated in other California cities during this era, some intra-race tensions emerged between long-standing Black residents of Los Angeles, many of whom had worked hard to become middle-class homeowners, and newly-arriving Black migrants, who tended to be working class and from rural backgrounds.[187] While many African American homeowners opened their home to lodgers and boarders during the war, in some cases accruing further income through new roles as landlords, some middle-class African Americans participated in social closure in order to protect the appreciation of their home values and exclude persons who they considered to represent undesirable elements of the Black community.[188] And, in another pattern that occurred in all West Coast cities, the coercive removal of approximately 36,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans from their homes in Los Angeles as a result of Executive Order 9066 created some vacant and available housing for newly arriving African Americans in the formerly Japanese enclave of Little Tokyo, which took on the temporary and informal moniker Bronzeville.[189]

Despite the massive need for housing for the city's new African American residents, the discriminatory policies of the federal government's mortgage-assistance underwriting programs that began in the 1930s continued to discourage investment in majority Black neighborhoods (and other communities of color) during the war. Rapidly developing suburban areas such as Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley were built with federally promoted racially restrictive covenants. One exception was the neighborhood of Pacoima, 17 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles, which had long supported a racially diverse population due to its history as a suburb for workers on the Southern Pacific Railroad. During World War II, Pacoima expanded with the settlement of 2,000 African Americans, many of whom worked in the defense industry. New tracts that were open to African Americans included Green View Homes, developed with three-bedroom homes, and Valley View Village, which included a thousand three-bedroom bungalows. Black settlement here in the 1940s spurred ongoing Black settlement in the 1950s, when another 6,000 African Americans chose to move to Pacoima.[190] Similar subdivisions, marketed to African Americans specifically, were established at Blodgett Manor, created by African American developer Louis M. Blodgett, and Carver Manor, for which Paul R. Williams was architect.

Overcrowding in Black neighborhoods continued throughout the war and in the immediate subsequent years; it was not until the U.S. Supreme Court's *Shelley v. Kramer* decision in 1948, which ruled that enforcement of racial restrictive covenants by the courts or other arms of government was unconstitutional,

[186] Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 93.
[187] Eric S. Brown, "The Black Professional Middle Class and the Black Community: Radicalized Class Formation in Oakland and the East Bay," *African American Urban History since WWII*, ed. Kenneth L. Kumser and Joe W. Trotter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 268.
[188] Brown, "The Black Professional Middle Class," 268.
[189] Nash, *The American West Transformed*, 94.
[190] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 31.

that African Americans were legally able to purchase suburban and semi-suburban homes in residential areas that had previously been the province of Whites only.[191]

During World War II, the Bay Area emerged as the West Coast's largest wartime shipbuilding complex, and federal agencies and private employers aggressively recruited workers from around the country to serve the needs of industrial war production. The Black population of the Bay Area tripled between 1940 and 1944, with equally drastic increases in Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, and Sausalito.[192] In San Francisco, the rapid influx of African Americans inflamed racist attitudes and made it difficult for Black people to find housing in some neighborhoods where they had previously lived without difficulty. As a result, most of the city's new arrivals settled in the existing Black enclave of the Western Addition, in the area centered on Fillmore Street between McAllister and Sutter Streets. After Executive Order 9066 was passed in 1942, African Americans began to move eastward into recently vacated houses, flats, and businesses in the hollowed-out heart of Japantown. Overcrowding was exacerbated by a recommitment to the use of restrictive covenants in many neighborhoods on the west side of the city. As a result, by 1943, approximately 9,000 African Americans resided in the Japantown area, a neighborhood that had housed fewer than 5,000 Japanese Americans.[193] Overcrowding led to deteriorating conditions, and most White residents of the neighborhood who were able to move, left. During this era, the Western Addition and neighboring Japantown became San Francisco's first nearly homogenously African American neighborhood.

African Americans also settled in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, an undeveloped semi-industrial neighborhood home to the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard and occupied largely by White working-class families. To accommodate the huge surge of new workers at the shipyard, the federal government constructed "temporary" defense worker housing just outside the shipyard gates on Hunters Point. By 1945, 12,000 units of plywood dormitories and portable house trailers accommodated 26,000 Navy employees and their families; the integrated housing reflected the integrated workforce, and by 1945, 42 percent of the population of Hunters Point was African American.[194]

Public housing, constructed by the San Francisco Housing Authority (SFHA) starting in 1938, was racially segregated, and the first four public housing projects in San Francisco completely excluded Black residents. By the mid-1940s, however, the need for public housing diminished amongst White people, as they were more able to take advantage of new mechanisms of subsidization including mortgage insurance and the G. I. Bill. African Americans continued to be shut out of these opportunities and emerged as the primary constituency for public housing. The effort to develop public housing for the city's African American residents was led by the Negro Women's and Western Addition Housing Council; these groups successfully advocated for the construction of Westside Courts in the Western Addition, which was built in 1943 and became the first public housing project in the city that was open to African American residents.

In Oakland, the wartime population increased by around 20 percent, as construction of the Oakland Army Base and the Naval Supply Center at Alameda brought a huge influx of residents, and related industries including shipbuilding yards and manufacturing plants provided employment for many new Oaklanders.[195] New arrivals crowded into existing crowded quarters, with hotel owners requesting permission to install beds in lobbies and

[191] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 30. An earlier U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Corrigan v. Buckley* (1926) had found that covenants were private agreements that the court was bound to uphold if the covenants were deemed valid based on technical considerations. *Corrigan v. Buckley* bolstered White litigant enforcement actions until the *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision.
[192] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 88-89.
[193] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 90.
[194] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 92.
[195] Marilyn S. Johnson, "Urban Arsenals: War Housing and Social Change in Richmond and Oakland, California, 1941-1945," *Pacific Historical Review* 60, no. 3 (August 1991), 285.

rooming houses renting out hallway spaces. The city's unhoused population soared as workers and their families slept in parks, on benches, and in theaters and all-night restaurants. Homeowners were encouraged by federal agencies to subdivide and share their homes with arriving workers. Black home seekers were confined through a mixture of racial restrictions and a cultural custom of renting from Black homeowners; as a result, the population density of the Black enclave of West Oakland increased far more rapidly than surrounding neighborhoods and suburbs, and by 1950, the neighborhood population had transitioned from multi-ethnic with 24 percent of residents identifying as Black, to a thoroughly Black enclave, with 67 percent of residents identifying as Black.[196] West Oakland simply could not absorb all of the area's new Black residents, however, and some African Americans were able to find housing in North Oakland and portions of East Oakland.[197] However, as private developers rapidly constructed new subdivisions underwritten by federal funding programs, Black residents continued to be shut out of these opportunities; through the use of racial covenants, out of more than 50,000 private housing units constructed in the Bay Area from 1940 to 1946, only 300 were open to Black buyers.[198]

This concentration of Black residents, while largely working class, created conditions for the emergence of a sizable Black middle class in Oakland. Black landlords, merchants, and businessmen prospered amid the boomtown atmosphere, and 7th Street in West Oakland consolidated its reputation as the Black commercial district, with at least 80 Black professionals and entrepreneurs including doctors, lawyers, dentists, and other professionals working on or nearby the street.[199] Several public housing projects were opened in West Oakland in the early 1940s, including included Peralta Village and Campbell Village, both used to house newly arrived war-industry workers; these were joined by a string of new "temporary" housing projects constructed near Oakland's waterfront and along the transit route to Richmond's shipyards during the war.[200] While the housing authority relied on the "prevailing neighborhood pattern" model to enact segregation in public housing, new projects were often built in areas where there was no existing neighborhood pattern, and new housing was varyingly integrated or segregated based on the current whim or notion of the housing authorities.[201]

Richmond saw even more explosive growth in population during the war, with a population increase of over 2,000 percent between 1940 and 1944.[202] Kaiser Shipyards was Richmond's major employer during the war, and the shipyard's racially integrated workforce met extreme housing shortages, made extra acute for African Americans by existing racial restrictions and restrictive racial covenants on new housing constructed in most of the region. Prior to the war, a small number of African Americans had lived in a multi-ethnic working-class community of North Richmond; unlike most other communities in the Bay Area, there wasn't an existing Black enclave which could absorb, or even attempt to absorb, the massive influx of new Black residents once the war started. A report on conditions for new migrants found hundreds of workers and their families camped in tents and trailers along creeks at the perimeter of Richmond, with reports of people lodging in more than 500 chicken shacks, garages, and sheds in unincorporated areas around Richmond.[203] In an attempt to meet this new housing need, the Richmond Housing Authority was created in 1941, and over the next several years constructed over 24,000 public housing units for war industry workers.[204] Housing authority policy limited African American defense workers access to only 20 percent of these new housing units, matching the official proportion of Black war workers in Richmond but

[196] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 293.
[197] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 88.
[198] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 297.
[199] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 295.
[200] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 44.
[201] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 303-304.
[202] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 287.
[203] Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 289-290.
[204] Page & Turnbull and Donna Graves, "Project PRISM Historic Context Statement, Richmond, California," prepared for the City of Richmond Planning Department, October 2009, 67; Johnson, "Urban Arsenals," 283.

not in line with actual need, as Black workers were shut out of other housing opportunities in the area.[205] Black workers were also placed in segregated public housing and were not allowed to live in the higher quality projects such as Atchison Village and Triangle Court. Black tenants picketed the housing authority offices and won an injunction against the Richmond Housing Authority in 1945 for claims of discriminatory practices.[206] Black commercial institutions continued to be located primarily in North Richmond during the war years, with a few Black churches were established on the Southside close to segregated Black war worker housing projects.[207]

San Jose and other towns in Santa Clara County were outside of the immediate sphere of the wartime industries that employed the greatest number of African Americans; as a result, the region did not experience immediate explosive population growth at the outset of the war, but slowly gained residents over the course of the 1940s as the second phase of the Great Migration impacted all of California.[208] The region retained a strong agricultural economy and many Black migrants were drawn to a setting that mirrored the climate and country-like social atmosphere of their home communities. Arrivals were met with the same type of restrictive racial covenants that were in place in other cities in California and nationwide, and were largely forced to live in the Northside neighborhood, San Jose's established Black enclave, and East San Jose, a multi-ethnic neighborhood predominantly occupied by Mexican Americans. After Japanese and Japanese American internment in 1942, Black settlement expanded into Japantown, located directly west of the Northside neighborhood. Other small Black enclaves developed in the Alum Rock neighborhood of San Jose; Lakewood in Santa Clara, Mountain View Park, and downtown Palo Alto.[209] Some African Americans established companies that employed a large number of San Jose's Black residents, including a cement and construction business; steam cleaning business; a gas station; and Blackwell and Sons janitorial service, which became one of the largest Black employers in San Jose. Other notable businesses from this era included several plumbing companies, beauty shops that operated out of private homes, and several restaurants and music and dance clubs. All of these businesses were in the Northside neighborhood, which remained the region's primary Black enclave through this era.[210]

Sacramento also experienced an increase in its African American population in the 1940s, leading to an acute housing shortage. In 1940, the majority of African Americans in Sacramento still lived in the West End, and Black arrivals had few options outside of the West End and Del Paso Heights. Many homeowners in these neighborhoods took in boarders, carving new subsistence living spaces out of porches, sheds, and garages. Boardinghouses including the Lincoln, Senator, and Berkshire hotels, provided temporary living quarters for Black workers and their families. As with other West Coast cities, Japanese and Japanese Americans were removed from Sacramento as a result of Executive Order 9066; many sold their homes and businesses in the West End neighborhoods for greatly reduced prices, creating an opportunity for African Americans in search of limited opportunities.[211]

A community of African American-owned and -serving businesses operated in the West End neighborhood of Sacramento during this era, including liquor stores, poolrooms, and hotels; the Lincoln Hotel was one of the few hotels available to African Americans in the city and housed many migrants during the war. The Crystal Palace Hotel Building and Barbershop, near the corner of 6th and Capitol, included 14 rooms, a four-chair barbershop, a shoe repair service and cleaners. Black entrepreneurs opened a variety of West End businesses

[205] Page & Turnbull and Donna Graves, "Project PRISM Historic Context Statement," 71.
[206] Page & Turnbull and Donna Graves, "Project PRISM Historic Context Statement," 72.
[207] Page & Turnbull and Donna Graves, "Project PRISM Historic Context Statement," 74.
[208] Ruffin, "The Search for Significance in Interstitial Space," 22-23.
[209] Ruffin, "The Search for Significance in Interstitial Space," 21-22.
[210] Ruffin, "The Search for Significance in Interstitial Space," 27-28.
[211] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 29.

including a taxi company, record store, cleaners, barbershops and beauty shops, and cafes, restaurants, and bars; in addition to servicing the Black community of Sacramento, these establishments were buoyed by Black military personnel who came to Sacramento for services and entertainment from McClellan Air Force Base and Mather Air Force Base, to the north and east of Sacramento, respectively, and at Beale Air Force Base in nearby Marysville.

In the northern portion of the state, the combination of Southern Whites and greater numbers of Blacks ushered in the area's first sustained pattern of segregation.[212] While the locations of Black enclaves in Eureka and other Humboldt County towns are not specifically known, housing and renting was described as the most significant form of prejudice experienced by Black people in Humboldt county in the postwar era.[213] Eureka real estate agents participated in block busting, and were directly reproached by prominent Black religious and civic leaders, including the first president of the local branch of the NAACP, Robert Nelloms; the action of these men in the 1950s is credited with ending the practice of block busting in Eureka, although housing discrimination certainly persisted in more subtle ways.[214] As in other cities and towns, small numbers of middle-class Black people were successful in purchasing homes in majority White neighborhoods, though not without navigating discriminatory actions by both real estate agents and neighbors.

As in other California cities, African Americans in Santa Barbara were met with limited residential opportunities as the use of restrictive racial covenants was commonplace in Santa Barbara. The city's population nearly doubled from 605 people to 1,154 people between 1940 and 1950.[215] By 1960, approximately 1,500 African Americans were living in Santa Barbara, with close to ninety percent concentrated into two census tracts encompassing the lower Eastside, an industrial neighborhood near the waterfront.[216] This neighborhood was an early site of African American residential displacement starting in the late 1940s as preparation began for the routing of U.S. Highway 101/State Highway 2 through downtown Santa Barbara; displacement continued into the 1950s as the neighborhood became more thoroughly industrial.[217]

The Postwar Period (1950-1974)

In the postwar period, most California cities saw their African American population grow steadily. Between 1950 and 1970, many African Americans experienced economic advances in part due to greater integration of the industrial economy and expanded opportunities for employment in the public sector. However, during an era in which California as a whole was characterized by rapid construction of new suburban residential subdivisions, racist housing policies and private actions of discrimination continued to constrain most African Americans from purchasing or renting these new homes. Although the U.S. Supreme Court's 1948 *Shelley v. Kraemer* decision determined that racially restrictive covenants were a violation of the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection clause, the case actually allowed the continued use of racial covenants, just not their governmental enforcement.[218] The 1953 case *Barrows v. Jackson* decision strengthened enforcement against their use. African American advocates and activists continued to challenge the use of these covenants in the courts, but it was not until the passage of the state's Fair Housing Act (Rumford Act) in 1963 and the federal Fair Housing Act in 1968 that strides were truly made against housing discrimination (see the Making a Democracy theme for more detail).

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[212] O'Reilly, "The Black Experience in Humboldt County," 18.
[213] O'Reilly, "The Black Experience in Humboldt County," 20.
[214] O'Reilly, "The Black Experience in Humboldt County," 21.
[215] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 53.
[216] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 53.
[217] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 50.
[218] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 106.

Realtors in communities throughout the state played a strong role in steering Black homebuyers to purchase homes on blocks where there was already a Black presence. In addition to this, White violence and intimidation also contributed to ongoing residential discrimination and segregation through the postwar era. Recorded incidents of White resistance to Black residential integration range from offers of payment and direct requests for Black neighbors to leave, to bombings, vandalism, and death threats. Reports of incidents rose in the 1950s and 1960s, as White people responded to court decisions striking down restrictive covenants, and occurred in a range of neighborhoods, from rural areas to blue-collar districts to wealthy areas where the most prominent and successful African Americans attempted to purchase homes they could easily afford. These practices represented the most consistent, long-lived technique that restricted the ability of African Americans to live where they pleased.

Despite these barriers, African Americans desired and pursued home ownership.[219] Supported by gains in income and civil liberties, and some assistance from federal programs, national rates of home ownership among African Americans climbed from twenty-four to thirty-nine percent between 1940 and 1960.[220] Advertisements for residential subdivisions which were open to Black homeowners used aspirational imagery largely identical to that found in advertisements directed to White homebuyers, emphasizing suburban ideals such as safety, children, home ownership, leisure, and a picturesque setting.[221] Semi-bucolic images of Black mothers watching children playing in the yard while also tending to large garden plots reflected aspirational values, as the postwar economic reality for Black families rarely enabled Black women the ability to select to stay at home with her children.[222] Some Black suburbanites valued the ability to pursue continued economic security through thrift and domestic production on their land, although keeping extensive gardens, including in some cases animals such as chickens, ducks, and sow, sometimes brought Black homeowners into conflict with local ordinances.[223]

One example of a neighborhood open to African Americans was the Sacramento subdivision of Glen Elder, which was open to "all qualified veterans or non-veterans." Advertisements for Glen Elder emphasized that it was an "unrestricted" community, and by 1955, the integrated tract included seventy percent Black homeowners, a percentage that rose to nearly eighty percent in the 1960s.[224] The Meadowview district, a south suburb of Sacramento, also offered unrestricted housing and saw a large influx of Black homeowners in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, Sacramento was home to a substantial Black middle class; due to progress in anti-discriminatory housing policy, some members of the Black middle class were able to purchase homes in Sacramento's predominately White enclaves like Fair Oaks, Carmichael, and Greenhaven.[225]

Most postwar Black suburbanites elected to buy homes in neighborhoods where Black families had already settled. In the late 1950s, surveys indicated that between 45 and 65 percent of African American home seekers preferred a neighborhood that was at least half Black; their preference was for integrated neighborhoods where they could experience economic benefits associated with integration without the experience of being racially isolated in a White neighborhood.[226] Black suburban homebuyers often relied on Black social and institutional networks in their quest to navigate an industry that remained entrenched in long-standing racist practices. Some middle-class and wealthier African Americans sought home ownership

[219] Andrew Wiese, "'The House I Live In': Race, Class, and African American Suburban Dreams in Post War United States," *African American Urban History since World War II*, ed. Kenneth L. Kumser and Joe W. Trotter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 162.
[220] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 163.
[221] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 167.
[222] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 168.
[223] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 163.
[224] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 32, 36.
[225] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 38.
[226] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 172-173.

in predominantly White neighborhoods, for the stated reason of valuing a racially integrated experience for their children, seeking out school districts where their children could compete and succeed in a multi-racial environment.[227] However, Black "pioneers" who settled in White neighborhoods commonly traveled out of their neighborhoods to maintain Black social ties, through church, fraternal group membership, visits to Black-serving commercial districts, and to find Black peers for their children to socialize with.[228]

The limited movement of Black home seekers into suburban communities placed tremendous pressure on the housing available within the segregated Black enclaves of California's cities.[229] These neighborhoods were generally in older areas, and many homes had been haphazardly subdivided to accommodate wartime population growth. Investment in these neighborhoods or the construction of new housing was discouraged and, in some cases, expressly prohibited by federal policy that funneled postwar monies into new suburban development. As economically secure African Americans began to be able to move into other neighborhoods and migration to California continued, many existing urban Black neighborhoods in cities such as Los Angeles, Oakland, Long Beach, and San Francisco became populated by higher concentrations of Black residents and became more uniformly populated by lower income households.

In the northern portion of the state, San Francisco was transformed in the postwar era and boasted an astonishing increase in its Black population of over 900 percent in the decade between 1940 and 1950.[230] Existing housing shortages for African Americans were exacerbated by the return of GIs and much of the city's Japanese American community. Efforts to move outside the city's prewar Black neighborhoods were prevented by the continued use of restrictive covenants in the new suburban communities being constructed in the area. The Western Addition therefore continued as San Francisco's largest Black enclave during the postwar era.[231] Much of the neighborhood's aging Victorian housing stock had been subdivided during the war and the neighborhood continued to be extremely overcrowded, with diminishing access for residents to hot water, full sanitation, and open space. The combination of overcrowding and poverty created neighborhood conditions diagnosed as "blight" by the San Francisco Housing Authority as justification for major redevelopment projects that would come to characterize the Western Addition in the 1960s. Hunters Point also emerged as a second African American enclave during and after the war and expanded into the surrounding residential communities of Bayview and the area now known as the OMI district (Oceanview/Merced Heights/Ingleside). As African Americans began to move in, some realtors began block-busting, diminishing the neighborhood's racial integration and accelerating the Ingleside district's transition to a middle-class Black enclave.[232] The existing commercial corridors along Ocean Avenue and Broad Street began to see new businesses opening in the 1950s, catering to the area's growing African American population.

The intersection of poverty and racism made many urban Black enclaves vulnerable to forces of displacement in the postwar period. In 1945, the California legislature passed the California Redevelopment Act to provide state funds for local improvement projects. The Act allowed cities to establish local redevelopment agencies, and to acquire property deemed blighted. Redevelopment agencies could then clear it and sell or lease it to a private developer to create new uses that complied with the community's general plan. Redevelopment projects in San Francisco, Sacramento, Pasadena, Los Angeles, and other cities were one of the major forces of Black residential displacement in the postwar era. Federally funded freeway construction also significantly displaced Black residential communities in the postwar era, in cities including Oakland, Sacramento, Pasadena, and San Diego.

[227] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 169-170.
[228] Weise, "'The House I Live In'," 173.
[229] Brown, "The Black Professional Middle Class," 276.
[230] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 103.
[231] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 104.
[232] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 109-110, 112.

Additional forces of displacement that continued to impact California's Black residential enclaves in the cities of California include the influx of technology industry wealth – and wealthy home buyers – into previously working- and middle-class neighborhoods, and explicit municipal policies encouraging gentrification, and forces of displacement - freeway construction, transit construction, gentrification of residential neighborhoods. As a result, a contemporary trend that reflects shifting yet persistent patterns of racial segregation includes a phenomenon identified as mobile segregation, sometimes called resegregation. The wealthiest cities and towns remain racially segregated with an overwhelmingly White population, while Black people, along with other people of color, seeking to suburbanize, were forced by economics to settle in more affordable locations, further from urban cores, with longer commutes, fewer public transportation options, and lower civic investment.[233] When African Americans were able to move to suburban communities, they often moved to older suburbs closer to the urban core such as Inglewood in Los Angeles County.[234] In these areas, African Americans were often confined to a few older areas adjacent to existing Black neighborhoods.

The passage of national and state fair housing legislation helped facilitate the movement of African Americans into the suburbs (see Making a Democracy theme for further details). Despite White resistance and pushback, it helped facilitate the movement of Black people into suburban neighborhoods. The rate of outmigration from the central city to the suburbs also increased after the Watts Uprising in 1965. The event and other similar ones around the nation led many African Americans to view the urban center as unsafe; for White residents in California's suburbs, it highlighted the needs of African Americans in a stark manner.[235] Those who could, namely middle class and more affluent Black Californians, moved to suburban neighborhoods, while poorer Blacks were left behind in inner city neighborhoods.

In Oakland, the postwar era brought significant changes to the historic Black enclave of West Oakland. The area's economic base was devastated by the end of war-related industrial employment, the demise of rail travel and the closure of the Southern Pacific Railroad yards, and industrial relocation to the suburbs in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.[236] As with elsewhere during this era, Black people were excluded from new suburban communities around Oakland such as Fremont, Newark, Union City, and San Leandro. These areas all included less than one percent Black residents through the 1960s and in some cases into the 1970s.[237] The effect of this residential discrimination was a concentration of Black residents within the city of Oakland, which saw its Black population rise by 41 percent between 1960 and 1970.[238]

Concurrently, West Oakland was the location of large capitol redevelopment efforts managed by White city officials who prioritized attracting industry back to Oakland. Projects included port upgrades, freeway construction, new rapid transit lines, and general "slum" clearance.[239] The construction of the Cypress Freeway, which was completed in 1957, removed housing on eleven blocks through the center of West Oakland, dividing the neighborhood in half and severing most of its connection to downtown Oakland. Elevated BART tracks were constructed in the 1960s, overshadowing and eventually decimating the neighborhood's Black-owned and Black-serving commercial district. In the 1970s, construction of a massive new post office and transfer facility removed six full blocks of housing. These combined forces of displacement reduced West Oakland's Black population by 25 percent and spurred relocation of many Black residents to East Oakland, a multi-racial and multi-ethnic

[233] Alex Schafran, "Mobile Segregation and Resegregation," in *Counterpoints: A San Francisco Bay Area Atlas of Displacement,* ed. The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (Oakland: PM Press, 2021), 299-300.
[234] Lawrence B. de Graff, "African American Suburbanization in California, 1960 through 1990," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, eds. Lawrence B. de Graff, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Los Angeles: Autry Museum of Western Heritage, 2001), 412
[235] de Graff, "African American Suburbanization in California," 414-415.
[236] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 46; Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 346.
[237] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 349.
[238] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 349.
[239] Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 353.

neighborhood far from city services and employment opportunities; East Oakland emerged as a second Black residential enclave in Oakland in the 1970s and 1980s.[240] While accelerated deindustrialization across the region in the 1980s and military base closures in the 1990s further depleted Black employment opportunities, a diminishment in the legality and informal enforcement of racial discrimination in suburban housing markets enabled dispersal of African Americans into some surrounding communities.

In the Central Valley, some African American rural settlements that had been established before World War II and sustained by agricultural employment during the war grew in size in the post-war era. Growth of these settlements was spurred in part by African Americans who relocated after losing jobs in shipbuilding and other wartime industries that collapsed after the war, as well as the ongoing use of racially restrictive covenants in the larger townsites to which these enclaves were often adjacent. Enclaves including Fairmead, Dos Palos, Lanare, Teviston, Sunny Acres, and Cookseyville all increased in population in the decade immediately following the close of the war; new arrivals in some cases had saved money and were able to purchase land to farm, while others worked in seasonal farm labor. Many of these towns were strengthened during the post-war era by improvements to infrastructure such as electricity, running water, and sewer service. However, the mechanization of the cotton harvest in the mid-1960s began a downward trend in population in these towns, as many seasonal laborers sought employment in urban areas outside of the Central Valley.[241]

Theme: Making a Democracy

The Making a Democracy theme explores the role that African Americans in California have historically played in the quest for civil rights and equality. This theme traces the effects of various discriminatory practices on the state's built environment, from California's foundation as an enslavement-free state; through the passage of restrictive racial legislation; government, institutional, and business practices that reinforced systemic racism; and the failure to enforce laws regarding equality and economic empowerment.

The National Park Service has identified a framework for understanding sites related to Civil Rights in America. It includes Rekindling Civil Rights (1900-1941), the Birth of Civil Rights (1941-1954), Modern Civil Rights (1954-1964), and the Second Revolution (1964-1976).[242] Although national in scope, this framework can also be useful when thinking about African Americans making a democracy in the state of California. This theme discusses the early history of civil rights in California, the post-World War II Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Power Movement. Each sub-theme then provides an in-depth look at the specific areas, including voting rights, equal education, housing, accommodations, and gender and sexuality.

With a state the size of California, the African American experience of making a democracy is not monolithic. The following discussion explores the national and statewide patterns and movements with their differing manifestations in urban centers of Northern and Southern California and the more rural communities that dot the Golden State.

Sub-theme: Struggles for Inclusion: The Civil Rights Movement

California State Constitution, Early Legislation, and Court Cases

As discussed in the Making a Nation theme, the 1849 California Constitution guaranteed individual rights to all men and outlawed enslavement; however, only White men had the right to vote. Almost immediately, the California state legislature passed a series of laws that limited the rights of African Americans. Between 1848 and

[240] Praetzellis, "Putting the 'There' There," 46; Lemke-Santangelo, "Deindustrialization," 354.
[241] Eissinger, "Growing on the Side of the Road," 12, 17.
[242] These time frames were established by the National Park Service, Landmarks Division in 2002 and revised in 2008. For more information, visit https://www.nps.gov/subjects/civilrights/pivotalmoments.htm.

1865, non-Whites and their allies fought against discriminatory practices in California and on behalf of freedom from enslavement, the ability to provide court testimony, and the right to vote.

The California Fugitive Slave Law of 1852 sought to clarify the state's position on the federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, which required that states track down fugitive enslaved persons and instituted penalties for those who aided and abetted them. The California Fugitive Slave Law upheld the federal law and clarified that enslaved African Americans who were in California prior to 1850 were bound by the rules of the state or territory where they had lived previously. Famous cases challenging these laws included the Carter and Robert Perkins cases (1852), the Stephen Spencer Hill case, and the Biddy Mason case (1856).

It did not take long for the California court system to test the federal Fugitive Slave Law. In 1849, Carter Perkins, Robert Perkins, and Sandy Jones were brought to California by Charles Perkins, the son of their enslaver. When Charles Perkins returned to Mississippi, he left them in the hands of a friend who promised them their freedom if they worked for six months. Six months later, they formed their own successful business in Ophir (Placer County). In 1852, a relative of Charles Perkins established a posse, captured them, and took them before a judge who proclaimed them enslaved fugitives and ordered their return to Mississippi. The African American community of Sacramento hired anti-enslavement lawyer Cornelius Cole to defend them. The California Supreme Court ruled in favor of Charles Perkins, ordering that the two men and one woman be returned to Perkins. On the trip back to Mississippi, the three formerly enslaved people escaped while the ship was docked in Panama.

Bridget "Biddy" Mason (1818-1891) and her family were brought to California by Robert Smith in 1851. When Smith insisted that Mason and family move with him to Texas, African American rancher Robert Owens helped Mason file a lawsuit under *Mason v. Smith*. In 1856, Judge Benjamin Hayes ruled that Smith had no property rights over Mason since she had been brought to California after statehood. Mason eventually moved to Los Angeles where she purchased land and was one of the founders of the First African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

Stephen Spencer Hill arrived in California with his enslaver, Wood Tucker, prior to statehood. In 1853, Tucker returned to Arkansas, leaving Hill behind. Hill worked a mining claim and purchased 160 acres of land in Gold Springs. In 1854, a friend of Tucker's, Owen R. Rozier, moved onto Hill's land and attempted to return Hill to Tucker. Friends of Hill hired a lawyer and took the case to court. The court ruled in Tucker's favor. However, while making his way back to Arkansas with Rozier, Hill escaped in Stockton.

Archy Lee came to California in 1857. An enslaved man by the Stovall family, Lee claimed his freedom and ran away. He ultimately sued for his freedom, with the California Colored Convention funding the case. After a series of conflicting rulings in the California courts, a U.S. federal court heard the case and ruled in Lee's favor. Taking advantage of his newfound freedom, Lee moved to Canada in 1858.

Another area of infringement on African American rights in the state was the state courts and trial guidelines that limited the testimony of African Americans and other non-White Californians. These practices became law in 1850. In 1852, the Franchise League was formed by David W. Ruggles and Mary Ellen Pleasant. The League focused on winning Black residents the right to vote and to testify in California courts. Other activists such as Mifflin Gibbs, Jonas Townsend, and W.H. Newby printed a resolution in the *Alta California*, a White newspaper, seeking to educate readers on discriminatory testimonial law and other prejudices.

The California Colored Convention was designed "for the purpose of devising the most judicious and effectual ways and means to obtain our inalienable rights and privileges in California."[243] The first Convention in 1855 set

[243] "Civil Rights for African Americans in Early California: Discrimination and Activism for African Americans 1848-1865," 10, The Autry Museum, accessed May 22, 2023, https://theautry.org/sites/default/files/education/civil_rights_for_african_americans_in_early_california/civilrights_africanamerican_earlyca_11th.pdf.

in motion a series of caucuses where advocates could strategize, network, and plan. That year, longtime Black abolitionists Mifflin Gibbs, William Newby, and Jonas Townsend organized the First State Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California, which was held at the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Sacramento. While its participants also aimed to "adopt plans for the general improvement of their condition throughout the State,"[244] their main purpose focused on the 1851 testimony exclusion law stating "No black or mulatto person, or Indian, shall be permitted to give evidence in favor of, or against, any white person."[245] This law meant, among other things, that if a White person attacked or robbed a Black person, the latter would be unable to testify in court as a witness to the crime – meaning without a cooperative White witness, the assailant would walk free with his victim's possessions in hand. If a White person kidnapped a free Black person and trafficked him/her to a "slave hunter" for a reward (common under the Fugitive Slave Acts), the victim would be unable to prove his/her identity and proof of status in court.

Each of the 49 delegates to the 1855 Colored Convention left with a petition demanding the right to testify, and the assignment to gather signatures. They ultimately delivered 8,000 signatures to the California state legislature.[246] Subsequent California Colored Conventions in 1856 (Sacramento) and 1857 (San Francisco) also focused heavily on repealing the testimony ban and built momentum for the state's civil rights movement. The highly influential *Mirror of the Times* newspaper was born out of the 1855 convention, providing a Black voice that was succeeded by the *Pacific Appeal* in the early 1860s.

In 1857, however, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Dred Scott v. Sanford* ruled that African Americans were not citizens and had no legal rights in court. The decision effectively denied African Americans their right to a trial because of their lack of citizenship. Yet the fight for the elimination of discriminatory testimony laws in California did not end until 1863, when Richard Perkins introduced bills into the California state legislature to repeal the law. The fourth and last convention was held in Sacramento in 1865.

On a national level, 1863's Emancipation Proclamation, followed by the 1864 passage of the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery, and the end of the Civil War in 1865, all contributed to a more positive environment for African Americans in California struggling against racial discrimination and for inclusion.

The Klan in California

The Ku Klux Klan, the extremist organization advocating for White supremacy and White nationalism, was founded in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee by Confederate War veterans. In this first iteration, the Klan was highly decentralized. Klan activities in California can be traced back to the 1860s. However, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, their raids, arson attacks, and racist rhetoric were primarily directed toward California's Chinese community that was reviled for its dominance of railroad jobs, their closed communities, and foreign cultural and religious practices.[247]

By the turn of the twentieth century, the first iteration of the Klan was defunct. However, in 1915, the organization was revived by William J. Simmons in Atlanta, Georgia. This version of the Klan was a centralized

[244] *Proceedings of the First State Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California* (Sacramento: Democratic State Journal, 1855), 3, accessed April 2023, https://omeka.coloredconventions.org/items/show/265.
[245] California Book of Statutes, 1850, Chapter 99: An Act Concerning Crimes and Punishment, Third Division: Who May Be a Witness In Criminal Cases. In the same Book of Statutes, Chapter 133, An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians, formalized terms of enslavement of Indigenous persons who owed legal fines or were deemed to be "vagrant; it also had an "apprenticeship" provision which allowed a White person essentially to take ownership of an Indigenous child if the child's parents or "friends" (broadly interpreted) agreed to it.
[246] Pfaelzer, "None But Colored Testimony Against Him," 339.
[247] Warren Pulley and Savannah Ryan, *Ku Klux Kalifornia: A History of Klan Activities in California from 1869 Until Today* (San Marcos: RyPul Media, 2022), 4.

fraternal organization, with a national and state structure.[248] Membership in the Klan typically appealed to lower- and working-class White Southern Protestants. In the American South, the focus of the Klan's racism was African Americans, and the Klan became synonymous with cross burnings, lynchings, and other actions of hate an intimidation.

During the 1920s, interest in the Klan spread across the country—including to California. In 1923, various local chapters, known as *klaverns*, formed throughout the state, including in Santa Maria, Bakersfield, Pasadena, Alhambra, Los Angeles, Montebello, Watts, Inglewood, Redondo Beach, Anaheim, Santa Maria, Fresno, and Calexico.[249] California Klansmen targeted ethnic and religious groups they perceived to be the greatest threats to the White race and way of life—Blacks, Chinese, Japanese, Catholics, Jews, etc. Some klaverns were more concerned with sex and marital infidelity than race or creed.

More than 50 klaverns were established throughout the state of California during the 1920s and 1930s, both in cities and in rural areas. Members were often prominent citizens within these communities. In Bakersfield, for example, when one man was subjected to Klan violence, local authorities investigated and found that the local chapter's membership roster included lawyers, judges, police officers, and politicians. A similar situation occurred in Ventura County. Klan activity was not all clandestine; rather, public displays were common and designed to intimidate. On July 29th, 1924, Anaheim held one of the largest Klan rallies in the history of California: 20,000 people came from all over the state for an initiation of 1,000 new Klansmen.[250]

Inglewood was also a hotbed of Klan activity during this period. In 1922, 36 men were arrested and tried for a nighttime raid on a bootlegger and his family. A jury found the men not guilty, but the scandal led to the eventual outlawing of the Klan in California.[251] The Klan officially disbanded as a national organization in 1944.[252] Reports of Klan-related activities such as cross-burnings and the expulsion of Blacks and Jews continued well into the 1940s in areas such as Lancaster and Big Bear Lake.[253]

Civil Rights Organizations

The role of civil rights organizations in California's African American communities cannot be overstated. As the *African American History of Los Angeles Context Statement* describes it, "While the importance of individual groups ebbed over time, the collective presence provided vital organizational resources for civil rights battles before, during, and after World War II."[254] Whether they were local chapters of national organizations or home-grown groups, these organizations gave voice to the priorities of the community, fostered leadership growth, and used a variety of legal and communications strategies to create change. The following section highlights a number of key civil rights organizations in the African American community.

Afro-American Council

The Afro-American Council was founded in August of 1891 as the Afro-American League, with 150 members. The companion Woman's Afro-American League was founded the following year. It was originally founded to

[248] "Guide to the Ku Lux Klan (KKK) Realm of California Records Finding Aid," California State University, Northridge, accessed May 22, 2023, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8xd12xb/entire_text/.
[249] "Mapping the Klan, 1915-1940," Virginia Commonwealth University, accessed May 22, 2023, https://labs.library.vcu.edu/klan/.
[250] "A Brief History of the Ku Klux Klan in Orange County: Notes on the Banality of Evil," *Fullerton Observer*, January 7, 2019, accessed May 22, 2023, https://fullertonobserver.com/2019/01/07/a-brief-history-of-the-ku-klux-klan-in-orange-county-notes-on-the-banality-of-evil/.
[251] "Ex-Clan Chief Dies After Traffic Row," *Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 1949, 7.
[252] "Ku Klux Klan Disbands," *Redwood City Tribune*, June 5, 1944, 1.
[253] "Kenny to Ask Courts Ban Klan in State," *Los Angeles Evening Citizen News*, April 9, 1946, 1.
[254] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 76.

combat Jim Crow[255] segregation in the South. By 1895, when the statewide group convened, there were chapters in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Stockton, Riverside, San Jose, Marysville, Fresno, and Redlands. The organization appealed for civil rights directly by lobbying politicians, opposing lynching, urging pardons for falsely accused African Americans, and providing a connection to the political process through political machines.[256] With many professionals and businessmen as members, the Afro-American League was savvy in using the political system to affect change. At the same time, the Afro-American Council was unique in that it maintained a membership strongly rooted in blue-collar communities. As was the case with many smaller clubs and political organizations, they often met in buildings owned by other groups. In San Francisco, for example, the group frequently met in Germania Hall.

By 1910, the Afro-American Council represented 12,000 voters in California.[257] The organization began to weaken in the early twentieth century and was eventually supplanted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Los Angeles Forum

Established in 1903, the Los Angeles Forum organized town hall-style meetings on issues in the Black community. They discussed current events, philanthropic causes, and later became more politically active. The group was established by Rev. J.E. Edwards, pastor of the First AME Church, Jefferson Edmonds, editor of *The Liberator*,[258] and John Wesley Coleman, a businessman. They met initially at the AME Church, then at the Odd Fellows Hall. The group raised money for San Francisco Earthquake victims and Black agricultural homesteading experiments and spoke out against political candidates who advocated for discrimination.[259]

Urban League

The National Urban League was founded in 1910 in New York City as an organization dedicated to improving the economic rights and social welfare of African Americans. Local chapters tended to tailor their efforts based upon the needs of their individual communities, but generally addressed areas of common concern, such as poverty and unemployment. The Los Angeles chapter opened in 1921 in conjunction with the Tuskegee Industrial Welfare League, a Black woman's organization. In 1926, the Los Angeles Chapter of the Urban League advocated for better jobs. They conducted a study of area manufacturers and found that racial policies within these businesses were largely dependent on plant managers.[260] Changing hiring practices, therefore, required targeting middle managers.

The Urban League began a chapter in San Francisco around 1945.[261] Leaders such as Seaton W. Manning, Donald Glover, and Dr. Daniel A. Collins all led the organization through advocacy work on topics ranging from fair pay, to access to jobs, to fair housing. The San Diego chapter was established in 1953. There, the League focused on better educational opportunities; chapter leader Alpha L. Montgomery was also a co-founder of the local NAACP and the second Black Superior Court judge in the county.[262]

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[255] Jim Crow laws were state and local laws enforcing racial segregation in the early twentieth century. The name "Jim Crow" was a pejorative term for African Americans at the time.
[256] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 77.
[257] "Afro-American Council Indorses (sic) Alden Anderson," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 28, 1910, 2.
[258] *The Liberator* was an early Black newspaper in the state.
[259] This section was adapted from GPA Consulting with Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 77.
[260] Douglas Flamming, *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 244-27 qtd. in GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 78.
[261] "Community Chest to Assist League," *San Francisco Examiner*, November 12, 1945, 9.
[262] Guichard Parris and Lester Brooks, *Blacks in the City* (New York, NY: Little Brown & Co., 1971), 469; Mooney & Associates, "Centre City," II-12.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was initially organized in New York in 1909 as a bi-racial group committed to eradicating racial discrimination through the courts.[263] Through its local chapters, the NAACP advocated for African American civil rights in cities throughout the country, including in California. As described by historian Delilah Beasley in her 1919 book, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, "the [NAACP] is very influential in California."[264] Within five years of its founding, the NAACP established five chapters (also known as branches) in the state, including in Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Diego, and throughout the Bay Area in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, and Alameda. The NAACP's Northern California chapter was established in 1915, after W.E.B. DuBois visited San Francisco on a speaking tour in 1913.[265] By 1919, it had 1,000 members.[266] Early on, activities included the removal of discriminatory signage at businesses and a fight against land segregation laws. In California, most major cities with substantial African American populations established local NAACP chapters. The Los Angeles chapter was founded in 1913-14 by Drs. John and Vada Somerville, among others. By 1920, the Los Angeles branch had 700 members.[267] The San Diego chapter was formed in 1918-19. In 1923, the Oakland branch split off from the Northern California branch. By 1930, local branches also included Long Beach, San Bernardino, Vallejo, Stockton, and Sacramento. By 1936, there were 14 branches throughout the state. Chapters often met at the private homes of their leaders or at local churches.

Common issues that the California NAACP rallied around included the 1915 release of the film, *Birth of A Nation,* D.W. Griffith's racially charged film. According to historian Jonathan Watson, "the NAACP branches in California played a vital role in stemming Jim Crow in the west during the 1910s and 1920s. In the 1930s, they developed new research and lobbied to deal with discrimination in New Deal welfare agencies. During World War II, the branches played an active role in desegregating industries and labor unions."[268] Later, chapters fought various aspects of institutional discrimination, including at lunch counters; fair access to housing, employment, and education; opposing false arrest and police brutality; and many other issues. Chapters also participated in lobbying for national issues such as blocking the confirmation of Judge John J. Baker to the U.S. Supreme Court.[269]

The Zoot Suit Riots occurred in June 1943; American servicemen attacked Latino community members clad in baggy zoot suits that the servicemen perceived as a waste of wartime resources. In reality, it was a thinly veiled racially motivated attack against a non-White group. Following the Riots, local membership in the NAACP rose to 12,115 members by 1945, as African Americans joined in a show of support to the city's Latino population.[270]

Advocacy issues for the organization ran the gamut and reflected both national and local discriminatory practices and concerns. In Long Beach, Ernest McBride, Sr. and his wife Lillian received the official charter for their chapter in October of 1940 and the organization became a welcome advocate for fair housing, educational equity, equal pay, and other important local issues. The Riverside chapter was established in 1942. The Ventura County chapter was founded 1954. Also in the 1950s, a reinvigorated chapter in Santa Barbara advocated against discriminatory education and housing practices in that city.[271]

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[263] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 78.
[264] Beasley, The Negro Trailblazers of California, 189.
[265] Tim Kelley Consulting, et al., "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 63.
[266] Beasley, The Negro Trailblazers of California, 189.
[267] Jonathan Watson, "The NAACP in California, 1914-1950," in *Long is the Way and Hard: One Hundred Years of the NAACP*, eds. Kevern Varney and Lee Sartain (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2009), 189.
[268] Watson, "The NAACP in California," 186.
[269] Watson, "The NAACP in California," 191.
[270] Watson, "The NAACP in California," 198.
[271] "About Us," Ventura County Chapter NAACP, accessed January 30, 2023, https://www.naacp-venturaco.com/about-us.

Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914. Born in Jamaica, Garvey traveled to England in 1912 and became fascinated with the issues around Ireland's independence and nationalism, and those ideas clearly influenced his nationalist "Back to Africa" message. In 1916, Garvey came to the United States to meet Booker T. Washington, unaware that Washington had died. He then traveled around the U.S. observing African Americans and their quest for equal rights. In 1917, Garvey established the headquarters of the UNIA in New York.

Garvey's ideas were rooted in cultural pride, the need for independence, and the belief that African Americans could establish a great independent nation in their homeland of Africa.[272] Garvey also believed that capitalism would be the tool by which they would achieve success. Garvey's messages were met with resistance by some Black leaders in the U.S., such as W.E.B. DuBois and James Weldon Johnson of the NAACP. Regardless, Garveyism has been called one of the most powerful grass-roots Black movements in the twentieth century.[273]

By 1921, the UNIA had chapters in San Diego, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.[274] In Oakland, Liberty Hall functioned as that chapter's chief gathering place during the 1920s, hosting many speakers and events.

In 1922, the federal government indicted Garvey for mail fraud (selling stock in a steam ship that he did not own) and he spent two years in prison, after which, he was deported back to Jamaica. As a result of his situation, the influence of Garveyism as a movement declined.

The Nation of Islam (NOI)[275]

The Nation of Islam was a Black nationalist organization founded by Wallace Fard Muhammad (1877-1934[276]) in 1930 in Detroit, Michigan. The organization drew on Garveyism, among other Black nationalist beliefs, along with some aspects of the Islamic religious tradition, combining political and religious beliefs into one organization. Its followers worship in buildings called mosques or temples. The NOI believes in a succession of mortal gods, each a Black man named Allah. The first Allah created the all-Black Tribe of Shabazz. The NOI pushed for African Americans to be economically self-sufficient and separate from White society, with an emphasis on traditional gender roles. In 1934, Fard Muhammad disappeared from public record and the date and circumstance of his death remains unknown. The leadership of the NOI was assumed by Elijah Muhammad.[277]

CORE: Congress of Racial Equality

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was founded by a group of Black and White Chicago students in 1942. With its parent organization, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), CORE provided advice and support to Martin Luther King, Jr. during the late 1950s and early 1960s. CORE organized the Freedom Rides in the spring of 1961, wherein an integrated group of civil rights activists called "freedom riders" rode buses through the Deep South to challenge the lack of enforcement of Supreme Court rulings that ruled segregated public buses were unconstitutional.

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[272] David Van Leeuwen, "Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association," National Humanities Center, accessed May 9, 2023, http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/garvey.htm.
[273] "In Brief," *Los Angeles Times*, as printed in the *Modesto Bee*, February 23, 1986, 26.
[274] Watson, "The NAACP in California," 190.
[275] See also the entry for the Nation of Islam later in this theme relative to the Black Power movement.
[276] New research suggests that Fard may not have died in 1934. Research suggests he moved to Fiji and was known as Muhammad Abdullah and may have been part of the Ahmadiyya Islamic movement. He may have returned to live in the Bay Area under the new name during the 1950s.
[277] See additional information about the NOI in the section on civil rights organizations of the mid-twentieth century Civil Rights Movement.

California chapters of CORE recruited freedom riders from the state and supported their journeys to the American South. The Berkeley chapter recruited local clergy, students from the University of California at Berkeley (UC Berkeley) and Oakland City College, and other members. Many were arrested and jailed while in the South. Northern California freedom riders included the Rev. Grant Muse of the Good Shepard Episcopal Church in Berkeley, Thornton Leotis, Ray Ashby, Marion Kendal, and John Dolan.[278] The San Fernando Valley chapter of CORE also recruited students as freedom riders.[279]

Churches often provided a place for CORE members to meet, organize, and obtain training in non-violent tactics. A Los Angeles march on the school board was staged from the First AME Church on Towne Avenue in the present-day Flower District. A few local chapters had their own headquarters, including the Los Angeles chapter. Others, such as the Marin chapter, used public meeting halls like the Marin City Housing Project Lounge.

Known CORE chapters from the early 1960s include: Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oroville, Midpeninsula (East Palo Alto/ Menlo/Atherton), South San Mateo, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Marin. In July of 1965, the Arcadia chapter was established, serving the cities of Arcadia, Duarte, Monrovia and Sierra Madre.[280]

After the Watts Rebellion in 1965, the Los Angeles chapter of CORE focused its protest efforts on police brutality, with a particular focus on Chief of Police William H. Parker (1905-66) and Mayor Samuel Yorty (1909-98). After the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, CORE relinquished its strict policy of non-violence and embraced the concept of Black Power.[281]

California Federation for Civic Unity (CFCU)

The California Federation for Civic Unity was a multi-ethnic civil rights organization established in the years after World War II. Originally founded as the California Councils for Civic Unity, it was renamed in 1947. That same year, its members represented 46 interracial civic unity and other community groups.[282] The purpose of the organization was to "assist and strengthen the activities of organizations devoted to the improvement of relations about people of different racial, religious, and national origins."[283] Early issues included the Black unemployment rate, the housing shortage, denial of medical care, and police injustice. The CFCU incorporated other groups such as Japanese American, Jewish, and other ethnic organizations. The organization appears to have been especially helpful to smaller, less urbanized communities, where political organizing and implementation was more difficult. Member groups included the Ventura County Committee for Civic Unity, the Council of Civic Unity for Redwood City, the Fair Play Committee of Los Altos, San Luis Obispo Council for Civic Unity, the Sacramento Intercultural Fellowship, the San Bernardino Council for Civic Unity, and the San Joaquin County Council for Civic Unity. Similar local groups were also formed in Bakersfield, Fresno, Solano, Delano, and Benecia. By 1949, the organization was also working on voter registration efforts. Leaders included Josaphine Duveneck of Los Angeles and Richard W. Dettering. These local groups often met in community facilities, but some cases had their own space; The Redwood City group, for example, had their own storefront.

The San Francisco Council for Civic Unity was founded in the mid-1940s. Led by Edward Howden, it was a very successful local group of the type united by the CFCU. With 1,800 members at its peak, it lobbied against

[278] "$ From SF Area On Way," *San Francisco Examiner*, June 22, 1961, 25.
[279] "Valley CORE Unit Plans Dixie Trip," *Valley Times*, July 26, 1961, 18.
[280] "CORE Slates Organizational Meet," *Daily News Pilot*, July 8, 1965, 2.
[281] "CORE in Closed Meeting Maps Use of "Black Power," *Stockton Evening and Sunday Record*, September 5, 1966, 17.
[282] "Discrimination Battle Mapped," *Oakland Tribune*, October 20, 1947, 8.
[283] "Civic Unity Group Expands," *Ventura County Star*, November 28, 1947, 15.

discrimination in unemployment, housing, and urban development.[284] The organization was essential to the establishment of the California Fair Employment Practices Commission (CFEPC).

San Francisco DuBois Club

A Marxist organization for African Americans, the DuBois Club of San Francisco was formed in the early 1960s based on the notion that the issues of civil rights and poverty shared common roots that had to be addressed.[285] The name of the club was inspired by W.E.B. DuBois who became a Communist late in life. William Edward Burghardt DuBois (1868-1963) was an author, historian and Pan-African Civil Rights activist. DuBois was the founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). DuBois clashed with Booker T. Washington believing that Blacks deserved comprehensive civil rights and that the attainment of those rights would be led by African American intellectuals.

Other local chapters of the San Francisco DuBois Club were formed around the Bay Area, and the club eventually established a national presence. The Los Angeles counterpart to the San Francisco DuBois Club was the Youth Action Union.

The Communist Party

After World War II, the Communist Party "reconstituted itself and dramatic leadership changes created a newly revitalized organization."[286] The party grew rapidly in California, which became the second largest party district in the nation.[287] During this time, African Americans increasingly found common ground with local chapters of the Communist Party in their struggle for equality. For example, in Los Angeles in 1948, the party took up the cause of racially motivated beating and death of Herman Burns at the La Veda ballroom in South Los Angeles, when the NAACP would not. Neighborhood clubs of the Communist Party also led picketing campaigns at retail establishments and institutions that refused to hire Black employees.[288]

They also partnered with other organizations, such as the NAACP, in protests. In 1948, in Santa Monica, the party and the NACCP campaigned against the discriminatory hiring practices of the Sears-Roebuck store at Colorado and 5th Streets. Frank Barnes, an African American postal worker, was president of the Santa Monica branch of the NAACP.[289] By the early 1950s, aligning the fight for Black equality with neighborhood clubs of Communist Party members cooled as the Red Scare took hold and such affiliations became a liability.

The National Mid-Century Civil Rights Movement in California

The most visible figure of the Civil Rights Movement in America was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-68). As a Baptist minister of a Church in Atlanta, Georgia, King blended religion and activism, and employed a network of activist clergy and the Black church in general to perform outreach and organize throughout the country. King's group, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was essential to the civil disobedience and non-violence strategies of the Civil Rights Movement. King's tireless advocacy for African American rights was famously on display at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, and the March on Selma in 1965, that resulted in Bloody Sunday. The name Bloody Sunday was based on the beating of the peaceful marchers by police as widely broadcast on national television. King was also a frequent visitor to California where he successfully fundraised and sometimes attracted high-profile celebrities to donate their time and money.

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[284] Tim Kelley Consulting, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 100.
[285] Tim Kelley Consulting, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 133.
[286] Josh Sides, Los Angeles City Limits: African American Los Angeles From the Great Depression to the Present (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006,) 141.
[287] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 141.
[288] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 143.
[289] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 146.

Dr. King in California

Dr. King visited California several times in the late 1950s and early 1960s to support state and local issues and to speak about national civil rights issues. In 1960, Dr. King traveled to Los Angeles for the Democratic National Convention where John F. Kennedy was nominated as a candidate for U.S. President. In 1961, King conducted a freedom rally at the Los Angeles Sports Arena where he appeared with Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown (1905-96). Two years later, King hosted another freedom rally at Wrigley Field in South Los Angeles, then the home of the Los Angeles Angels.[290] In 1964, King spoke before 150,000 people at the Los Angeles Coliseum, gave a speech against Proposition 14 (see the Housing sub-theme below) at the Hollywood Palladium, and spoke at the Second Baptist Church. In the wake of the Watts Uprising in 1965, King visited Los Angeles to speak with community residents. Two years later, King spoke at the University of Southern California's Bovard Auditorium, where a bomb threat caused a temporary evacuation.

King also visited Northern California throughout the 1960s. His first visit to the Bay Area may have been as early as 1956. In 1964, he again spoke out against Proposition 14 at the St. Francis Hotel—days ahead of the Republican National Convention held at the nearby Cow Palace. King also made visits to San Diego. Historians disagree if it was as early as 1955 for a talk at Bethel Baptist Church or in 1960 at Calvary Baptist. However, a 1957 talk at San Diego High School's Russ Auditorium was attended by 850 people.[291] After his "I Have a Dream" speech in Washington, D.C., in 1963, he spoke at San Diego State's Greek Bowl. In San Diego, King had a strong network of clergy, who often referred to the city as "The Mississippi of the West."[292]

On October 16, 1967, King spoke to a crowd of 7,000 students in the football stadium at Sacramento State College.[293] The following year, he spoke at the Anaheim Convention Center for the annual convention of the California Democratic Council. King's address celebrated civil rights achievements and criticized the Vietnam War.

Sit-ins, Stock-ins, Boycotts, and Picket Lines: California Protests of the Civil Rights Movement

Local chapters of the NAACP and CORE sponsored many non-violent protests within their local communities. Participants were given training in the organizations' codes of conduct to ensure that the protests remained peaceful. Chapter protest activity varied and reflected the challenges of each community: topics included discriminatory housing practices, equal opportunity in employment, and school segregation.

In January 1963 in Oroville, local CORE chapter members protested Barnes Market on Myers Street for unfair employment practices. Although two Blacks had interviewed for open positions, the roles were filled by White men.[294] Similar protests occurred against Lucky Stores, Inc. supermarkets in San Francisco, Palo Alto, and Berkeley in early 1964, also organized by CORE. Protestors engaged in a "shop-in" during which they filled their carts with items, had the cashier ring up the sale, and then refused to pay.

In October 1963, the Ad Hoc Committee to End Discrimination, an outgrowth of members of the local CORE and DuBois Club members, protested outside Mel's Drive-in in Berkeley, as well as the homes of the restaurant's co-

[290] The Angeles played at Wrigley Field temporarily. They later moved to Dodger Stadium and then to Anaheim.
[291] "When Martin Luther King, Jr. Came to San Diego," *San Diego Union Tribune*, January 15, 2018, accessed May 3, 2023, https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/local-history/sd-me-king-visits-20180111-story.html#:~:text=Some%20say%20his%20first%20appearance,was%20attended%20by%20850%20people.
[292] "When Martin Luther King, Jr. Came to San Diego," *San Diego Union Tribune*, January 15, 2018, accessed May 3, 2023, https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/local-history/sd-me-king-visits-20180111-story.html#:~:text=Some%20say%20his%20first%20appearance,was%20attended%20by%20850%20people.
[293] "Sacramento State Celebrates 50th Anniversary of MLK Visit, Speech," accessed May 3, 2023 https://www.capradio.org/articles/2017/10/16/sacramento-state-celebrates-50th-anniversary-of-mlk-visit-speech/#:~:text=On%20October%2016%2C%201967%2C%20civil,College%2C%20now%20named%20Sacramento%20State.
[294] "Temporary Truce Ends Negro Picket Line at Oroville Store," *Enterprise Record*, January 15, 1963, 1.

owners. After weeks of protest, the restaurant agreed to train and employ African Americans in various roles in the restaurants. The NAACP organized protests against the Cadillac showroom and the Sheraton Palace Hotel for their lack of employment of African Americans. The Bank of America was also a target of CORE and NAACP protests against discriminatory hiring practices. While some fair employment practices protests were successful, others appear to largely have resulted in the mere appearance of change. For example, when negotiations and promises were made by the Hillsdale Shopping Center in San Mateo and the Stanford Shopping Center in Palo Alto, actual implementation was minimal.[295]

In June of 1963, the NAACP and CORE joined forces in Torrance on consecutive Saturdays where more than 300 members picketed at the all-White Southwood Riviera tract. Hundreds of protestors were arrested and booked.[296]

Realtors and realty boards were often the target of fair housing protests. These included Select Realty and Rentals in San Francisco, and the office of L. Spike Wilson in Fresno.[297] In conjunction with the California Real Estate Convention, CORE picketed the Sunnyvale Board of Realtors, the San Jose Board of Realtors, and the Los Gatos/Saratoga Board office in early 1964. More than 1,000 demonstrators also gathered in picket lines outside the California Real Estate Association (CREA) convention at the Cabana Hotel in Palo Alto to protest the potential repeal of the Rumford Fair Housing Act.[298]

In June of 1963, a group of CORE members staged a sit-in in the rotunda of the second floor of the state capitol in Sacramento. The group protested the lack of action on the Rumford Act. CORE members from all over the state were recruited and transported to attend the sit-in.[299] Protestors were joined briefly by actors Marlon Brando and Paul Newman.[300]

The first school boycott in California to address issues of school segregation was in Marin City in 1964. There, the local CORE chapter sponsored alternative schools. The boycott emptied the Richardson Bay Elementary School of half its students in Sausalito and Manzanita Elementary School in Marin City. The alternative school was set up by CORE at the First Baptist Church across Drake Avenue from Manzanita.[301]

Circa 1963, the Community League of Mothers was established in San Bernardino to address segregated and unequal school conditions including no bus transportation, no air conditioning, and no Black teachers and administrators. From September to November of 1965, the group boycotted their public schools and established a group of "Freedom Schools" in private homes and churches around the city. Approximately 350 Black children attended the Freedom Schools.[302]

In her oral history, Community League of Mothers advocate Frances Grice detailed the group's advocacy efforts and its work with organizations like CORE and the NAACP. In 1964, Congressmen John Conyers and George E. Brown advised the League of Mothers to organize their efforts around the 1964 Civil Rights Act.[303]

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[295] "SM Stores Sign Rights Pact," *The Times*, April 24, 1964, 25.
[296] "Torrance Negro Wants State to Punish Builder," *Sacramento Bee*, July 27, 1963, 8.
[297] Fresno did not have a local chapter of CORE per "Core Delegates Picket Fresno Office of Realty Group Chief," *Fresno Bee*, December 9, 1963, 17.
[298] "Chaos if Rumford Act Repealed: Pike," *Oakland Tribune*, March 23, 1964, 15.
[299] "More Arrive to Join Capitol Sit-in," *Fresno Bee*, June 2, 1963, 6.
[300] "Actors Marlon Brando, Paul Newman, in Visit to Sacramento CORE Sit-in," *Humboldt Standard*, June 12, 1963, 19.
[301] "The State's First School Boycott," *San Francisco Examiner*, May 19, 1964, 1;14.
[302] "S. B. Boycott Ends; Freedom Schools Close," *San Bernardino County Sun*, November 2, 1965, B1.
[303] Wilmer Amina Carter Foundation, "Frances Grice" (2008), Bridges that Carried Us Over Digital Archive, accessed June 19, 2023, https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=bridges.

The U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the most sweeping civil rights legislation since the reconstruction era. Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson on July 2, 1964, it prohibited discrimination in public spaces, provided for school integration and other public facilities, and made employment discrimination illegal.

Prior to his assassination, President John F. Kennedy had been advocating for civil rights legislation with the American public and lobbying Congress for a bill. Once authored, passage was not easy. There was opposition in the House of Representatives, and in the Senate, Southern Democrats attempted the filibuster. Congressional leaders persisted, however, and a compromise bill was reached. In the Senate, it ultimately passed 73 to 27.[304] The Act also created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce laws prohibiting discrimination in hiring, firing, wages/compensation, training, and all other aspects of employment. Despite the Act's passage in 1964, discriminatory practices continued for years—requiring additional legislation and continued community organizing around enforcement.

Civil Unrest and Police Brutality

During the mid- to late-1960s, Black discontent occurred in communities across the nation, sparking a series of acts of civil disobedience. The Harlem riot of 1964 was followed by civil unrest in Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston. In August of 1965, the Watts Uprising broke out at Avalon Boulevard and 116th Street and spread to communities in South Los Angeles. It proved to be one of the deadliest uprisings of the 1960s, lasting for six days and resulted in the broadcasting of numerous incidents of police brutality across the nation. In a show of their discontent at the poor treatment they endured in American society, protestors overturned and burned automobiles and looted and damaged grocery stores, liquor stores, department stores, and pawnshops.[305] Property loss totaled $40 million, with much of that loss sustained in South Los Angeles.[306] The violence ultimately spread as far east as Monrovia, as far north as Pacoima, and as far south as Long Beach.

Lesser known, but equally important, 20 incidents of urban unrest occurred in San Francisco between 1967 and 1969. One of these incidents revolved around a five-month strike by the Black Student Union at San Francisco State College. More than 500 National Guard members were deployed. Openly hostile actions by police and law enforcement enflamed the situation. Such interactions between law enforcement and the Black community both reflected and contributed to the degradation of relations between the two groups.

Unrest in Hunter's Point and the Fillmore District was directly related to the shooting of a Black youth by a police officer. On September 27, 1966, Alvin Johnson, a White police officer, shot and killed Matthew Johnson, an unarmed 16-year-old African American boy in Hunters Point. This sparked violence and vandalism by a crowd of frustrated and angry residents at the corner of 3rd Street and Palou Avenue. More discontented residents gathered at the Bayview Community Center demanding to speak to San Francisco's mayor, John F. Shelly. Ultimately, 2,000 National Guard troops were sent to quiet the uprising.[307]

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[304] Civil Rights Act (1964), accessed May 9, 2023, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/civil-rights-act#:~:text=This%20act%2C%20signed%20into%20law,civil%20rights%20legislation%20since%20Reconstruction.

[305] A map of damaged or burned private and public buildings is available in the McCone Commission Report, "Violence in the City: An End or a Beginning?" https://www.lc.edu/uploadedFiles/Pages/Services/Reid_Memorial_Library/McCone%20Commission%20Report%20Violence%20in%20the%20City%20Watts%20Neighborhood.pdf

[306] The History Channel, "Watts Rebellion," accessed April 24, 2023, https://www.history.com/topics/1960s/watts-riots; Livia Gershon, "Did the 1965 Watts Riots Change Anything? , JSTOR Daily, July 13, 2016, https://daily.jstor.org/did-the-1965-watts-riots-change-anything/ (accessed July 24, 2023).

[307] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 147.

On July 26-27, 1967, coinciding with the urban unrest in Detroit, Long Beach police were called to the Central District, where the city's African American population was concentrated.[308] Tensions escalated, and windows were smashed in buildings along the Pacific Coast Highway. The event in Long Beach was evocative of smaller isolated episodes that occurred in cities throughout California and the country during this period.

Another such episode occurred in Santa Barbara in 1968 when 12 Black students barricaded themselves inside North Hall at the University of California, Santa Barbara, renaming it "Malcolm X Hall during the protest."[309] The protests resulted in the establishment of a Center for Black Studies.

On April 27, 1962, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officers observed two African American men removing clothes from a car parked near the Nation of Islam's Mosque No. 27 on Broadway. Monroe Jones ran a delivery service for dry-cleaned clothes, and often delivered to members of Mosque No 27. Although the LAPD officers could find no evidence of a crime being committed, they attempted to arrest Jones and his assistant Fred X. Jingles. As members of the Mosque attempted to come to their aid, five of them were shot by police, including Mosque secretary Ronald Stokes, who was killed as he approached police with his hands up. The killing of Stokes placed Malcolm X at the center of the conversation on police brutality and fueled the rise of the Black Power Movement.

Civic Commissions on Race and Ethnicity

In response to civil rights activists and the Watts Uprising, Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown established the McCone Commission and charged them with preparing an accurate and objective report of the events of the Watts Uprising and to make recommendations to prevent similar events. [310] The Commission was headed by John A. McCone (1902-91), a former CIA director. The McCone Commission recommended that Los Angeles establish a Human Relations Commission. Los Angeles County already had its own commission, but the focus of this body was on the city itself.

In their book *Human Relations Commission*, authors Brian Calfano and Valerie Martinez-Ebers identify several factors giving rise to the Human Relations Commissions (HRCs): an influx of a new minority population into the local area, combative and prejudiced interracial attitudes, inadequate housing and basic services, biased law enforcement, and job competition.[311] Following World War II, many California municipalities were facing many, if not most of these issues.

As a result, many California cities formed civic commissions whose purview was race, ethnicity, and related issues such as fair housing, educational equality, unemployment, equal opportunity, and police brutality. Historians Philip J. Ethington and Christopher D. West identified the period from 1943 to 1971 as the "golden age" of human relations commissions.[312] Often, however, these commissions were formed as a gesture to ease tensions and lacked any real authority. An example of one such municipal commission was the Pomona Human Relations Council, formed around 1960.[313] Even though the Pomona council included members of the NAACP and activist clergy, it was widely criticized as ineffective. For example, with respect to affordable housing, the

[308] "Fires Set in Central Long Beach Area," *Independent Press Telegram*, July 27, 1967, 1.
[309] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 61.
[310] In 1938, Governor Frank Merriam established the California Race Relations Commission, an early version of Civic Commissions on Race and Ethnicity. African American Lawyer Hugh McBeth, Sr (1884-1956) was the Secretary.
[311] Brian Califano and Valerie Martinez-Ebers, *Human Relations Commissions: Relieving Racial Tensions in the American City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 71-72.
[312] Philip J. Ethington and Christopher D. West, "The Racial Re-segregation of Los Angeles County, 1940-200," Race Contours 2000 Study, Public Research Report No. 2001-04. University of Southern California and University of Michigan, 2001 qtd. in in Brian Calfano and Valerie Martinez-Ebers' book, *Human Relations Commissions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 69.
[313] Historic Resources Group, "Historic Context Statement: Suburbanization and Race, City of Pomona," 2022, 133.

Human Relations Council asked the City Council to draft a letter affirming fair housing principles, but the City Council failed to comply.

Another example was the Long Beach Human Relations Committee, which held its first meeting in October 1963. The committee largely served as a fact-finding board for civil rights grievances with the power to make recommendations to the City Council. Members included chairman E. John Hanna, Dr. Horace Rains, Joseph E. Brooks, Dr. John Kashawahara, James H. Blackburn, C.F. Liebenguth, and Harry Mould. It also included Melvin L. Mould, former head of the Long Beach Realtors Association. The HRC was met with skepticism almost immediately by protestors who felt it should be more multi-racial in its composition and not stacked in favor of Whites, apartment owners, and realtors. Similar to the Pomona Human Relations Council, the Long Beach HRC was reminded by the City Council that they were not there to make policy, only to investigate civil rights matters referred to them by the Council.[314]

San Francisco's Interim Committee on Human Relations was established in 1964 by Mayor John F. Shelley (1905-74). The committee was organized in reaction to demonstrations against hotels, supermarkets, drive-in restaurants, and automobile showrooms that discriminated against African Americans.

Among the later commissions to be formed was the San Diego Human Relations Commission in 1970. This HRC was a joint powers agency between San Diego County and 13 municipalities.[315] Board members were selected to represent north, south, and east county areas. The Orange County Board of Supervisors created the Orange County Human Relations Commission in 1971.

Meetings of HRCs were typically held in city facilities downtown, and not in the communities they were serving. These formal settings were often criticized as inconvenient as well as intimidating for some community members, reducing participation. During the early 1970s, many HRCs, especially those that were primarily advisory bodies, suffered budget cuts, while others were dissolved entirely. Those that survived were often rebranded as "Human Rights Commissions."

The Black Power Movement and Organizations

Despite the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, racism, economic disparities, unemployment, and racial oppression were perpetuated in African American communities across California by decades of discrimination, segregation, and institutionalized racism. A generation of young activists disenchanted with the Vietnam War, the draft, and the establishment in general, were mobilized by the Black Power Movement of the 1960s. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s policy of non-violence was no longer appealing.

As described by the *African American History of Los Angeles Context Statement*, "…out of rage and frustration, many young people increasingly embraced Black Nationalist rhetoric, which sometimes led to friction with the police and the growth of groups such as the Nation of Islam." The assassination of Nation of Islam minister and human rights activist Malcom X in February 1965 was also a contributing factor. The Watts Uprising was a turning point in the nascent Black Power Movement. The militant and anti-integrationist aspect of Black politics took hold in public colleges and universities.

The roots of the Black Power Movement can be found in the Afro-American Association. The movement is most commonly associated with the Black Panther Party, but other organizations operated in California.

The Afro-American Association

While many Americans know about the Black Panthers, the party was preceded by a lesser known but extremely important organization with roots in the Bay Area: the Afro-American Association (AAA). The AAA grew out of

[314] Historic Resources Group, "Historic Context Statement: Suburbanization and Race, City of Pomona," 36.
[315] "Board Ready for Human Relations Group," *Chula Vista Star News*, September 6, 1970, 10.

the desire of a group of Black UC Berkeley students to bring Malcolm X to campus to speak. Their request was met with resistance from university administrators, but after a long fight, the school acquiesced, offering Malcolm X the off-campus venue of Stiles Hall. The event took place in May of 1969.

Efforts to organize the talk inspired the creation of an all-Black student organization led by Donald Warden, Henry Ramsey, and Donald Hopkins, who were all law students. The Afro-American Association was the first indigenous post-World War II Black-nationalist organization and provided the intellectual underpinnings for the West Coast Black Panther Movement.[316] Members of the AAA were inspired by a growing awareness of the continental independence movement, the situation for Africans,[317] as well as conditions of African American life in the East Bay. Donald Warden especially clashed with traditional civil rights organizations such as the NAACP, which he accused of failing Black students.[318]

The AAA met in a number of early meeting places to socialize and discuss politics. They included Robbie's, a Chinese restaurant where Warden frequently held court, the home of Mary Lewis and Anne Cook several blocks south of the UC Berkeley campus. When meetings grew too large to be held in these locations, the AAA used Downs Memorial Church, and based an office there.[319] Early members of the AAA also established two mosques: Temple 26A in San Francisco and Temple 26B in West Oakland. [320]

Public outreach became an important component of the evolution of the AAA. "Street speaking"—charismatic oration from the sidewalk at key intersections and public rallies—helped the organization's message reach beyond the campus. One of the most fertile places for rallies and membership recruitment was Merritt College in Oakland. By 1963, the AAA reached the pinnacle of its influence. They were also responsible for popularizing the term "African American" as a replacement for the more commonly used term of the period, "negro." The term "African American" was preferred for its emphasis on the community's African roots, thereby creating a bigger tent under which the voices of African leaders from the continent chimed in.

From 1964 to 1969, Merritt College experienced a demographic revolution: the Black student population grew from less than 10 percent to more than 40 percent.[321] The AAA made significant inroads into that student population, who had little patience for organizations such as CORE and the NAACP. The militant movement for a Black Studies program saw its first success when the college established a Black Studies course in 1964.

Among the Black student activists attending Merritt College at this time were Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. Over time, however, they grew frustrated with the AAA for the organization's failure to translate ideas into action.[322]

The Black Panther Party of Self Defense

The Black Panther Party for Self Defense--typically referred to simply as the Black Panther Party (BPP)—was founded in Oakland in October of 1966 and soon spread nationwide. The BPP was founded by Bobby Seale (1936-) and Huey P. Newton (1942-89). It was at the law library of the North Oakland Service Center where the two friends wrote the first BPP program.[323]

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[316] Donna Jean Much, *Living for the City* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 72.
[317] During this period, there was a wave of independence movements among European ruled African territories including Algeria and Angola. These majority Black countries were ruled by predominantly white European governments.
[318] Much, *Living for the City*, 72-79.
[319] Much, *Living for the City*, 72-79.
[320] Maryam Kashani: Scenes of Muslim Study and Survival, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2023) https://www.google.com/books/edition/Medina_by_the_Bay/NuHPEAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%22Temple+26A%22+Nation+of+Islam&pg=PT164&printsec=frontcover (accessed September 20, 2023); Jean Much, *Living for the City*, 70, 81.
[321] Much, *Living for the City*, 96-97.
[322] Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton* (New York, NY: Random House, 1970), 27.
[323] Much, *Living for the City*, 127.

Stokely Carmichael (1941-98), leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), gave a keynote at UC Berkeley calling for "Black Power," inspiring Seale and Newton to found the organization on the principles of self-defense, self-determination, and self-respect. By January 1967, the BPP opened its first official headquarters in a storefront in Oakland. Their rallying point was against police brutality with a taste for revolution and weaponry. In later years, the BPP became known for their community programs. They were also known as "the Black Berets," for their iconic headwear. The founders, as well as members of the BPP, were often investigated by the FBI, arrested by police, and jailed.

The Black Panther Party had local offices, information centers, and locations where they served their Free Hot Breakfast Program for Children. The latter was a key program when the BPP turned toward community service and established "survival programs."[324] The BPP dropped "Self Defense" from the party name in 1968, and the following year expanded their free breakfast programs for children.

In Los Angeles, locations included the BPP headquarters, BPP party office, Walter Toure Pope Community Center, Free Clinic, and Free Hot Breakfast Program and Community Information Center.[325] In 1969, the free breakfast program was housed at the Seventh Day Adventist Church at present-day Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard near Budlong Avenue.

In the Bay Area, the BPP had several information offices and service centers for the various Bay Area communities, typically in older houses or commercial buildings. De Fremery Park in Oakland was also the site of many Black Panther Party demonstrations and programmatic activities.[326]

An important BPP program was the establishment of "liberation schools" to educate children. At first, these schools were only open to the children of BPP members, but soon expanded to serve the broader community. The curriculum of these schools emphasized African history as well as African American history and culture. The first school was established above the party headquarters in Berkeley. In 1969, Ridgepost Methodist Church in the Hunter's Point area of San Francisco was established, as was a liberation school in Richmond.[327] The liberation schools made their greatest impact between 1969 and 1971. The Intercommunal Youth Institute was the culmination of the BPP educational program. It moved frequently during its first few years but by 1973 had a permanent home in East Oakland where it was renamed the Oakland Community School; it remained in operation until 1982.[328]

By 1969, Sacramento had its own branch of the BPP. In February, Sacramento City College was the site of a joint meeting of the Brown Berets (a Chicano civil rights organization) and the BPP. Local members included Charles Brunson and James Mott.[329] In 1970, the San Diego branch of the BPP transferred to Riverside. Fearing violence, the Riverside police raided the local BPP headquarters, causing the group to relocate in Los Angeles.[330]

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[324] Much, *Living for the City*, 178.
[325] The University of Washington has embarked on a "Mapping Social Movements Project," accessed April 14, 2023, https://depts.washington.edu/moves/BPP_map-cities.shtml. Mapped locations for Los Angeles include 4115 S. Central Avenue, 1810 103rd Street, 3223 South Central Avenue and 334 W. 55th Street.
[326] The University of Washington has embarked on a "Mapping Social Movements Project," accessed April 14, 2023, https://depts.washington.edu/moves/BPP_map-cities.shtml. Mapped locations for the Bay Area include the Second BPP Office at 4418 Martin Luther Kind, Jr. Way, and the Third BPP Office at 3106 Shattuck Avenue, in Berkeley. The BPP Oakland Community learning center was located at 6114 International Blvd, Oakland with a BPP Office at 520 Bissell Street in Richmond. In San Francisco proper, there were two sites: the Black Panther National Distribution Center at 1336 Fillmore Street and the Black Panther Community Center at 2777 Pine Street.
[327] Much, *Living for the City*, 179. It later relocated to Ellis Street in the Fillmore.
[328] Much, *Living for the City*, 182.
[329] "Black Panther, Brown Beret Leaders Urge Unity," *Sacramento Bee*, February 19, 1969, 22.
[330] IS Architecture, "City of Riverside African American Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Statement," 53.

When Huey P. Newton fled to Cuba in 1974, Elaine Brown (born in 1943) became chair of the BPP in Oakland. She remained in that position until 1977. Generally, the 1970s saw more women elevated to positions of leadership within the Party. Ericka Huggins (born 1948) was a writer/editor for the Intercommunal News Service and led the Oakland Community School from 1973-1981.[331]

Eventually a schism appeared within the BPP rising from clashes between chapters on the East and West coasts, over militant vs. non-militant actions and gender shifts. Police also fomented dissension within the organization. The East Bay chapter turned its focus towards the community in Oakland; Bobby Seale ran for mayor of Oakland in 1973. All these factors contributed to a mainstreaming of the BPP into a more traditional political party during the 1970s, and away from its grassroots militaristic origins.

The Nation of Islam (NOI)

As previously discussed, the Nation of Islam was founded by Wallace Fard Muhammad in 1930 as an African American nationalist organization with adapted Islamic religious traditions. Black nationalist advocate and NOI member Malcom X (1925-65), rose to prominence during the 1950s. Malcolm X suggested that Black people did not have to tolerate abuse and that they had the right to protect themselves. This was in direct opposition to the philosophy of non-violence espoused by Dr. King.

In 1959, membership of the NOI increased significantly, fueled by the documentary, *The Hate That Hate Produced*. During the last six months of 1959, the number of temples or mosques rose from 30 in 15 states to 50 in 22 states.[332] Malcolm X was instrumental in the establishment of Mosque No. 27 in Los Angeles. He launched a nationwide speaking tour, further raising the profile of the NOI and Black Muslims. By 1961, it was estimated that there were 3,500 members of the Nation of Islam in Los Angeles and 600 in the San Francisco Bay Area.[333]

Even smaller communities like Santa Barbara had a Black Muslim presence during this period. In 1964, a local activist who went by the name of Bobby XX opened a headquarters on East Haley Street. His vision for Santa Barbara's African American community was to create a separate Black society. The organization planned to build stores and apartments in the Eastside neighborhood, but it is unclear if any were ever constructed. The headquarters moved to another location on East Haley Street. By 1968, the group had a meeting hall, mosque, and bakery on Haley Street.[334]

In Sacramento, the Black Muslim mosque was located in Oak Park. The first mosque was established on Sacramento near 8th Avenue in the late 1960s. They later acquired a building on the West side of 35th Street between 4th and 5th Avenues. Like Santa Barbara, the mosque helped foster Muslim-owned businesses such as the Shabazz Fish n' Chip restaurant, a bakery selling Muslim pies, and a door-to-door fish purveyor.[335]

In March of 1964, Malcolm X announced his break with the Nation of Islam. He was assassinated at the Audubon Ballroom in New York in February of 1965. In the wake of his assassination, the NOI mosque in Harlem was firebombed, followed shortly by a similar act at the San Francisco mosque.[336]

The United Slaves (US Organization)

Less visible and famous than the Panthers, the United Slaves, or US Organization, was founded in 1965 by Hakim Jamal (1931-73), and Maulana Karenga (1941-present). The name was a play on "us vs. them." The stated

[331] Ericka Huggins: The Official Website, accessed September 19, 2023, https://www.erickahuggins.com/.
[332] Zoey Colley. "All America Is a Prison: The Nation of Islam and the Politicization of African American Prisoners, 1955-1965," *Journal of American Studies*, 48, Issue 2, May 2014, 393-394.
[333] Barbara Bundshu, "Negro Cult of Muslims Seeks Segregated State," *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1961, 2.
[334] 1968 Santa Barbara City Directory as quoted in the "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 60.
[335] "Muslims Denounce Police Temple Entry," *Sacramento Bee*, April 24, 1974, 25.
[336] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 227.

purpose of the organization was to promote Afro-American cultural unity and to root Black Americans in African culture. It was Karenga who created the winter holiday Kwanzaa in 1966. Seen as rivals to the Black Panthers, a gun battle between the two organizations erupted at Campbell Hall at UCLA, resulting in the death of two Panthers. Karenga was imprisoned for this crime. Jamal, born Allen Eugene Donaldson in Roxbury, Massachusetts, began proclaiming his Black Power views on the street corners of Compton.[337] By 1968, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, a local Black newspaper, was publishing two of his columns per week. He was also the West Coast director of the Malcolm X Foundation[338] and director of the Malcolm X Montessori School in Compton.[339]

One of the most visible and polarizing figures of Black Power generally was Angela Davis (1944-present). The Black civil rights activist and feminist was hired to teach at UCLA in 1969, but was ultimately fired for being a member of the Communist Party. In 1970, guns owned by Davis were used in a shootout at the Marin County Courthouse and she subsequently served time in jail before being acquitted of all charges.

The Rise of Black Representation

African Americans saw modest political success in the early twentieth century, though it was not until the mid-twentieth century that this began to change in a significant manner. Historically, the State Assembly had been more progressive than other legislative bodies in the state. In 1918, Frederick Madison Roberts (1879-1952) was elected to state office and served for 16 years.[340] August Freeman Hawkins (1907-2007) represented Los Angeles in the State Assembly from 1935 to 1963. He went on to be serve in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1963 to 1991. Hawkins helped author the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act of 1978.

Byron Rumford (1908-86) served in the State Assembly from 1948 to 1996 representing the Bay Area. He is known for authoring California's Fair Employment Practices Act of 1959 and the Rumford Fair Housing Act of 1963.

Douglas Ferrell (1915-82) represented Watts in the State Assembly from 1963 to 1966. Ferrell also fought for school integration in the Los Angeles Unified School District in the 1960s. Mervyn Dymally (1926-2012) represented the Los Angeles region in the State Assembly from 1963 to 1966, in the State Senate from 1967 to 1975, and in the U.S. House of Representatives during the 1980s and 1990s. Leon D. Ralph (1932-2007) was elected to serve in the State Assembly in 1966. In 1975, Diane Watson (1933-) became the first African American woman elected to a seat on the Los Angeles School Board before going on to serve in Congress.

It was not until the 1960s, however, that African Americans made substantial inroads into state and local government. In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans began making inroads into local, state, and federal government posts. Many of the issues that civil rights leaders had been working toward—fair housing, quality education, fair hiring practices, and an end to racial profiling and police brutality—were being prioritized for the first time. African American civic, state, and federal officials now represented the needs of the community. According to historian Raphael Sonnenshein, the civil unrest of the mid to late 1960s "solidified a movement for black political representation [in the City of Los Angeles]."[341]

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[337] "Seberg's Turning Point," *Chicago Tribune*, August 10, 1981, 23.
[338] According to "Fire Probe Ordered," *Long Beach Independent*, October 23, 1968, 3. The West Coast office of the Malcolm X Foundation was located at 430 E. Compton Boulevard, Compton. A fire was set there in October of 1968.
[339] According to "Malcolm X Cousin Conducts Montessori School for Negroes," Los Angeles *Times*, December 1, 1968, 37, the Malcom X Montessori School was located at 445 W. Greenleaf Boulevard, Compton in a rented house.
[340] Ray Delgado, "African Americans Who Made History in California," accessed April 25, 2023, https://californialocal.com/localnews/statewide/ca/article/show/26479-black-history-month-california-focus/.
[341] Raphael Sonnenshein, *Politics in Black and White, 139-175*, 159-161 qtd. in GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 37.

City governments were among the first to move towards fairer hiring practices and the employment of African Americans. For years, the only African Americans in California's city halls were the janitors and maintenance workers.[342] Slowly they were hired for more important jobs at city halls across the state. The integration of municipal police departments and fire departments was implemented more slowly. African Americans as elected representatives in government also increased significantly during the 1970s and the decade that followed.

In 1963, three African Americans were elected to the Los Angeles City Council: Gilbert Lindsey, Billy Mills, and Tom Bradley. Bradley first served in the LAPD, then ran for City Council. As told in the *African American History of Los Angeles Historic Context Statement*, "The civil rights movement in Southern California finally got its reward" with the election of Tom Bradley (1917-98) as its mayor in 1973.[343] Bradley was the second Black mayor of a major U.S. city.[344] Under Bradley's mayoral administration, affirmative action and other civil rights policies were implemented and enforced. This resulted in the inclusion of more people of color into the upper ranks of civil servants in Los Angeles city government for the first time.[345] Bradley was popular across ethnic groups in the city and served as Los Angeles' mayor for 20 years. Bradley's election also paved the way for other African American mayors in the state, including Willie Brown, Jr. (1934-present) in San Francisco during the 1990s.

For the smaller cities, the late 1960s and 1970s were a period of increased African American representation on city councils, school boards, and other commissions whose purview was related to various civil rights issues, such as fair housing and school desegregation. In 1961, Richmond became an early example of representation in city government when it elected its first Black city council member, George Carroll (1922-2016). In 1967, Milton McGhee (1932-2018) was Sacramento's first African American city council representative.[346]

Increased representation at the municipal level provided stepping-stones for many to rise to power at the state level. Curtis R. Tucker, Sr. (1918-98) was the first African American elected to the Inglewood City Council. Two years later, in 1972, he was elected to the State Assembly where his legislative focus was on racial equity.

In 1970, Wilson Riles (1917-99) became the first African American to hold statewide office in California, as the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Yvonne Brathwaite Burke (1932-present) was the first African American woman to represent California in the U.S. Congress from 1973 to 1979.[347] A lawyer, she went on to serve on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

All of these Black legislators and politicians laid the foundation for subsequent generations of mayors, representatives, and lawmakers.

Sub-theme: Voting Rights

Voting rights have long been a key issue for the African American community. Whether it was the original battle for enfranchisement or more recent needs for legislation to address discrimination at the ballot box, Black Californians have faced many obstacles to their participation in the democratic system.

African American Suffrage

African American activists established suffrage associations in California shortly after statehood. The movement was historically known as the Negro Suffrage Movement. In the 1850s, African Americans in San Francisco

[342] The notable exception to this was Edward Duplex (1830-1900) who was the first African American mayor of a California City. He was the Mayor of Marysville in 1888.
[343] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 170-171, 197 qtd. in GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 38.
[344] The first was Carl B. Stokes who served as mayor of Cleveland, Ohio from 1968 to 1971.
[345] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 38.
[346] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience Project Historic Context," 116-117.
[347] Shirley Chisholm (1924-2005) was the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Congress, representing New York.

formed the S.F. Executive Committee, the earliest Black organization to fight for civil rights, focused on the right to vote.[348] Another important early organization was the Franchise League, begun in 1852 and led by David W. Ruggles and Mary Ellen Pleasant. The Athenaeum Institute of San Francisco was another major advocate for suffrage, as well as for the ability to testify in court.

While poll taxes are often associated with disenfranchisement efforts in the American South, there were state and county poll taxes in California during the 1850s. In 1857, Mifflin Wistar Gibbs and John Lester of San Francisco protested the tax issued on every male between the ages of 21 and 50 years old. Gibbs and Lester boycotted the tax as "taxation without representation" since they could not vote.[349]

During the period of reconstruction (1861-1900), California's African American leaders identified priorities for the community. Critical among these was voting rights. In October of 1865, Black leaders went to Sacramento for the Fourth California Colored Convention that was focused on Black suffrage. A number of state legislative efforts in 1866, 1868, and 1869 all proved fruitless. Governor Henry Huntly Haight (1825-78) repeatedly expressed his views against Black suffrage, suggesting it would be a steppingstone to the enfranchisement of the Chinese immigrants.

In San Francisco, two Black voices, Peter Anderson (1822-79) and Philip Alexander Bell (1808-99) took up the charge. Anderson and Bell were involved in early Black newspapers, *The Pacific Appeal* and *The Elevator*, respectively. They even briefly tried a joint newspaper venture but found partnership difficult. Another advocate welcomed into the fight was Rev. Thomas Starr King (c. 1824-64). Arriving in California in 1860, King became the pastor of the Unitarian Society of San Francisco and lectured widely on African American causes.

The idea of Negro suffrage was opposed by many White leaders in California. In San Francisco, some leaders attempted to conflate Black voting rights with enfranchisement of the Chinese—the city's dominant ethnic minority group. Philip Alexander Bell, in particular, felt that an alliance with the Chinese community over voting rights would ultimately hurt their cause. Thus, many Black advocates for suffrage rejected any type of coalition building with other disenfranchised groups.[350]

Another advocate for Black suffrage was Rev. J.E.M. Gilliard,[351] a Northern California-based activist who contributed to *The Elevator* and participated in the Colored Convention. Gilliard traveled the state for many years speaking out on various civil rights issues. In Los Angeles, Lewis Green was the leading advocate for voting rights.[352]

Despite petitions drafted by the California Colored Conventions, the state never passed African American suffrage legislation of its own. The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting African American men the right to vote, was passed in April 1870. In Los Angeles, the passage was celebrated by civil rights advocates with a dinner and a ball. In San Francisco, there was a parade of local Black military organizations, the Young Men's Union Beneficial Society, the West Indian Benevolent Society, and leaders of churches and fraternal organizations.[353]

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[348] Chris Carlsson, Found SF, "Early Political Organizing," accessed April 24, 2023, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=EARLY_POLITICAL_ORGANIZING.
[349] Autry Museum of the American West, "Civil Rights for African Americans in Early California," 15, accessed April 24, 2023, https://theautry.org/sites/default/files/education/civil_rights_for_african_americans_in_early_california/civilrights_africanamerican_earlyca_11th.pdf.
[350] For more, see Frank H. Goodyear, "'Beneath the Shadow of Her Flag': Philip A. Bell's 'The Elevator' and the Struggle for Enfranchisement, 1865-1870," *California History* 78, No. 1 (Spring, 1999): 26-39.
[351] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 15.
[352] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 15.
[353] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 15; Leight Dana Johnsen, "Equal Rights and the 'Heathen Chinee': Black Activism in San Francisco, 1865, 1875," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 11, no 1. (Jan 1980), 63.

Despite the amendment, California politicians created bureaucratic obstructions to voter registration for African American men. Some lawmakers passed legislation restricting African American suffrage, rejecting the constitutional provision that federal law takes precedence over state law. Others rejected implementation of the new constitutional amendment based on a lack of specific procedures. Registration barriers were mediated somewhat by Congressional legislation "which imposed fines and other penalties on those who obstructed individuals" from voting rights.[354]

Obstructionist efforts included an 1899 state law requiring re-registration every two years. This required that individuals take time from work, travel to the county seat, and update their voter registration. As intended, these requirements created the greatest obstacles to immigrants, people of color, and the working poor.[355] During the 1930s, permanent registration returned; however, failing to vote in a primary or general election resulted in an individual being purged from the voter rolls. It is estimated that this practice resulted in the disenfranchisement of approximately 30 percent of California voters annually.[356] The effects of such laws were particularly felt among Californians who moved frequently or did seasonal work, including many Black Californians. Because of these obstructionist efforts, voting rights continued to be a key component of the Civil Rights Movement in the mid-twentieth century.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965

Voting rights were an essential part of the Civil Rights Movement.[357] Many Southern states had imposed barriers to discourage and intimidate African American voters. In 1964, numerous peaceful demonstrations on the topic were organized by civil rights leaders. The murder of several civil rights activists in Mississippi and the violent attack on protesters in Selma, Alabama galvanized African Americans across the country in their fight for civil rights. Protests were also held in cities across California.

One of the most important pieces of legislation on voting since Reconstruction was the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in August of that year, it outlawed the discriminatory voting practices that had been adopted in many states after the Civil War. These practices included literacy tests, poll taxes, and other means of interference in African Americans' ability to exercise their right to vote. The passage of this important legislation had the net effect of increasing African American voter registration throughout the country, including in California.

Sub-theme: Equal Education

Although California presented more economic and social freedoms for African Americans than in the states of the American South, California's early educational system was rife with discrimination, segregation, and racism. As a result, education became a central issue of the Colored Conventions held early in the state's history. Despite evolving state and federal legislation on equal education, segregation, and discrimination continued well into the twentieth century. The following sub-theme discusses relevant legislation and court cases, early African American schools, the rise of vocational training, de facto segregation, school integration, and the rise of ethnic studies programs.

Early Statehood (1850-1888)

No system of public schools was developed under Spanish or Mexican rule. In 1849, the framers of California's first Constitution established a Superintendent of Public Instruction who was charged with organizing school

[354] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 15.
[355] "Modern California is all About Voter Access, History Reveals a Far Grimmer Voting Rights Past," *Los Angeles Times*, November 3, 2020, accessed April 24, 2023, https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-11-03/california-voting-history.
[356] "Modern California is all About Voter Access, History Reveals a Far Grimmer Voting Rights Past," *Los Angeles Times*.
[357] The contributions of Black women towards suffrage are discussed in the Gender and Sexuality sub-theme and the Making a Living theme, Social Organizations sub-theme.

districts, electing school trustees, hiring teachers, and building schools.[358] The system was slow to progress, as the first California State Legislature rejected taxing residents for education. In 1851, the Legislature created a State Board of Education, but state funds for education remained insignificant. Early State Superintendents of Public Instruction had little financial support and the meager available funds were distributed to counties based on recordation of children in the census. During this time, responsibility for administering the public schools was passed back and forth between the state and the local level. During the late 1850s, an increase in county taxes was passed enabling expansion. However, these early schools were not free—parents typically paid tuition. It was in 1867, under State Superintendent John Swett (1830-1913), that California public schools were made free for children, and public education as we know it began.[359] In 1874, attendance became mandatory for children aged 8 to 14. However, access to public education varied greatly with the color of one's skin.

In 1852 the California state legislature passed legislation barring Black children from public schools which were funded by the state.[360] In 1855, the California state legislature changed the laws regarding public schools so that only "white children" were counted when determining education needs. There was also a provision added in the new law that "white families" could petition to establish a school. Such racial language in educational legislation increased over time and by 1860, policies for White and non-White schools were wholly separate and discriminatory. Section 8 of the Act to Establish, Support and Regulate Common Schools and to Repeal Former Acts Concerning Same, stated that "Negroes, Mongolians and Indians shall not be admitted to public schools…the Trustees of any district may establish a separate school for the education of Negroes, Mongolians, and Indians."[361] In a concession to the African American community, in 1864 the state acknowledged that non-White parents could request a school be established in their district.

Court cases proved a valuable tool in battling early segregation and discrimination in education. In 1872, Harriet Ward initiated the first school segregation court case in the state, against Noah F. Flood, principal of the Broadway Grammar School in San Francisco, when her daughter Mary Frances was denied admission. The case of *Ward vs. Flood* went all the way to the California Supreme Court where the jurists instituted a "separate but equal rule." In practice the Black schools were neither well-funded nor high quality. According to Eleanor M. Ramsey and Janice S. Lewis, "…incremental changes between 1852 and 1879 gave Black children legal access to a separate, although unequal, education. Statutory proscription of Black children's right to a public education was not repealed until 1880."[362]

In 1888, Edmund Wysinger filed suit against the Visalia school district for not admitting his son into their schools because he was Black. Two years later, the case of *Wysinger v. Crookshank* reached the California Supreme Court where it was ruled that California could not establish separate schools for Black children.

Early African American Public and Private Schools

With state support of California schools underfunded and caught between state and local governance during the early years, it often fell to the Black community to establish schools during the 1850s. The Black church was key in securing education for California's African American children. The Sacramento and San Francisco AME Churches were the first to establish private schools in the basements of their church buildings. Elizabeth Thorn-

[358] "The Department of Public Instruction Before 1921," University of California, Berkeley, accessed July 21, 2023, https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/main/b22239670_C029975798.pdf, 3.
[359] "The Department of Public Instruction Before 1921," 4-6.
[360] Ramsey and Lewis, *Five Views*, accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2b.htm.
[361] The Autry Museum, "Civil Rights for African Americans in Early California: Discrimination and Activism for African Americans 1848-1865," 17, accessed May 22, 2023, https://theautry.org/sites/default/files/education/civil_rights_for_african_americans_in_early_california/civilrights_africanamerican_earlyca_11th.pdf.
[362] Ramsey and Lewis, *Five Views*, accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2b.htm.

Scott Flood led the African American school in Sacramento beginning in 1854.[363] In 1854, the San Francisco Board of Education opened the first public "colored school" in the basement of the St. Cyprian Church near Jackson and Virginia streets. The school enrolled 45 children, but by 1860 more than 100 students attended.[364] A second school opened around 1865 at the corner of 5th and Cleary Streets.[365] In 1858 in Marysville, the Mt. Olivet Baptist Church started a school in the basement of their purpose-built church. The brick structure planned for a basement room "…intended to be used as a school room for colored children."[366] Approximately 20 children attended the school.[367] The Marysville City Council provided financial support to the school c. 1859 and continued with some level of support through the 1870s.

In 1856, when local governments were more active in public school administration, Sacramento extended financial aid to a previously private school for African American children.[368] The following year, they built a new schoolhouse for the institution.[369]

By the 1860s, several Black communities organized private schools for their children. Such schools were established in Nevada City, Marysville, Oakland, San Jose, Petaluma, and Red Bluff. In 1864 State Superintendent of Public Schools, John Swett, in his *Thirteenth Annual Report,* stated that there were 831 Black school-age children in California, and six state-supported "colored schools."[370] These schools were located in San Francisco, Sacramento, Marysville, San Jose, Stockton, and Petaluma.[371] As noted above, free public schools were not established until 1867, so these Black schools charged tuition.

By 1873, there were 21 public "colored schools" in the state and a few private institutions. Among these private institutions was the Black parochial intermediate school the Phoenixonia Institute, a secondary-level boarding school in San Jose.[372] The Livingston Institute in San Francisco, founded by the Reverend Barney Fletcher and Reverend John J. Moore was the first secondary school for Black children in the West and operated out of the AME Zion Church.[373]

The challenges of establishing a California public school system offering quality education to the state's children resulted in a fragmented and uneven educational experience during the state's early years. For Black Californians, the challenges presented by segregation and underfunding only exacerbated the situation for African American children, once again leaving the community to fill educational gaps presented by the state and local governments.

De Facto Segregation and School Integration (1889-1974)

Beginning in 1888, Black children were legally allowed to attend public school but were nonetheless discriminated against in the educational system. Despite the de jure prohibition of segregated California schools in the late nineteenth century, de facto segregation as the result of school boundaries was the norm. Because

[363] Delilah Beasley, *Negro Trailblazers of California*, 177.
[364] Charles M. Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed: Segregation and Exclusion in California Schools, 1855-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 11.
[365] Johnsen, "Equal Rights," 64.
[366] *Marysville Herald*, October 7, 1857 qtd. in Jana Noel, "The Creation of the First State-Supported Colored School in Marysville, California: A Community's Legacy," California State University, Sacramento. Paper presented at the 2004 Annual Conference of the History of Education Society, November 3-7, 2004, 12.
[367] Noel, "The Creation of the First State-Supported Colored School," 16.
[368] Sources are conflicting regarding the date and location of the first private school for Black children. Some say it was established in Oakland in 1857 by Elizabeth Thorn Scott-Flood in an abandoned schoolhouse. Other sources provide a date of 1854 for Flood's school. Yet the conversion of a private school in Sacramento suggests otherwise.
[369] Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 11-12.
[370] Ramsey and Lewis, *Five Views*, accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2b.htm.
[371] Petaluma refused to integrate their white schools until the state legislature mandated it in 1880.
[372] Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 11-12.
[373] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 35.

people of color were often relegated to living in certain neighborhoods (and then effectively forced to remain in those neighborhoods through redlining, covenants and other discriminatory practices) school districts often created attendance boundaries for individual schools that reflected the segregated living conditions. The creation of these attendance boundaries meant that some schools served primarily African American students, while others served primarily White students.

In Los Angeles, the African American school-aged population remained small until the turn of the twentieth century, and no separate "colored schools" were created in the city.[374] In 1910, Holmes Avenue School (a.k.a., 51st Street Elementary School) opened and was the first school in Los Angeles specifically to serve a Black neighborhood.[375] Here in 1911, Bessie Burke became the first Black teacher in the Los Angeles public school system.[376] By 1939, Los Angeles had nine predominantly Black schools.[377]

In Santa Barbara, children living in the Eastside neighborhood attended Lincoln School, which first opened in 1922 and offered both elementary and high school curricula. The school was not technically segregated, but students were mostly composed of the African Americans, Latinos, Chinese, and Japanese Americans.[378]

During the same period, American educators turned toward a new system of vocational education. The movement was designed to prepare students for the actual duties of life rather than academic pursuits. California was very progressive in this regard: the first grammar school with manual training was established in Santa Barbara in 1891. In 1913, the California state legislature signaled the state's commitment to an efficient vocational program by creating a State Board of Education position for a Commissioner of Industrial and Vocational Education. By the mid-1920s, California enrollment in vocational courses exceeded 25,000 students.[379]

The unspoken agenda for vocational education was that it was often meant for lower socio-economic groups. Vocational and technical schools were typically established in locations adjacent to poorer neighborhoods, including many communities of color. Many African Americans were enrolled in these vocational schools. Separate polytechnic schools were prevalent in larger urban areas that supported multiple high schools. Los Angeles Polytechnic High School, located south of downtown, was the vocational counterpart to Los Angeles High School, which drew students from more affluent White neighborhoods. San Francisco Polytechnic High School was established in 1895 on the site of the former Commercial School.

The migration of African Americans into California during World War II soon propelled the issues around Black education to the forefront. Despite the 1888 Supreme Court ruling that California could not establish separate schools for Black children, segregation in education persisted. Historian Josh Sides writes that school segregation "was the product of racial geography, willful neglect, and racial gerrymandering."[380] A survey of integration in public schools across the country found that California schools were more segregated than those in Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina.[381]

In 1947, California saw a marked shift in its stance on school segregation, as evidenced by a landmark court case and the passage of progressive statewide legislation that predated a U.S. Supreme Court decision. The case of *Mendez v. Westminster* (1947) did not involve African Americans, but the ruling had significant implications for Black students. When Sylvia Mendez' parents attempted to register her in school in Westminster (Orange

[374] Campbell, 63-68 as qtd. in GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 85.
[375] Ramsey and Lewis, *Five Views*, accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2b.htm.
[376] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 85.
[377] Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 27.
[378] "Santa Barbara News," *California Eagle*, May 6, 1922, 3.
[379] Lewis B. Rosenberg, "History and Development of Industrial Arts Education in Los Angeles" (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, June 1939), 47.
[380] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 159.
[381] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 159.

County), they were told that she needed to attend a separate school for Mexican American children. Joining with other families facing the same circumstance, the Mendez family sued the school district. Because Mexican Americans were considered White at the time, the basis for the suit was not discrimination based on race. Rather, the lawsuit alleged discrimination based on ancestry and claims of a lack of English language proficiency, thus denying these students their 14th Amendment rights of equal protection under the law. The judge ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, and the ruling helped pave the way for the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* seven years later. In 1947, Governor Earl Warren signed a bill repealing all remaining provisions in the education code that fostered segregation in California schools, the first state to do so.[382] In 1954, in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*, the Court ended legalized racial segregation in public schools, overruling the "separate but equal" principle set forth in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case. Los Angeles-based African American attorney Loren Miller, along with Thurgood Marshall, argued the *Brown* case before the Court.

Despite legal victories in the fight against discrimination, unequal treatment of students of color continued, and organizations turned to other methods of battling discrimination in education. During the early 1960s, several activist organizations began a series of non-violent protests against the Los Angeles Board of Education—calling for them to redraw their individual school attendance boundaries. The United Civil Rights Committee (UCRC), NAACP, and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) all participated in these demonstrations. In June of 1963, Marnesaba Tackett, chair of the UCRC education committee and Christopher Taylor, then president of the NAACP, organized the Freedom March through downtown. It attracted between 1,000 and 2,000 participants and was the largest civil rights march in the history of the city to that date.[383] The march began at the First AME Church and ended at the office of the Los Angeles Board of Education.

The reality was that many local school districts across the state found ways to perpetuate segregation. In some districts, when schools became predominantly Black due to demographic shifts, “neutral zones” were established where White students could be transferred out of their local school. The legality of this policy was tested in Pasadena. In the case of *Jackson vs. Pasadena School District*, the parents of Jay Jackson, a Black student, sued the Pasadena School District when their son was prohibited from transferring from Washington Junior High School to the predominantly White Eliot Junior High School. With the assistance of the NAACP, the case went all the way to the California Supreme Court and in 1963, the court applied *Brown vs. Board of Education* to California for the first time.

The Riverside School District attempted an integration program in September of 1966. Riverside had been trying to integrate its schools for a number of years. In 1961, they adopted a policy of “open enrollment,” allowing for fifth and sixth graders at the Lowell School, which was primarily African American and Latino, to transfer to more racially integrated schools. The program lacked the necessary infrastructure to support busing and implementation was difficult.[384] Lowell School continued to be segregated and three weeks after the 1965 Watts Uprising, the school was set ablaze by an arsonist. After the fire, Robert Bland led a successful parents’ movement for desegregation. Local activist Edna Milan, who had ridden the buses with Rosa Parks in Montgomery, Alabama, assisted the Riverside Unified School District by riding the buses transferring children from Casa Blanca School to Washington Elementary.[385]

By 1969, some California communities were voluntarily adopting plans to reduce the racial imbalance in many schools. The Berkeley School District instituted one of these programs, which resulted in the busing of about

[382] SFUSD, “Facing our Past, Changing Our Future, Part I: A Century of Segregation in San Francisco Unified School District (1851-1971),” accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.sfusd.edu/facing-our-past-changing-our-future-part-i-century-segregation-san-francisco-unified-school-district.
[383] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, “African American History of Los Angeles,” 86.
[384] IS Architecture, “City of Riverside African American Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Statement,” 48.
[385] IS Architecture, “City of Riverside African American Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Statement,” 52.

3,500 of the city's 9,000 elementary school children. Black children were bused to predominantly White schools and vice versa. The program ignited a statewide and national debate about busing and school desegregation.[386]

According to historian Charles M. Wollenberg, the most spectacular school integration failure occurred in Richmond.[387] The city adopted two-way busing for both Black and White students. The result was a political uprising among White, working-class conservatives. By 1972, Richmond schools were still imbalanced, and the school board was resisting court orders for comprehensive integration.

Controversy over school busing in California reached national audiences when court orders were issued requiring integration of the Los Angeles and San Francisco public school districts. *Crawford v. Los Angeles* (1970) and *Johnson v. San Francisco* (1971) were key cases in the early 1970s, resulting in court orders for desegregation of schools in both districts. But court orders did not mean that integration came swiftly or effectively: the Los Angeles School Board voted to appeal the decision. While it made its way through the court system, no progress was made. No integration plan was formulated until 1977. Delays such as these meant that residents of means in cities struggling with bussing and integration issues often placed their children in private schools—leaving some schools with predominantly non-white student populations.

In 1970, Wilson Riles (1917-99) became California's new Superintendent of Public Instruction—the first African American elected to statewide office. He served in that capacity until 1983. Along with his other expertise, Riles brought the African American perspective on education to state government.

Ethnic Studies Programs

The Civil Rights Movement spurred many college students to demand courses that explored the rich cultural heritage of non-White groups, including in universities where the student body was mostly White, and the faculty was mostly White and male. It should be noted that ethnic studies is a nuanced field of study in which a number of universities and colleges claim varying degrees of "firsts": first Black studies course, first Black history department, first ethnic studies program, first Black studies major, etc. Regardless, California's Civil Rights Movement and protests were essential in broadening the educational experience to include the history and culture of African Americans.

In 1968, students at San Francisco State University (SFSU); UC Berkeley; and University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) protested in school administrative offices for the recruitment of more professors of color and the development of ethnic studies programs.[388] These California protests would ultimately ignite a wave of ethnic studies programs across the United States. By one account, during the late 1960s, Black students protested on over 200 campuses nationwide.[389]

In 1968, the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) became a presence at SFSU. In November of that year, nearly 50 students demonstrated in the cafeteria. In the fall of 1968, students at UCSB occupied North Hall and presented administrators with a series of demands. This sparked the creation of the Department of Black Studies.[390] The second oldest department of Black Studies in the nation was the Department of Pan-African Studies at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA) established in 1969.[391] Today the program includes both African American studies as well as the study of the history and culture on the African continent.

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[386] Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 114.
[387] Wollenberg, *All Deliberate Speed*, 149.
[388] Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies," *The Phi Delta Kappan* 75, no. 1 (Sep. 1993), 50.
[389] Rasheed W. Shabazz, "'Mau Mau Tech': The Making of a Black University in Oakland, California, 1960-1970," *The Berkeley McNair Research Journal, 86*.
[390] Department of Black Studies, UCSB, "History of the Department," accessed May 6, 2023, https://www.blackstudies.ucsb.edu/about.
[391] Cal State LA Pan African Studies, accessed April 6, 2023, https://www.calstatela.edu/academic/pas/pan-african-studies-history-pas-cal-state-la.

At UC Berkeley, which was also a focus of anti-war protest, the TWLF launched an extended student strike in 1969. Ten weeks long, the strike was met with violent resistance by the National Guard and police. After the strike, UC Berkeley established its ethnic studies program focused on four groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanos, and Native Americans.

Historians and the news media of the time mostly focused on the protest activities at California's major universities, and as a result, the story of Merritt College in Oakland has largely been overlooked. Author and historian Rasheed El Shabazz, notes the changing demographics around the Merritt College of Business, established in 1946. The school was located on Grove Street between 57th and 59th Streets.[392] In the early 1960s, many of the Merritt students were Black activists. One such student, Huey Newton (1942-89) demanded Black Studies classes and in 1964, Merritt established the nation's first Black Studies course. Soon, Black students there formed the Soul Students Advisory Council (SSAC) and advocated for a fuller curriculum.[393] In 1967, they established the first Black history department.[394] When administrators planned to move Merritt College to the Oakland Hills, Black members of the student body attempted to retain the Grove Street campus by forming a Black university. The effort failed but represented an early attempt to establish an all-Black post-secondary educational institution.

A Black Studies major was also created at University of California, Riverside (UCR) in 1969. Charles Jenkins founded the Black Student Union and that same year, the group helped organize the Black Studies department.[395] UCR also had the first professionally-staffed Black student resource center in the UC system when it was founded in 1972.[396]

During the 1990s, many ethnic studies programs faced budget cuts due to an economic downturn in the state. By 1993, the programs at UC Berkeley and UCSD were the two largest programs in the United States.

Sub-theme: Housing

Housing for African Americans in California, and the lack thereof, played an essential role in segregation, discrimination, and patterns of institutionalized racism that persist throughout the state to this day. For many African Americans who had fled the poverty and discrimination of the American South, the harsh reality was that many times they did not find better living conditions in California when they arrived. In urban areas, they were often forced to live in densely-populated neighborhoods of older housing stock. In rural areas, enclaves outside the city limits often meant they were not served by crucial infrastructure such as running water or electricity.

The following sub-theme looks at patterns in housing African Americans, including racial covenants and deed restrictions, redlining and other discriminatory housing practices, key state legislation, the rise of fair housing organizations and neighborhood groups, the passage of federal housing legislation, freeway construction and urban renewal, and the development of public housing. For more information on early settlement patterns, see the Making a Nation theme.

Racial Covenants and Deed Restrictions

There were no legal restrictions dictating where African Americans could and could not live in nineteenth century California.[397] While most African Americans lived near their places of work, some who could afford to do so

[392] It was originally built in 1923 as University High to serve the children of the University of California faculty.
[393] Shabazz, "Mau Mau Tech," 88.
[394] Peralta Community College District, accessed March 6, 2023, https://web.peralta.edu/blog/peralta-matters-african-american-studies-at-merritt-college/.
[395] IS Architecture, "City of Riverside African American Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Statement," 53.
[396] UC Riverside, African Student Programs, accessed March 6, 2023, https://asp.ucr.edu/.
[397] Some of the earliest legislation aimed at segregating people of color in California were aimed at Chinese migrants and Chinese Americans.

lived in the homes of their choosing. However, as the African American population increased and Black residents became more visible, this began to change.

Racial restrictive covenants were used widely in cities nationwide from 1900 to 1948. Restrictive covenants were legal clauses written into property deeds prohibiting the sale of property to individuals based on race, religion, or ethnicity. In many cases, restrictive covenants dictated that the owner could only sell or rent the property to "Caucasians," otherwise the owner could lose the property.[398] Some covenants explicitly excluded groups by name, including African Americans, Mexicans, Asians, and occasionally Jews. A typical covenant lasted between 20 and 50 years.[399] In the wake of the 1917 *Buchanan v. Worley* case (see Making a Nation theme for more), restrictive covenants were one of the legally enforceable ways of segregating housing. They were used by private developers during the boom years in the 1910s and 1920s, and blocked access to new residential neighborhoods in cities across the state.

In the Bay Area, Duncan McDuffie (1877-1951) was one of the earliest developers to use restrictive covenants. McDuffie's approach to development involved giving "the entire property the appearance of a park or private estate,"[400] which required substantial investment in infrastructure. McDuffie's answer was to couple high-end developments with restrictive covenants. McDuffie began recording these covenants in the Berkeley neighborhood of Claremont Park in 1905, and few years later in St. Francis Wood in San Francisco.[401] McDuffie went on to chair Berkeley's first city planning board and establish city planning in California.

Though restrictive covenants were challenged in the California and U.S. Supreme Courts in 1919 and 1926, they were ultimately upheld as constitutional at both the state and national levels, unleashing their widespread use across the United States. As historian Gene Slater documents in his book *Freedom to Discriminate*, "major realtor-developers and local officials often worked together to ensure that all the subdivisions in entire new cities were covenanted."[402] Slater cites advertisements for residential developments in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Eagle Rock, noting that in 1914, only one African American owned property in these developments and that all properties had covenants.[403] In Pasadena, the realty board organized retroactive restrictions that would go into effect when they were signed by 75 percent of homeowners. "Known as the Covenant Plan," Pasadena's approach "became standard in neighborhoods throughout the state," Slater states.[404] Other Southern California cities adopting this approach included Glendale, Eagle Rock, South Pasadena, San Marino, and Arcadia. In many cities, these restrictive covenants, known as Covenants Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs), divided the cities' geography along racial lines. This pattern was evident in San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, San Diego, Sacramento, San Jose, and Los Angeles.[405]

CC&Rs were not only enforced in major urban metropolitan centers. The desert city of Palm Springs relied upon a population of hospitality and service workers (mostly people of color) to support their popular resorts, hotels, and spas. However, these workers were not allowed to live within city limits, and those who were not provided housing by the resorts themselves were relegated to a square of Indian land known as Section 14, over which the city had no jurisdiction. In Section 14, workers often built makeshift shelters and other vernacular structures without the benefit of city services such as electricity, running water, sewer, and police and fire departments.

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[398] The development of racial covenants dates back to developers Duncan McDuffie (1877-1951) in the San Francisco Bay Area and J.C. Nichols (1880-1950) in Kansas City during the early twentieth century. For more on this, see Gene Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate: How Realtors Conspired to Segregate Housing and Divide America* (Berkeley: Heyday, 2021), 56-62.
[399] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 38.
[400] Fogelson, *Bourgeois Nightmares*, 2005, 161 qtd. in Gene Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 57.
[401] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 59.
[402] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 64.
[403] Andrea Gibbons, "Segregation in Search of Ideology," 2014, 78 qtd. in Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 64.
[404] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 65.
[405] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 76.

The real estate industry also reinforced discriminatory practices and the "color line." In 1924, the National Association of Real Estate Boards established a "code of ethics" which prohibited realtors from introducing "members of any race or nationality" to a neighborhood if it would threaten property values. This resulted in a practice known as "steering," where people of color were not shown properties in White neighborhoods. The penalty for not adhering to the ethics code—which stayed in effect until the late 1950s—was loss of license.[406] In addition, the real estate industry often refused to admit Black members into the profession. In response, African Americans formed the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) in 1947. The Southern California Chapter was founded in 1949 and chartered in 1950.

Restrictive covenants were increasingly challenged as the twentieth century progressed. In Los Angeles, between 1937 and 1948, there were more than 100 lawsuits to enforce restrictions resulting in the removal of African Americans from their homes.[407] One important victory was the Sugar Hill case (eight cases consolidated into one, Anderson V. Ausseth). In 1938, Black homeowners finally broke the race barrier in the all-White neighborhood when Norman O. Houston[408] purchased a home on an unrestricted parcel. Houston's White neighbors attempted to buy him out, but could not agree. Subsequently, the West Adams Heights Improvement Association filed a lawsuit. Civil rights activist and attorney Loren Miller (1903-1967) argued the case for the NAACP and won in California Supreme Court.[409]

During World War II, the state saw an influx of African Americans looking for work in defense industry jobs. This influx of African American war workers only heightened the trend toward CC&Rs, a movement that was both organized and strident. During World War II, when Air Raid Wardens went house-to-house in Culver City to discourage using lights after dark, they also distributed leaflets discouraging people from selling or renting to African Americans in tracts not subject to racial covenants. In 1945, Dr. DeWitt Buckingham, a respected African American physician and former Captain in the Army Medical Corps, purchased a home from a White friend in the Claremont neighborhood of Berkeley, where many university professors lived. The neighborhood association sued, and a state court ordered Dr. Buckingham to vacate the residence.[410]

The use of restrictive covenants diminished after 1948, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Shelley v. Kraemer* that it was unconstitutional for courts to enforce the agreements. In 1953, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Barrows v. Jackson* further helped to curb their use. But it was not until the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act that restrictive covenants were deemed illegal.[411]

Redlining, the HOLC, and the FHA

During the Great Depression, two New Deal housing initiatives—the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), founded in 1933, and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), founded in 1934—were created by the U.S. government to encourage homeownership and protect homeowners at risk of foreclosure. In practice, however, these initiatives only provided protection and other ancillary benefits for White homeowners. The FHA in particular played a significant role in the legalization and institutionalization of racism and segregation through an overt practice of denying mortgages based upon race and ethnicity.

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[406] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 40. As Richard Rothstein points out in his book, *The Color of Law*, the state licensure of these realtors did not make them government agents, but in effect, the state did contribute to *de jure* segregation by licensing organizations with these practices.
[407] Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017), 81.
[408] Houston was not a defendant in the case.
[409] The case would lay the groundwork for the later *Shelley v. Kramer* case, and Loren Miller partnered with Thurgood Marshall at the U.S. Supreme Court.
[410] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 80, 82.
[411] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 69; de Graaf and Taylor, 3-69; Wendy Plotkin, "Restrictive Covenants," in *Encyclopedia of American Urban History, Vol. 2*, ed. David Goldfield (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007), 681.

The FHA insured bank mortgages that covered some 80 percent of purchase prices. To be eligible, the FHA conducted an appraisal of the property in order to select properties that had a low risk of default. The guidelines included a "Whites only" requirement. The FHA underwriting manual for its appraisers also recommended against "an infiltration of inharmonious racial or nationality groups," and discouraged loans in older, urban neighborhoods, largely populated by people of color.[412] The 1936 FHA Underwriting Manual recommended that "deeds to properties for which it issued mortgage insurance should include an explicit prohibition of resale to African Americans."[413]

To fulfill their missions of refinancing mortgages and granting low-interest loans to those who had lost their homes, the HOLC began rating neighborhoods as "security risks." What emerged was a system of ranking of neighborhoods by race, with African Americans and other ethnic minorities at the bottom. While other factors were also considered—such as class, the presence of industry, density, and housing stock—a neighborhood's racial composition was a key factor in determining its ranking. Areas deemed high risk were systematically denied financial services such as mortgages and insurance loans. These areas were delineated on maps in red, a practice known as "redlining". These areas were also barred from receiving federal assistance, effectively segregated, and plunged into a vicious cycle of decline.

The HOLC's original system (later adopted by the FHA) for appraising risk used letter grades. "A" areas, in green, indicated places where maximum loans were granted. "B" areas, in blue, were not as desirable but still considered relatively low risk. "C" areas, in yellow, were determined to be in decline. "D" areas in red were considered to be in full decline and, therefore, rejected for mortgage insurance.

Descriptions of red-lined areas in older, more urban cities such as San Diego, Sacramento, and San Jose were often unrestricted areas zoned for industry. In these areas, small vernacular homes could be found immediately adjacent to rail lines and other heavy industrial uses. The Watts neighborhood in south Los Angeles is an example of a community that had been redlined by the HOLC. By 1958, Watts was 95 percent African American.[414] The segregationist and discriminatory practices that federal agencies and financial institutions established were subsequently perpetuated at the local level by realtors, developers, housing authorities, municipalities, and the courts against people of color and other minoritized people.

After World War II, the shortage of housing throughout California worsened as returning servicemen settled in the state and started families. Developers, especially in Southern California, purchased and improved the available farmland for expansive housing tracts. Because the FHA would not insure loans on housing in integrated developments, or in developments exclusively for African Americans, the housing shortage for Black families during this period was especially acute.

In Milpitas (Santa Clara County), when it became apparent that no development would sell or rent to Black workers, the American Friends Service Committee (ACSC), a Quaker group committed to racial integration, committed to the development of an interracial subdivision to help house workers in the rapidly expanding Ford Motor Company plant. Over several years, the ACSC engaged with various developers. Time and again, local developers, governments, and banks stepped in to stop the new development by re-zoning land, significantly increasing sanitation district fees, or taking them to court on land use issues. The FHA would not insure loans on the property and other financial institutions charged prohibitively high interest rates when they learned that the development was integrated.

The United Auto Workers (UAW) union stepped in to help to get housing built for both its Black and White autoworkers at a Ford Motor plant. In January 1955, the UAW announced that a non-discriminatory housing

[412] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 67.
[413] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 84.
[414] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 120.

development would be available in the Milpitas area, called Agua Caliente. After a series of locally imposed impediments, the FHA finally agreed to insure loans on the property only if they made it a cooperative—where participants would own a share of the overall project—rather than owning just their individual houses. Renamed "Sunnyhills," ultimately only 20 of the development's 500 units were sold to African American families.[415]

Public Housing

Public housing played an important role in the African American experience. Because racial covenants excluded Blacks from many neighborhoods, they were often relegated to living in areas with sub-standard housing stock. With investment in these areas effectively prohibited by the insurance industry, these areas often degraded and became the targets of early twentieth century slum clearance efforts and public housing projects. The migration of African Americans to California for defense industry jobs during World War II further exacerbated the housing shortage generally.

Like many states, California's public housing program was the result of the 1937 Wagner-Steagall Housing Act, which provided federal funding through local housing authorities. Born out of the Great Depression, the Act required that for each new unit built, a unit of "slum" housing had to be razed.[416] As author and historian Carolyn Stuart writes, "The premise for beginning any new public housing project was dependent upon designating urban areas as slums, and this process was highly politically motivated and rooted in racial prejudice."[417] Housing activists of the time argued, "Slums cost money. They are the most expensive form of housing known, and it is the community that pays for them… However great the cost of wiping out slums, it is not so great as the cost of maintaining them."[418] It ushered in a period of "slum clearance" for cities across America—often displacing low-income African Americans and other people of color. As World War II loomed, many existing public housing projects were repurposed for housing for workers in the defense industry, displacing residents of color and further exacerbating housing scarcity for them.

In cities throughout California, local housing authorities constructed public housing complexes to provide housing for their rapidly expanding populations. The United States Housing Authority (USHA), the federal agency created in 1937, specified that the ethnic and racial makeup of the communities in which they were constructed inform the demographics of residents in public housing complexes. However, this often resulted in the segregation of communities of color, including African Americans, due to the selected locations for complexes. In Los Angeles County, for example, public housing was distributed unevenly. Of the first nine complexes constructed in Los Angeles, five were located in the multi-racial, working-class neighborhoods of Boyle Heights and Lincoln Heights.[419]

The degree of integration in public housing projects around the state varied. Some were racially segregated, some were integrated, and some were open to Blacks only when whites moved out. Some offered equal housing opportunities. In the Bay Area, housing at the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, which was constructed in 1942 to house 14,000, did not employ racially discriminatory policies that excluded Blacks. In Marin County, the Marin City housing complex was so overwhelmed with new shipyard workers that their plan to racially segregate workers was set aside, and they became an integrated facility with none of the disruptions they had anticipated.[420]

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[415] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 121.
[416] It was not required that the demolition take place on the same site as planned for development.
[417] Carolyn Stuart, "Public Housing in California," Society of Architectural Historians, accessed April 7, 2023, https://sah-archipedia.org/essays/CA-01-ART-03.
[418] Dana Cuff, *The Provisional City: Los Angeles Stories of Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), 106.
[419] George Sánchez, *Boyle Heights: How a Los Angeles Neighborhood Became the Future of American Democracy* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 2021), 73.
[420] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 29.

In the San Francisco, the Housing Authority constructed three public housing projects in two years in 1940-41, but none of these projects were open to African Americans. Westside Court, completed in 1943, was San Francisco's first public housing project to open its doors to African Americans. But with only 136 units, it was substantially smaller than most of the other public housing projects of the period, and thus had little practical impact on the availability of affordable housing units for San Francisco's Black residents.

In Long Beach, which was a major focus of defense industry employment, the African American community was largely restricted to living in the "Central" area of the city—an area redlined by the FHA—in older housing stock that was in generally poor condition. Other African American war workers took up residence in existing segregated housing projects, such as the Savannah, Truman Boyd Manor, and Cabrillo projects.

Another center of defense production was San Diego. Thousands of African Americans and other workers overwhelmed available housing in the area. The Linda Vista housing project of 1941 was the first project to be initiated under the Lanham Defense Housing Act of 1940. It was the largest low-income housing development in the world.[421] While African Americans were housed at Linda Vista, by 1950 there were 13,092 White residents and only 500 Black residents, suggesting a substantial underrepresentation.[422]

A review of public housing statewide, as administered in various forms on the local level, reveals discriminatory practices in public housing as well as examples of African Americans fighting that discrimination. In Sacramento, African American lawyer, Nathaniel Colley successfully fought to desegregate the New Helvetia housing complex (constructed in 1941). Colley discovered that the Sacramento Housing Authority segregated Black residents at New Helvetia Public Housing into just 16 of their 310 units. He won an injunction in 1952 that put a stop to that practice. The case helped end the segregation of public housing and was one of the early victories in the Civil Rights Movement.[423] He also won a case barring private developers from receiving federal funds when discriminating based on race.[424]

In Los Angeles, African Americans were instrumental in advocating for public housing. In response to Black lobbying, the city housing authority appointed an African American woman, Jessie L. Terry, Commissioner of the Authority in 1939. In addition, the mayor formed an Advisory Committee on Tenant Selection, a diverse body which included African American representatives from the NAACP and the Urban League as well as advocates from other communities of color. The Committee advocated that the city create integrated housing projects, a change from USHA guidelines. As a result, Los Angeles' first housing project, Ramona Gardens (1940) used racial quotas to ensure integration; it was one of the first (if not the first) integrated public housing complexes in the country.[425] The city's housing authority began using a first-come-first-served policy, regardless of race, in 1943. This policy change was in response to pressure from the Los Angeles NAACP, the Urban League, Charlotta Bass of the *California Eagle*, and Leon Washington of the *Los Angeles Sentinel*.[426]

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[421] Christine Killory, "Temporary Suburbs," San Diego History Center, accessed April 7, 2023, https://sandiegohistory.org/journal/1993/january/suburbs/.
[422] Vincenta Martinez Gorea, "America's Finest Housing Crisis: Racialized Housing and Suburban Development," University of San Diego, Digital UCSD, accessed June 27, 2023, https://digital.sandiego.edu/library-research-award/5/.
[423] "Demolition of New Helvetia Would Be A Loss for the Black Community, Says Historian," accessed June 16, 2023, https://fox40.com/news/local-news/demolition-of-new-helvetia-would-be-a-loss-for-the-black-community-says-historian/.
[424] "How 'Mr. Civil Rights of California' Had An Impact on Equality Beyond the Golden State," accessed June 16, 2023, https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/sacramento/mr-civil-rights-of-california-nathaniel-colley/103-75c68d21-42ea-46e7-a9bc-7cce75eff0de.
[425] The only other integrated housing project in California was in Oakland, "a community with a similar tradition of black political activism." Charlotte Brooks, *Alien Neighbors, Foreign Friends: Asian Americans, Housing, and the Transformation of Urban California* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 77-78.
[426] Don Parson, *Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 1.

Despite these strides locally, discrimination in public housing continued well after the landmark *Shelley vs. Kramer* (1948) decision in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that restrictive covenants prohibiting the sale of homes to non-Whites were illegal.

During the early 1950s, African Americans in San Francisco, with the aid of the NAACP, protested the discriminatory practices of the San Francisco Housing Authority. Mattie Banks and James Charley applied to live in the new North Beach Place housing project. The application was denied by the Housing Authority due to race and the case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, where the plaintiffs prevailed. This case opened the door for African Americans to integrate North Beach Place and all the other San Francisco public housing projects.[427] Elouise Westbrook (1915-2011) was a housing and health rights activist. She and four other Black women formed the Big Five of Bayview, who lived at the Hunters Point housing project in San Francisco. In 1973, they marched in Washington, D.C. for $30 million in funds to replace temporary housing in the project.

By the 1970s, a lack of funding had driven many of the public housing projects into a state of neglect. By 1974, President Nixon officially ended the urban renewal program. In cases where the former public housing projects were torn down, such as Bernal Dwellings in San Francisco, out-migration of African Americans was the norm.

Blockbusting and Contract Sales

After the war, the predatory real estate practice, known as "blockbusting," pitted races against one another and resulted in higher profits for realtors. Blockbusting was a means of inducing fear-based panic selling in mixed or White neighborhoods. Realtors would suggest that recent sales to African American families was a sign of a "Negro invasion" that would result in declining property values.[428] As a result, White residents would often sell their houses for less than their worth. The realtors would then sell the White homeowners another house in an unthreatened area. Simultaneously, realtors would advertise the vacated house in ads for "colored buyers," who would then purchase the homes for inflated prices. The result: three commissions for the realtor instead of one.

Blockbusting was a common practice in Palo Alto, Long Beach, Pomona, and other California communities. Initially there was pushback from local real estate boards, but once the practice became more prevalent, the boards grew unconcerned and even supportive. The successful use of blockbusting created East Palo Alto, where the population became 82 percent African American in the span of six years. Due to the artificially inflated purchase prices, Black families often had to double up in a single-family house, leading to cramped living quarters.[429] With such deteriorated conditions, the FHA and VA would not insure loans, and neighborhood decline became a self-perpetuating reality.

In *Freedom to Discriminate*, Gene Slater recounts how in 1955, 85 percent of brokers in San Francisco said they would not handle a sale by a White property owner to an African American buyer. In 1961, of 600 brokers in Palo Alto, only one-half of one percent would consider showing property on a non-discriminatory basis.[430]

Another predatory housing practice African Americans were often subjected to was "contract sales." In areas where Blacks could purchase homes (typically in red-lined areas), the FHA would not insure the homes. This was important because if no organization agreed to insure the loans, a mortgage was unobtainable. As a result, the homes were often purchased on "installment plans," which unlike a traditional mortgage, provided no accumulation of equity. The contracts typically provided that the equity would transfer to purchasers after 15 or

[427] Amy L. Howard, *More Than Shelter: Activism and Community in San Francisco Public Housing* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 147-148.
[428] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 12.
[429] Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, 13.
[430] Slater, *Freedom to Discriminate*, 170.

20 years, but if a single monthly payment was late, the would-be owner could be evicted, thus forfeiting any opportunity to amass equity in their home.[431]

On the rare occasions when African Americans were able to purchase homes and become integration pioneers in effectively White neighborhoods, they were often met with racial violence. In Long Beach, Dr. Charles Terry, an African American physician, purchased a home in the upscale neighborhood of Bixby Knolls. Prior to moving in, vandals caused some $15,000 worth of damage. The incident garnered newspaper headlines as far away as Washington, D.C., and was reported on radio and TV news. Undeterred, the Terry family moved in, but was subjected to more vandalism later that year; a rock was thrown through a bay window at the rear of the home while occupied by three of the Terry children and a babysitter, causing $7,500 in damage.[432]

Another instance of racial violence occurred in 1952 when Wilbur Gary moved his family from an apartment in Richmond to a house he purchased in Rollingwood, a wartime subdivision developed for shipyard workers. The Gary family was greeted with a burning cross on their lawn and a rock-throwing mob. Like the Terrys, the Gary family refused a buyout offer from White neighbors and instead were given volunteer security details by the NAACP and sympathetic Whites. Even their Black realtor, Neitha Williams, was targeted when a rock was thrown through the window of her downtown real estate office.[433]

Such instances of racial violence and intimidation were experienced by African Americans in cities throughout the state. Incidents ranged from the circulation of threatening pamphlets to targeted bombings. In March of 1952, the homes of two African Americans were bombed in the Mid-City neighborhood of Los Angeles, where deed restrictions had recently expired. The two men were both members of the distinguished Tuskegee Airmen.[434]

Fame and fortune were no deterrent to racial violence for integration pioneers. In 1948, when singer Nat King Cole (1919-65) and his family purchased a home in the upscale Los Angeles neighborhood of Hancock Park, the local homeowners association offered to buy it from him to prevent the Cole family from moving in. Undeterred, Cole and his family moved in and were subjected to months of abuse, including the burning of a racial slur into his front lawn and the poisoning of his dog.[435]

Baseball star Willie Mays was at the center of a similar controversy in 1957, when the New York Giants player moved to San Francisco. A White homeowner in the exclusive Sherwood Forest development, under pressure from the area neighborhood association, refused to sell to him. This set off an international scandal that was resolved only after the mayor's intervention.[436]

State Housing Legislation

In response to the Civil Rights Movement, Congress adopted laws designed to promote integration and equity in public accommodations, transportation, voting, employment, and housing. However, federal laws designed to address these issues were often less effective than more local efforts. States and local municipalities were powerful actors in the dynamic of segregation and discrimination, influenced by community and activist groups. This was particularly true in the 1960s and 1970s.

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[431] Historic Resources Group, "Long Beach Historic Context Statement: Race and Suburbanization," prepared for the City of Long Beach Development Services Department, January 18, 2022, 26.
[432] "Vandals Hit Home of Doctor," *Independent Press-Telegram*, September 1, 1958.
[433] Page & Turnbull and Donna Graves, "Project PRISM," 125-126.
[434] Stanley G. Robertson, "Police Reveal 'Leads' in Bombings: Local, State, Nat'l agencies Delve Into West Adams Blasts…" *Los Angeles Sentinel*, March 20, 1952.
[435] "The Story of Nat King Cole and His Racist Neighbors," *Independent*, May 17, 2014, accessed December 27, 2022, https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/the-story-of-nat-king-cole-and-his-racist-neighbours-9391316.html.
[436] Deirdre L. Sullivan, "Letting the Bars Down: Race, Space, and Democracy in San Francisco, 1936–1964" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2003), chap. 5.

During the 1960s, the California state legislature passed several bills aimed at combating discrimination in business, employment, and housing. The Rumford Fair Housing Act, passed in 1963, made it illegal for "anyone selling, renting or leasing a residence to discriminate based on race, creed, color or national origin."[437] As described in the report *Housing Long Beach*, "the law was not universally well received and realtor home association groups in Long Beach collaborated with similar groups around the state to spearhead Proposition 14," which aimed to repeal the Act.[438]

The organization of Long Beach realtors around Proposition 14 reflected a statewide and national perpetuation of racial discrimination by realtors. In his book *Freedom to Discriminate*, author and historian Gene Slater details decades-long efforts by California realtors to maintain segregated communities with the support of the National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB) and the Los Angeles Board of Realtors (LARB) leadership. These organizations developed unified messaging focused on the rights of homeowners as a patriotic freedom issue. An example of such an organized effort was around the "Property Owners' Bill of Rights," endorsed by the California Real Estate Association and NAREB that included "the right to determine the acceptability and desirability of any prospective buyer of his property."[439]

Realtor groups initially focused on two strategies in reaction to the Rumford Act: a referendum to repeal the law and a state constitutional amendment. The latter approach won out as it would not only negate the Rumford Act, but also supersede the passage of other new legislation.

Californians for Fair Housing, a San Francisco-based advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the Rumford Act against Proposition 14, was established to lead the fight against the ballot measure, eventually rebranding itself as Californians Against Proposition 14.[440] The opposition branded itself as the Committee for the Constitutional Amendment to Abolish The Rumford Forced Housing Act. Despite the opposition, Proposition 14 passed by a large margin in November of 1964.

The Rise of Fair Housing Organizations

The passage of Proposition 14 had a galvanizing effect on fair housing advocates and those who battled against racial discrimination in housing. Many of them redoubled their efforts by forming other fair housing organizations. Californians for Fair Housing, a 22-member "blue ribbon" Committee was established by Governor Pat Brown in 1964. By December of 1965, more than 170 groups were active across the state and listed in the *Directory of Fair Housing Organizations*.[441]

One of the first and most important such organizations in the state of California, the Fair Housing Foundation (FHF) of Long Beach, was founded in November 1964 by citizens who had organized to fight Proposition 14. The FHF was founded by attorney and activist Myron Blumberg (1919-2008) who became its first Chairman of the Board. The board was chiefly composed of clergy and White Long Beach residents who believed in integration and housing equity. The FHF was designed to act as a clearinghouse for landlords, tenants, buyers, and sellers interested in equal opportunity housing in the city. In their first newsletter, the organization declared: "This will be a non-profit, educational organization devoted entirely to the promotion of fair and open housing practices in our community. Those who worked so hard against Proposition 14 now have an opportunity to be for a positive solution to the housing problem."[442] The mostly African American clientele included middle-class college instructors and professors, engineers, doctors, and businessmen who could not locate housing outside of Long

[437] Lawrence P. Crouchett, "Assemblyman W. Byron Rumford: Symbol for an Era," *California History* 66, no. 1 (1987): 19.
[438] "Housing Long Beach: A Brief Historical Context and Framework for Equitable Housing Policy in Long Beach," accessed November 11, 2019, http://www.housinglb.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/HousingLB-Paper5-8-13.pdf, 2.
[439] "Crusade to Aid Small Property Owners," *Long Beach Independent*, March 3, 1963, R1, R5.
[440] Richard Rodda, "Bitter Housing Act Battle Starts," *Fresno Bee*, June 29, 1964, 2.
[441] "Calif. Fair Housing Directory," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 28, 1965, 60.
[442] Fair Housing Foundation Newsletter, no. 1, 1964, 1.

Beach's Central neighborhood or the integrated majority-minority Westside. Before the FHF, only eight African American families lived in previously segregated Long Beach White neighborhoods.[443]

The all-volunteer FHF employed unique methods in their mission for open housing. Research Director Emma Buckland conducted surveys among home sellers and landlords to determine the prevalence of discrimination in Long Beach. In 1965, Buckland used a telephone survey to determine that only 24 of 110 people with properties for sale on the MLS would consider an offer from an African American buyer.[444] The Long Beach Apartment House Association, and its president Arnold Berg, provided a particularly vociferous presence in the community, taking the position that White residents would move out if African American residents moved in, and property investments would decline in value. Another FHF survey from early 1967 found that 57 percent of apartment house managers would object to an African American tenant in their buildings.[445]

In order to secure home sales to African American buyers, the FHF often used the "double escrow" technique. Founder Myron Blumberg would enter into escrow to purchase a home in an exclusive area. The sellers believed the buyers to be White, but Blumberg would then open another escrow to sell the house to a qualified professional African American.[446] Another FHF tactic was the use of "checkers." When a potential African American buyer or renter came to the Foundation with a report of discrimination, the organization would send potential White clients to see if the property was still available. For the potential White buyer/renter, the property was usually still on the market.

The FHF often documented housing discrimination by sending White FHF representatives/aides with African American housing seekers. The White FHF aide served as a bridge between the landlord and the prospective tenant. As one aide noted, "It has been my experience that a manager is more at ease speaking to me than a Black client."[447] Each aide attended a workshop on types of clients and housing needs; the procedures of informing clients about job, credit, and previous landlord references; and state and federal housing laws. To illustrate discrimination in the rental market, the *Independent Press-Telegram* dispatched a White investigative journalist and an African American man to pose as a married couple apartment hunting in Long Beach. For two and a half weeks, the pair visited a total of 50 apartments, and was uniformly turned away by landlords and managers. FHF sent checkers to each location and verified that there were vacancies for White renters.[448]

By the late 1960s, the work of the FHF led directly to an increased presence of African Americans in previously segregated White neighborhoods, from essentially zero to hundreds of residents. The FHF was considered an innovative actor and other fair housing organizations adopted their strategies and tactics in their own communities.

Another early and active fair housing organization was the Midpeninsula Citizens for Fair Housing (in the Palo Alto area), founded in January of 1965 and led by Dr. Felix Smith. By March, it had 800 members.[449] The group fought against discrimination of homeownership and rentals, and to counter popular beliefs that integrated neighborhoods foretold decline. The Palo Alto group developed educational campaigns and acted as intermediaries when Black families moved into all White neighborhoods. A particular focus was the education of apartment managers who would often not rent to African Americans.[450] Like many such organizations, the

[443] "L.B. Negro Home Ownership Increasing," *Independent Press-Telegram*, September 25, 1965.
[444] "Bias Ban on City Work Urged," *Independent Press-Telegram*, December 17, 1965.
[445] "Apartment Managers Second-Guess Tenants," *Independent Press-Telegram*, April 13, 1967.
[446] Julie Saunders, "Good Neighbors Come in All Colors: The Social, Political, and Legal History of the Fair Housing Foundation of Long Beach," May 18, 2005.
[447] "Idealism in Action," *Independent Press-Telegram*, March 30, 1969.
[448] "Would You Rent to This Couple?" *Independent Press-Telegram Southland Sunday*, October 26, 1969, 1.
[449] John Keplinger, "Fair Housing Group Holding Public Relations Drive In Area," *The Peninsula Times Tribun*e, May 10, 1965, 13.
[450] "Spreading the Word On Housing," *Redwood City Tribune*, May 13, 1965, 19.

Midpeninsula Citizens for Fair Housing based their campaigns out of a series of storefront offices and held outreach meetings at community centers, recreation centers, churches, and other meeting halls.

Other local organizations included: the Chico Fair Housing Committee, Shasta Citizens for Fair Housing, Santa Monica-West Los Angeles Fair Housing Committee, Pasadena Fair Housing Committee, Ventura Fair Housing Committee, Santa Maria Valley Fair Housing Committee, Citizens for Fair Housing in Los Gatos, Pacifica Fair Housing Committee, Sacramento Fair Housing Committee, and the Stockton Fair Housing Committee. Fair housing organizations such as those mentioned above often had storefront offices from which they organized communications campaigns, held educational meetings, and planned their activism.

During the years of fighting for fair housing, numerous lawsuits were brought by African Americans throughout the state. In January of 1966, the California Supreme Court heard seven cases including that of Lincoln W. Mulkey, who was denied a lease on a Santa Ana apartment; Wilfred J. Predergast, who sued to prevent his eviction from a Hollywood apartment; Dr. Thomas R. Peyton, who was refused a high-rise apartment in West Los Angeles; Clifton Hill, suing to prevent eviction from his North Sacramento home; Doris Thomas, seeking damages for being refused an apartment in San Francisco; and Joyce Grogan, who was refused the ability to rent because of her race.[451]

Neighborhood Organizations

While fair housing organizations were critical to the cause of fair housing, neighborhood organizations could also be very powerful tools. In 1963, the Valwood Property Owners Association in Pomona was formed to help stem the sale of homes by White owners and beautify the recently integrated neighborhood. The association was led by Mrs. Rudolph Augarten and Mrs. Louis Robinson, White and Black residents, respectively. The association began a "not for sale" campaign of yard signs to discourage selling by White owners, and to prevent blockbusting by realtors who were encouraging panic selling among White residents. In 1963, the homeowners association voted to support an open housing covenant. The association's efforts proved fruitful. By 1964, all but 20 of the vacant houses were occupied and White flight had effectively been curtailed—making Valwood one of the first, if not the first, successfully integrated neighborhoods in Pomona.

Crenshaw Neighbors, organized in fall of 1964, was another neighborhood organization dedicated to promoting cross-racial dialogue and building awareness that integrated neighborhoods could be successful communities.[452] By 1972, its offices were located on Buckingham Road.[453] It began as a discussion group during the 1950s and expanded into the APEX (Area Program for Enrichment and Education) offering real estate services and apartment referral services. Around this same time, the Interracial Home Visiting Committee was established to the same end in Sacramento.

Organized in 1965, the Westside Neighbors Association (also known as the West Side Homeowners/West Side Property Owners Association) sought to discourage residents from succumbing to blockbusting and panic selling activities of Long Beach realtors. During the mid-1960s, about half the members of the organization were African Americans living in the integrated Westside neighborhood. Among their organizing tactics, the Westside Neighbors Association encouraged community members to use lawn signs proclaiming, "This Property is Not for Sale. We Like Our Neighbors."[454]

At Last: Federal Fair Housing Legislation

[451] "State Supreme Court To Hear Prop 14 Debate," *The Salinas Californian*, January 27, 1966, 10.
[452] "They Are Proving It Really Works," *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1965, 36.
[453] "Set Drive for New Members," *Southwest News*, March 9, 1972, 1.
[454] League of Women Voters of the Long Beach Area, "Long Beach: Citizens Take Action," 1981, 5.

There were legal challenges to Proposition 14. They began in the Orange County suburb of Santa Ana when Lincoln Mulkey sued landlord Neil Reitman for refusing to rent an apartment on the basis of race. In 1966, the California Supreme Court invalidated Proposition 14 as a violation of the equal protection guarantee of the federal constitution."[455]

At the federal level, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in housing. However, there were no federal enforcement provisions. This necessitated a follow-up piece of legislation: The Civil Rights Act of 1968, commonly known as the Fair Housing Act. The Fair Housing Act, comprising Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, was passed by Congress four days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. This legislation prohibited discrimination by direct providers of housing (landlords and real estate companies), as well as other entities (such as municipalities, banks and other lending institutions, and homeowners insurance companies).[456] Discrimination in other housing-related activities such as advertising, zoning practices, and new construction design was also prohibited. As a result of this legislation, the practices of red-lining and the writing of racially restrictive covenants into deeds were deemed illegal. A Black newspaper in Los Angeles proclaimed, "California Negroes Can Now Live Anywhere!"[457]

The Federal Housing Act, combined with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, codified fair housing at the national level. As observed in the *African American History of Los Angeles Context Statement*, "…following the passage of these two bills, African Americans in Los Angeles [and in other cities across California] had more freedom to live in the neighborhood of their choice; however, their choices were still dependent upon their socioeconomic status."[458]

Urban Renewal, Displacement, and the Freeway Systems

The late 1960s ushered in an era of urban planning in major cities across the country. Architectural firms engaged with cities in undertaking sweeping modernization programs aimed at eliminating so-called urban blight. These programs usually targeted large, often poor, sections of cities—virtually leveling them and creating new neighborhoods. The establishment of county and city redevelopment agencies was often the primary vehicle for these efforts. The justification for these programs by urban planners was to rid the city of blighted or "slum" areas. These projects disproportionally affected African Americans and other communities of color who were often relegated to living in the oldest neighborhoods of a city.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency established two large project areas in the Western Addition: Project Area A-1 and Project Area A-2. These projects called for the wholesale razing of large portions of the Western Addition, largely built out with Victorian-era homes. Project A-1 displaced more than 1,350 households and 358 businesses from the predominantly African American old Fillmore neighborhood. Project Area A-2 was much larger than A-1. The area contained approximately 2,500 Victorian-era buildings, many of which were dilapidated. The project area was completely razed, with estimates of the number of people displaced as high as 13,000.[459]

Some cities experienced urban renewal on a smaller but no less disruptive scale. Older downtown shopping districts facing increased competition from regional malls and suburban shopping centers, such as those in Fresno, Pomona, and Long Beach, were replaced with pedestrian malls. These pedestrian malls involved the closure of streets to vehicular traffic, the addition of trees and landscaping, public art projects, and other amenities designed

[455] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Civil Rights in America: Racial Discrimination in Housing*. March 2021, 62.
[456] When originally passed in 1968, the Fair Housing Act only covered four protective classes: race, color, religion, and national origin. Sex was added as a protective class in 1974. In 1988, disability and familial status were included as protective classes as well.
[457] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Civil Rights in America: Racial Discrimination in Housing*. March 2021, 50.
[458] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles,"46.
[459] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 124, 127.

to create a pleasant shopping experience. As part of this process, African Americans were often displaced from their residences.

After World War II, the U.S. government also embarked on an interstate highway construction program. The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 began a nearly 20-year infrastructure program that affected American urban centers across the country. In his book, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, author and historian Eric Avila looks at the building of the Interstate freeway system and its impacts on communities of color. Avila cites a number of factors that influenced construction, including the incorporation of science into the planning and design process; leadership by established bureaucrats who were primarily White and male; corporate interests; the framing of freeways as the way of the future; and the wielding of power and influence by those who blocked the freeways and those who did not. Communities of color lacked the political and financial capital to effectively protest the destruction of their neighborhoods.

The freeway system displaced many communities of color. The location of the freeways took the "path of least resistance," through communities that were already plagued with disinvestment, deindustrialization, and decline.[460] Planners used redlining maps of the HOLC and FHA to (identify areas of substandard housing stock, a high percentage of African American residents as well as other residents of color), and proximity to industry to identify areas of "blight" which they deemed ripe for redevelopment.[461] Between 1956 and 1966, highway construction demolished some 37,000 urban housing units per year.[462] Communities that were not destroyed by the construction were often physically cut off by the infrastructure projects and isolated. In San Bernardino, the African American westside community was "choked off…they built all the off ramps to go to the other community…but to the Black community, they wouldn't let any cars come."[463]

Opposition to freeway construction was strongest in wealthy communities. One of the first successful examples of this was in San Francisco, where mostly White residents and business owners ultimately prevailed in re-routing Highway 280 out of their neighborhood and supported a truncated version of the Embarcadero Freeway, based on environmental and historic preservation concerns. Avila states that "success in San Francisco offered a template by which White affluent communities successfully challenged downtown and suburban interests to stop the freeway."[464]

In the Oakland area, Black nationalists organized against the convergence of three highway projects (including the I-580 and I-980) circa 1969, destroying the commercial and cultural heart of Black Oakland.[465] It subsequently devastated the adjacent African American enclave of West Oakland, destabilizing the working-class community and isolating its residents. Redlining maps identified the Los Angeles neighborhood of Lincoln Heights, which had a population make up of African Americans as well as Japanese, Mexican, and Armenian workers, as being "the ideal place for the highway."[466] Planners decimated nearby Boyle Heights with the confluence of six freeways and the destruction of ten percent of the existing housing stock.[467] The community was devastated and the result was the complete encirclement of the community of East Los Angeles, a primarily Mexican American area. In San Diego, Logan Heights, the African American enclave dating back to 1852 and one of the largest urban concentrations of people of Mexican origin, was displaced by I-5 and the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge.

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[460] Eric Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 39.
[461] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 40-41.
[462] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 19-20.
[463] Wilmer Aminia Carter Foundation, "Cheryl Brown" (2021). *Bridges that Carried Us Over Digital Archive*, https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=bridges (accessed June 19, 2023), 30.
[464] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 30.
[465] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 42-3.
[466] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 41.
[467] Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway*, 39.

Construction of the I-10 freeway devastated two African American communities in Los Angeles. The first was its routing through Sugar Hill and Berkeley Square, the affluent Black neighborhoods that had resulted from the aforementioned Sugar Hill case. Santa Monica's African American community was similarly devastated by the extension of the I-10 through their neighborhood in 1966. Hundreds of modest houses were demolished, as were commercial and institutional buildings serving the Black community.[468] In 1960, the *Los Angeles Sentinel* reported the displacement of more than 400 African American families, though the *Los Angeles Times* later reported the number was closer to 550.[469] A similar fate befell communities of color in Pomona, as I-10 stretched eastward during the 1950s and 1960s.

The Interstate 101 through Ventura was completed in September 1962. One community that was adversely affected by the freeway was Tortilla Flats, one of the oldest and poorest neighborhoods in the city, located near the southwest edge of downtown. This multi-ethnic community, home to people of Native American, African American, Spanish, Mexican, Japanese, Chinese, Basque, Filipino, and Italian heritage, was almost entirely demolished to clear land for the freeway.[470]

As seen above, the policies surrounding the development of one of California's most iconic symbols—the freeway system—was a key factor in the perpetuation of institutionalized racism that damaged and displaced African American communities and other communities of color in Northern and Southern California. Urban renewal projects from the period, combined with freeway development, negatively impacted California's communities of color generally, from a residential, commercial, and institutional perspective, including African Americans.

In summary, housing discrimination against African Americans in California was legalized through the creation of restrictive covenants and deed restrictions for new tract development and the retroactive application of such restrictions to existing neighborhoods by realtors. These discriminatory practices were codified and institutionalized by federal lending and insurance programs established in the early decades of the twentieth century, and supported patterns of under-investment that remain to this day. Civil rights organizations took up the issue of housing as an early and essential aspect of their advocacy. When California state legislators attempted to address the discrimination in housing, private investors, homeowners, and realtors organized a legislative campaign to overturn the Rumford Act. Undeterred, however, California's housing advocates rallied to create some of the most progressive fair housing organizations in the country, serving as models for other states. The passage of federal legislation in the 1960s helped quash persistent discriminatory practices in communities throughout the state. The story of fair housing is just one aspect of the decades-long struggle for African Americans to effect democracy.

Sub-theme: Public Accommodations

One of the most visible aspects of persistent institutionalized racism following Reconstruction[471] in America was public accommodations discrimination, which refers to the act by White people of denying access to services of a business or other public place based on race. During the twentieth century, common locations of such discrimination against African Americans included movie theaters, public pools, lodging, restaurants, and amusement parks. While California did not have Jim Crow laws, per se, as there were in the South, there was still persistent racial discrimination and segregation evident in many areas of public life. Professional baseball player Jackie Robinson (1919-72), who broke the race barrier in the Major League and grew up in Pasadena, recalled

[468] Architectural Resources Group and Historic Resources Group, "Draft Historic Resources Inventory Update Historic Context Statement," January 31, 2017, 282-3.
[469] "Santa Monica Ousts 400 Families," *Los Angeles Sentinel*, October 13, 1960, A1; "Negroes Getting Aid in Relocating in Santa Monica," *Los Angeles Times*, December 22, 1966, WS1.
[470] Historic Resources Group, "Revised Draft Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of San Buenaventura, March 2022, 107.
[471] Reconstruction lasted from 1866-1877.

"…we saw movies from segregated balconies, swam in the YWCA pool only on Tuesdays, and were permitted in the YMCA only one night per week. Restaurant doors were slammed in our faces."[472]

San Diego's Edward W. Anderson (1871-1953) was an early and important lawyer facilitating public accommodation cases. In 1897, he and his wife sued when denied access to premium seats purchased at the Fisher Opera House. Anderson won the case but lost on appeal.[473] In 1923, Anderson lobbied for an amendment to California State Law adding places selling ice cream and soft drinks prohibiting discrimination on race and increased the fine to $100.[474]

In response to the persistence of racially discriminatory policies in public accommodations, African Americans organized civil rights protests, developed workarounds, and generally fought back against these ongoing efforts to segregate them from mainstream American life in California.

Lunch Counter Sit-Ins

In February of 1960, four young African American men sat down at a Whites-only lunch counter at a Woolworth's department store in Greensboro, North Carolina. The four young college students stayed seated on their stools until closing time. They repeated this routine over subsequent days with additional students joining in. Soon, the movement gained momentum throughout the American South. These protests effectively moved the civil rights struggle from the courtroom to the streets of major cities and small towns alike, engaging a new generation of African Americans in the struggle for equality. These passive resistance protests made national news and, as a result, many dining establishments ended their segregationist policies.

Lunch counter sit-ins occurred in California as well. In 1952, after Andrew Murray was denied service at The Witch Stand drive-in hamburger restaurant in Los Angeles, he recruited a number of friends and staged a sit-down strike at the restaurant.[475] Oral histories taken through California State University, San Bernardino also suggest that there were picket lines against segregation at the local Woolworth's lunch counter around this time.[476] In support of the Southern lunch counter protests, in March of 1960, lunch counter sit-ins were held at the Woolworth's and S.H. Kress stores in downtown Long Beach. These protests of the early- to mid-1960s were encouraged by the local chapter of the NAACP. CORE also sponsored Woolworth's boycotts in San Francisco due to lunch counter segregation. In July of 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr. attended a sit-in at the F.W. Woolworth on Broadway in downtown Los Angeles.[477] Lunch counter sit-ins and protests were effective at drawing attention to the racially discriminatory practices of some of the country's largest retailers. Changing the policies of smaller businesses without brand name recognition was even more challenging.

Traveling While Black

As difficult as it was to navigate public discrimination and segregation in one's own community, it was often even more difficult—and more dangerous—when traveling to other cities. During the 1920s, the automobile supplanted the railroad as the preferred means of vacation transportation. The automobile became the leading consumer product in the country and, by 1925, there was one automobile for every six Americans (compared with one for every 100 people in Great Britain).[478] The automobile and the freedom it represented touched the American spirit

[472] Jackie Robinson, *Baseball Has Done It* (New York: Lippincott Publishing, 1964), 29-32.
[473] San Diego NAACP, "History," accessed July 23, 2023, www.sandiegonnacp.org/sbout-style-4/.
[474] San Diego NAACP, "History," accessed July 23, 2023, www.sandiegonnacp.org/sbout-style-4/.
[475] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 133.
[476] Wilmer Amina Carter Foundation, "Cheryl Brown" (2021). *Bridges That Carried Us Over Digital Archive*, accessed June 19, 2023, https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=bridges, 38.
[477] University of Southern California. "Martin Luther King Jr.'s Moments and Mission in Los Angeles," accessed June 2, 2023, https://news.usc.edu/trojan-family/martin-luther-king-usc-los-angeles-moments-and-mission/.
[478] Calvin Coolidge Papers, "Transportation – General 1923-28: Automobiles and the Highways," Library of Congress American Memory Collection.

of individualism and exploration. The new "motor tourist"—upper and middle class alike—was lured by the promise of adventure and unencumbered by the routes and schedules of the railroad. This was particularly true in California, with the state's large footprint, relative wealth, and expanding infrastructure during the early twentieth century. According to the California Highway Commission, in 1923, 823 cars per day were traveling the coast route from Los Angeles to San Francisco. U.S. Highway 101 was the primary artery for north-south travel along the coast. As a result, lodging and other service businesses sprang up along the route to meet the needs of these auto tourists, including motels, roadside restaurants, and gas stations.

African American motorists faced special challenges during road trips. Racial discrimination in public accommodations was widespread throughout the country—not just in the South—and many business owners refused to serve Black would-be patrons. While some proprietors posted signs declaring their policy of denying service to Blacks, others were less overt. To address this need for information, the travelers turned to the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, typically referred to simply as *The Green Book*, and other travel guides. Developed by African American mail carrier Victor Hugo Green (1892-1960) and published between 1936 and 1966, *The Green Book* (today the most well-remembered of these guides) provided a list of hotels, boarding houses, taverns, restaurants, service stations, and other establishments throughout the country that served African Americans. With the primary goal of preserving the safety of Black travelers, *The Green Book* also preserved their dignity. *The Green Book* was particularly important in the South where freedom of movement for African Americans was often subject to curfews. In 1939, it expanded coverage to locations in California as well.

A review of the 1941 *Green Book* indicates that African American travelers were afforded more choices in California than in many of the other 49 states. Los Angeles offered the most establishments, followed by San Francisco. In fact, it was possible to travel along the California coast from San Diego to San Francisco with suitable accommodations. Inland and rural towns like Fresno, El Centro, Tulare, and Victorville offered far fewer choices, but accommodations were available. In many towns, however, there were no public accommodations for African Americans. By 1947, new establishments were more likely to welcome African Americans patrons, but there was little in the way of geographic variety. By 1950, accommodations were available in Elsinore and Needles, but large areas of the state were still considered off limits for the Black traveler.

In response to the lack of accommodations for Black travelers, African American entrepreneurs established businesses that catered to their community. In Los Angeles, Central Avenue was home to several Black-owned hotels.[479] Foremost among these was the Dunbar Hotel. By 1959, San Francisco had the Booker Washington Hotel and Courts, owned by Willie L. Young; it was a six-story hotel offering fireproof construction, a cocktail lounge, and dining room. It should be noted that not all of these accommodations were Black-owned or exclusively for people of color. Among the major hotels listed in the 1959 *Green Book* was the upscale Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco. The California Hotel in Oakland was one of the first venues to host black entertainers, but it wasn't until 1953 that African Americans were allowed to book rooms. The Douglas Hotel in downtown San Diego was one of the few hotels in San Diego to welcome African American guests.[480]

The fact that *The Green Book* continued to be published until 1966—well after key events in the Civil Rights Movement—suggests an ongoing need for the kind of information it provided, at least in some states across the country.

Segregated Leisure Sites

During the early twentieth century, African Americans laid claim to the California lifestyle of recreation and leisure with the creation of race-specific leisure spaces. The establishment of these race-specific leisure spaces

[479] Central Avenue was a vibrant African American commercial strip home to various hotels, restaurants, and performance venues—making it a hub for West Coast jazz.
[480] Mooney & Associates "Center City Development Corporation," II-12.

emerged in response to pervasive discriminatory policies against African Americans at beaches, bathhouses, and other leisure facilities frequented by White visitors. Blacks who visited these sites were frequently harassed, subjected to violence, or even arrested.

During the 1910s and 1920s, African American leisure pioneers acquired property and built facilities. In many cases, these pioneers faced discrimination from nearby White property owners whose extreme tactics ranged from arson to intimidation and police brutality. The best-known of these cases is that of Bruce's Beach, an African American-owned beach and community in today's Manhattan Beach. Founded in 1912 by Willa "Willie" A. Bruce and Charles Bruce, by 1923 their beach resort property included a café/dancehall, and a building for day-trippers with accommodations for a few overnight guests. Over several years, a small African American residential community developed alongside their establishment. Despite the vibrancy of this African American community, by the 1920s their property at 26th Street and Highland Avenue was taken by eminent domain for a park.[481]

Historian Alison Rose Jefferson writes, "…along many stretches of the California coastline, refusal to allow African Americans access to places of leisure continued as an informal policy that was sometimes forcefully asserted and physically enforced by White citizens and public authorities."[482] This happened in El Segundo, Santa Monica, and Manhattan Beach. The predominantly African American Bay Street Beach in Santa Monica—derisively nicknamed the "Inkwell" by local Whites—was the focus of Black recreation and social interaction until the middle of the twentieth century. The elaborate Egyptian-Revival style Pacific Beach Club for African Americans in Huntington Beach featured a clubhouse, bathhouse, 450-seat auditorium, roof garden, and electrically lit boardwalk-until it burned to the ground at the hand of a White arsonist on March 22, 1925.

Public Pools

As described in the book, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools*, historian Jeff Wiltse chronicles how public pools have their origin in the bathhouses of the late 19th century. During the early twentieth century, progressives championed public swimming pools as safe, wholesome opportunities to socialize and exercise. Construction of municipal pools boomed during the 1920s and 1940s, and even during the 1930s, public pools were frequently the projects of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). African American migration at mid-century collided with White racist perceptions that people of color were dirty and often carriers of disease. Public swimming pools are places with difficult histories of discrimination, segregation, and racism. As the historian Lynn M. Hudson points out in her book, *West of Jim Crow: The Fight Against California's Color Line*, municipal pools offered opportunities for "…semi-clad bodies in interracial groupings that included both sexes," resulting in "…dangerous intimacy…" as perceived by White populations.[483] As a result, public pools were common sites of segregation: African Americans were segregated to their own pools or were relegated to swimming on the day prior to draining and cleaning at a White-owned pool.[484]

One of the earliest, and most notable lawsuits regarding segregation of municipal pools was the case of the Brookside Plunge (or pool) located in Pasadena. Built in 1914, it was one of the earliest public pools in Southern California. Upon its opening, all non-Whites were barred from swimming there. When The African American community of Pasadena protested, city government established Wednesday afternoon and evening as the time during which the pool would be open to people of color; the day before the pool was weekly drained and cleaned.

[481] In 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom authorized the property's return to the descendants of original property owners.
[482] Alison Rose Jefferson, *Living the California Dream: African American Leisure Sites during the Jim Crow Era* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 73.
[483] Lynn M. Hudson, *West of Jim Crow: The Fight Against California's Color Line* (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 2020), 264.
[484] Erin Blakemore, "Public Swimming Pools Are Still Haunted By Segregation's Legacy," *National Geographic*, June 11, 2021, https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/public-swimming-pools-still-haunted-by-segregation-legacy (accessed July 24, 2023).

Immediately, the African American community protested, but the Brookside Plunge became an iconic fight for civil rights for decades to come.

The city closed the pool after a 1915 challenge by the Negro Taxpayers and Voters Association, and upon re-opening, the Brookside Plunge remained off limits to people of color until 1930. In 1930, after the local NAACP Pasadena chapter took over the fight and the Los Angeles NAACP chapter won Bath House Battle (see Ethel Prioleu case, below) in Los Angeles, "International Day" (Wednesday access) was reinstated at the Brookside Plunge.

Undaunted, the Pasadena NAACP, under the leadership of Ruby McKnight (1914-1999) and Edna L. Griffin (1905-1992) engaged the services of lawyer Thomas L. Griffith. The lawsuit, *Stone vs. Board of Directors of the City of Pasadena*, filed in 1939 was lost. Pasadena continued to deny access. Griffith next engaged Thurgood Marshall of the NAACP in New York in the fight. The appeal was heard in 1941 and in 1947, the Brookside Plunge opened without restrictions. The battle-scarred race relations in the city and city officials let the facility deteriorate after forced integration.

Examples of discrimination can be found for decades in California's urban and rural communities. In 1911, the plunge at Fairmont Park in Riverside opened as a segregated space. Frank Johnson, a local pastor, sued the City. The Fairmont Park plunge was opened to residents of color, but only on certain days.[485] Similar stories can be found in virtually all California communities during the early- to mid-twentieth century. In 1930, Mrs. Ethel Prioleu filed a lawsuit against Los Angeles city park officials who prohibited her family from swimming in the pool at Exposition Park forcing her to travel nearly four miles to the "negro swimming pool."[486] She eventually won the case. After World War II in Bakersfield, Central Park and its community pool became the primary recreation area for the city's Black population. In 1952 in Sacramento, eighth grader Helen Jackson was the subject of a lawsuit when her class held an outing at the local public pool and she was denied admission because of her race.[487]

One of the nation's first successful desegregation lawsuits related to pools was against Mexican Americans in San Bernardino, *Lopez v. Seccombe* in 1944. Charging discrimination because Latino children were only allowed to use the public pool on Sunday prior to draining and cleaning, the federal ruling served as one of the legal precedents for *Brown vs. Board of Education.*[488]

Historian Andrew Kahrl asserts that "the development of attractive and accessible Black beaches and leisure sites free from White harassment emerged as a major political issue in the long civil rights movement."[489] Washington observed that the constrained ability to pursue leisure activities among African Americans in the south was one of the things that made migration attractive. Though far from fair or equal, California offered Black Americans much greater freedom to vacation and travel recreationally compared to many other parts of the country during this period.

Sub-theme: Gender and Sexuality

As if the struggle for civil rights and equality for African Americans was not enough in and of itself, Black women and Black members of the LGBTQ community faced additional challenges over time. The fight for African American suffrage did not enfranchise Black women. And the success of women in obtaining the right to vote in California in 1911 did not equate to gender equity for women, especially for Black women. As discussed

[485] IS Architecture, "City of Riverside African American Historic Context Statement," 31.
[486] "Test Expected in Negro Suit," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1930, 25. The outcome of this court case is currently unknown.
[487] "Negro Girl Sues Swimming Pool," *Tulare Advance-Register*, June 19, 1952, 3.
[488] Blakemore, "Public Swimming Pools."
[489] Andrew Kahrl, "on the Beach: Race and Leisure in the Jim Crow South" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2002), 22 qtd. in Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*, 23.

in the previous sub-theme on Voting Rights, efforts to suppress the Black vote were commonplace, which made it harder to elect representatives reflecting race and gender equity. Moreover, members of the Black LGBTQ community often found themselves discriminated against twice over, as they fought for a voice in the late twentieth century.[490]

Early Woman's Suffrage Activists

California's Black women were fighting for the right to vote as far back as the 1890s.[491] Generally, the fight for a woman's right to vote in California was led by women's civic clubs and organizations, including the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). These clubs typically barred women of color from participating in their activities. As a result, African American women formed their own clubs, often born out of churches, mutual aid societies, and literary clubs. Although not all of these groups were politically active, some rallied around the issue of suffrage.

In her book *Righteous Discontent*, historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham suggests the importance of Black Baptist women in the fight for women's voting rights. She notes that they "expressed their discontent with popular conceptions regarding 'a woman's place' in the church and society at large."[492] Although Higginbotham does not address how this movement manifested with Black Baptist women in California specifically, she notes the tendency for religious affinity to supersede the racial divisions found in other organizations.[493]

The Woman's Suffrage Advocate was a statewide advocacy organization that specifically targeted Black communities. In Rosalyn Terborg-Penn's book *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*, the author cites information in the *Negro Year Book of 1912* suggesting that the California Black community largely supported suffrage.[494] However, not all scholars agree on the topic. Lawrence B. de Graaf offers that "suffrage and temperance were important issues to a few individual Black women, but they did not command the attention that racial rights or social uplift did at the turn of the twentieth century."[495]

In the area of suffrage for Black women, two figures stand out: Naomi Anderson and Sarah M. Overton. Naomi Anderson was designated the colored representative of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association. A native of Kansas, she advocated for suffrage in that state before coming to California in 1896, where she received support from the Afro-American Women's League. She was also active in temperance work in California. Another Black woman, Sarah M. Overton, was a leader in suffrage organizations in San Jose and toured the state as community organizer in 1911 for the suffrage amendment.[496]

Charlotta Spears Bass (1874-1969) was an outspoken advocate for suffrage as a means of social change for communities.[497] She began working at Los Angeles-based newspaper the *California Eagle* in 1912, publishing pro-suffrage editorials and encouraging Black men to vote (the *Eagle* is discussed further in the Making a Life theme; Black Press sub-theme). The *Eagle*'s influence went well beyond its local readership. In 1950, Bass ran unsuccessfully for California's fourteenth legislative district seat in Congress. She rose to national prominence in

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[490] The concept of intersectionality attempts to address the layers of nuanced history. In theme studies, such as this one, it is important to note that associating buildings with one group of people over another had the potential to misrepresent the layered histories of place.
[491] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 140.
[492] Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Woman's Movement in the Black Baptist Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 121.
[493] Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, 122.
[494] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 850-1920* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 140.
[495] Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region: Black Women in the American West, 1850-1920," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No 2 (May 1980), 310.
[496] de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region," 309.
[497] Smithsonian National Museum, accessed April 4, 2018, https://www.facebook.com/NMAAHC/posts/532717593445907.

1952, when she became the first Black woman in history to run for the vice presidency on the Progressive Party's ticket.

Bass was the subject of a poem about women's rights by fellow suffragist and poet Eva Carter Buckner (1863-1946). Buckner moved to Los Angeles from Colorado around 1910 and was chair of suffrage for the California State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. Buckner would go on to be quite active with the NAACP.[498]

Women's clubs (discussed further in the Making a Life theme; Social Organizations sub-theme) were important organizations in the Suffrage Movement. In Los Angeles, African American women's clubs that supported suffrage included the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club, Progressive Women's Club, the Helping Hand Society, and the Stickney Women's Christian Temperance Union.[499] The Sojourner Truth Industrial Club was founded in 1904 and fought to improve the low wages and bad working conditions faced by Black women. African American women in Riverside established a local WCTU. The Riverside chapter advocated for suffrage, but also provided a mechanism for African American women of color to meet and discuss community issues.[500]

The Fannie Jackson Coppin Club was an important early club for African American women who were active in the Suffrage Movement in Alameda County. Lydia Flood Jackson and Hettie B. Tilghman (1871-1933) were among the leaders of this organization. Other active members included Melba Stafford and Willa Henry. Flood Jackson also served as a leader of the California Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.[501] Tilghman was born into an influential African American family in San Francisco. In the 1920s, Tilghman was heavily involved with the League of Women Voters. She founded the Phyllis Wheatley Club of the East Bay and also served as president of the Alameda County League of Colored Women Voters. Suffragist Georgianna Offutt served as vice president of this organization. The efforts of suffragists finally saw success in 1919. That year, the country passed the 19th Amendment, which legally guaranteed women the right to vote.

Black Voices in Second Wave Feminism

During the 1960s and 1970s, a new Women's Rights Movement began to gain nationwide momentum driven by the publication of books like *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan, the introduction of the birth control pill, and a rejection of the traditional role of the suburban housewife. Like the earlier Women's Suffrage Movement, the second wave feminism was criticized for its lack of inclusivity. This allegation was specifically leveled at the legal rights branch of the movement. According to author and scholar Benita Roth, Black feminism grew as a consequence of participation in the Civil Rights Movement. Many African American feminists worked within the larger Black Liberation or Black Power Movements, believing feminism was inherent in the anti-racist struggle. Some who tried to incorporate a feminist agenda into these movements were met with resistance, as these movements were characterized by strong masculine discourse and the belief that truly revolutionary Black women should be less concerned with feminism and more concerned with racism. Likewise, many Black feminists viewed White middle-class women as out of touch with those that didn't enjoy their race and class privilege.[502]

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[498] Beasley, *Negro Trailblazers of California*, 229.
[499] Delta Sigma Theta, founded at Howard University in 1913, spawned suffrage organizations in some cities; however, the Los Angeles Chapter was not founded until 1927. The University of California, Berkeley Chapter was founded in 1921.
[500] IS Architecture, "City of Riverside African American Historic Context Statement," 24.
[501] "Lydia Flood Jackson," BlackPast, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/jackson-lydia-flood-1862-1963/, accessed August 2024.
[502] Adapted from Historic Resources Group, "Women's Rights in Los Angeles Historic Context Statement," SurveyLA Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement, prepared for the Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Office of Historic Resources, October 2018, 66.

Most Black feminists declined to organize with White feminist groups. As a result, Black feminists largely functioned in unorganized, decentralized groups doing consciousness-raising at the local level.[503]

The San Francisco-based Black Women Organized for Action (BWOA) is an example of an organized Black woman's group with a broad agenda. Founded in January 1973 by fifteen Black women, the group had some 200 members at its peak, but their influence reached thousands.[504] The BWOA made significant outreach in the Western Addition of San Francisco, but their reach went well beyond the city limits. Coverage of their activities and activism can be found in newspapers throughout California.

Among the early organizers were Aileen C. Hernandez, Patty Fulcher, and Eleanor Spikes, who all had connections to the predominantly White National Organization for Women (NOW). BWOA was committed to giving African American women an opportunity to nurture their leadership potential. The organization's unique hierarchy called for three leaders that rotated regularly. BWOA engaged in local protests and developed a handbook for Black women on how to look for a job. BWOA was instrumental in the publication of the book *70 Soul Secrets of Sapphire*, a Black woman's empowerment book by Carolyn Jetter Greene in 1973. Fulcher, Hernandez, Jean Kresy, and Maxine Ussery acted as publishers.[505] Meetings and educational events were held at community centers such as the Bethel AME Church in San Francisco.

In the East Bay, the similarly named Black Women Organized for Political Action was also organized by Aileen C. Hernandez (1926-2017). Hernandez served as national president for the National Organization for Women from 1970 to 1971 and headed the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission under President Johnson. She continued to organize women of color into the 1980s. Along with Clara Stanton Jones (1913-2012), she also founded the group Black Women Stirring the Waters. In 1973, Wilma Miller attempted to organize a Los Angeles Chapter of Black Women Organized for Political Action; however, there is little evidence of her success.[506]

In Southern California, Black feminists were far less organized by comparison, and activism was largely the result of motivated individuals and their small immediate social circle. Some of these individuals included: Ferrol Bobo Starks, President of the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), who promoted feminine progress; and Althea Scott, a Los Angeles-based Black feminist who was the host of "Ad Lib," a feminist talk show airing on KTTV/Los Angeles in the mid-1970s. Scott described her feminist kinship with White women: "How can a liberated woman rush to a meeting leaving her black maid at home to look after the children and then wonder where all the black sisters are?"[507]

Other notable Black feminists included Margaret Wright and Yvonne Brathwaite Burke. Wright espoused feminist principles, playing an active role within the Black Power movement and fighting for equal education within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). As an activist in the group Women Against Repression, she stated, "We don't want to be equal with men, just like in black liberation, we're not fighting to be equal with the White man. We're fighting for the right to be different and not be punished for it."[508] Burke was one of the first Black women to be admitted to the USC School of Law and became a prominent political figure. She was an outspoken advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and its impact on job equality in the late 1960s. She was elected to the State Assembly in 1966; she served there until 1972. Burke (D-Los Angeles) was

[503] Consciousness raising and rap sessions invited women to open up about and share their personal experiences with discrimination and empower them as a group.
[504] Benita Roth, Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 125.
[505] "Sapphire, a Gem of a Symbol," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 17, 1973, 19.
[506] Historic Resources Group, "Women's Rights in Los Angeles Historic Context Statement," 67.
[507] "Blacks vs. Feminists," *TIME*, March 26, 1973, 64.
[508] Gerda Lerner, ed. *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History* (New York, Vintage Books, 1992), 608.

the first African American woman to serve in the California state legislature from 1973 to 1979, and one of the first to represent a western state in the U.S. Congress.

Other important voices for Black feminism in California included Emily F. Gibson, a freelance writer and columnist for the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, and Sandra L. Carter, the first president of Black Women Lawyers. Radical activist Angela Davis (1944-) was outspoken on the topic of second wave feminism, in addition to her work for the Black Liberation Movement. "As black women we must liberate ourselves," she stated, "…and prove the impetus for the liberation of black men from this whole network of lies around the oppression of blacks which serves only to divide us, thus impeding our black liberation struggle."[509] As previously described in the subtheme, Struggles for Inclusion: The Civil Rights Movement, Davis' activism, views as a Marxist/Communist, and work with the Black Panthers made her a controversial national figure.

LGBTQ Rights

During the early twentieth century, the gay and lesbian communities throughout California were often targeted by police profiling, and establishments serving the LGBTQ community were subjected to raids. As a result, members of this community often gathered in private or underground spaces where they could feel safe being themselves. During the 1950s, there was a period of "panic scenarios" common throughout the United States, where one raid triggered a series of raids, harassment, and arrests in the gay community.[510]

African American members of the LGBTQ community were further subject to issues of race by the larger group of predominantly White gay men and lesbians. Much in the same way that African American feminists felt excluded from the larger second wave feminist movement and organizations like NOW, historic patterns of discrimination and segregation played themselves out in the LGBTQ community and in the fight for gay rights much as they did in mainstream society.

As described in the book, *Gay L.A.*, "gay people of color often banded together in friendship groups because they perceived a double discrimination in public gay venues; they were subjected not only to police harassment but also sometimes to discrimination by other gay people."[511] As a result, African Americans in the LGBTQ community created private clubs that met in people's homes.

In more urban environments like San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego, the LGBTQ community established bars, nightclubs, discos, and bathhouses. Often there were venues catering only to African American or Latino members of the LGBTQ community. In Los Angeles, in the heart of Central Avenue, the Club Alabam[512] next door to the Dunbar Hotel hosted an annual drag ball in the 1940s. [513] During the 1950s, Los Angeles neighborhoods like Westlake, Silver Lake, and Echo Park emerged as primarily White gay enclaves, leaving the former neighborhood of Bunker Hill and downtown's venues like the Waldorf and Harold's for African American and Latino patrons. In West Hollywood, an unincorporated area in Los Angeles County that was out of the watchful eye of the abusive LAPD, gay bars and nightclubs flourished. Yet these predominantly White clubs, like Studio One (which functioned from 1974 to 1993), discouraged non-Whites from entering or harassed those who did. In 1972, the Catch One (a.k.a., Jewel's Catch One) was founded as a gay nightclub for African Americans by Jewel Williams. Catch One would later serve as a de facto community center during the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s.

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[509] "Angela Davis Speaks From Prison," *Guardian Independent Radical Newsweekly*, December 26, n.d., n.p.
[510] Donna Graves and Shayne Watson, "Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco," prepared for the City of San Francisco Planning Department, 2015, 120.
[511] Lillian Faderman and Stuart Timmons, *Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2006), 101-102.
[512] The Club Alabam dated back to 1928, at its Culver City location.
[513] Queer Maps, "Club Alabam," accessed July 24, 2023, https://www.queermaps.org/place/club-alabam.

San Francisco was home to one of the largest concentrations of gay and lesbian bars in the state. Discrimination in these venues gave rise to a phenomenon of weekly house parties, particularly important in the African American lesbian community. In an oral history, Thelma Davis remembered that the house parties she attended "were mainly Black. There were a few Caucasians, but not a lot, just a few."[514] Eventually, Amelia's—a Black lesbian bar on Valencia Street—was established by activist Mary Midgett.[515] For African American gay men in San Francisco, there were bars that catered to them. The Trapp, established around 1965, was one such establishment.[516]

During the 1950s, Los Angeles had several lesbian bars that served African Americans. The If Club (a.k.a., If Café) and the Open Door provided safe spaces for lesbians of color.[517] The Sugar Shack welcomed Black lesbians, whereas some other bars regularly asked Black patrons to leave.[518] In South Los Angeles, during the 1950s and 1960s, African American lesbians frequented the Star Room in an unincorporated part of Los Angeles County. Los Angeles gay bars that did not discriminate against Black men during the 1950s and 1960s included The Picadilly, the Waldorf, the Golden Carp, and the Vieux Carre.[519]

In the conservative community of San Diego, all of the pre-World War II gay and lesbian bars were located in downtown. After the war, bars branched out into other parts of the city and county from La Jolla to Ocean Beach. By the late 1960s, the bars became centers of support services. The Imperial Court system became a key aspect of bar culture: bars sponsored candidates to compete for the citywide titles of Emperor and Empress. The winners were later crowned at a gala and led fundraising efforts during their year-long reign.[520] A photograph of the first Imperial Court in 1972, includes two African Americans. The first African American drag performer in San Diego was at the Show Biz bar.

The racial segregation that existed at many LGBTQ establishments was also reflected within activist gay rights organizations of the same period. In the Bay Area, the Bay Area Gay Liberation (BAGL) organized a Third World Caucus open to Latino, African American, Native American, and Asian American members of the LGBTQ community in 1975. Another organization, the Third World Gay Coalition, was formed in Berkeley. These organizations were devoted to the issues that the White and largely male gay activists were not addressing. The Black Gay Caucus was formed in late 1976; they met at the Gay Community Center in San Francisco. This was the first Bay Area organization to address issues for Black gays both young and old. In 1980, the group Black and White Men Together (BWMT) was organized in San Francisco's Castro district, with a Los Angeles Chapter organized that same year. Further south, in Los Angeles, Ron Grayson founded the Association of Black Gays in the 1970s.[521] National organizations formed around 1975 included the Association of Black Gays (ABG) and later, the Committee of Black Gay Men (CBGM).

According to the *Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco*, the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) was the first lesbian civil rights organization in the United States.[522] It was formed in 1955. Although DOB was predominantly a White organization, women of color rose to leadership positions including,

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[514] Graves and Watson, "Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco," 102.
[515] Graves and Watson, "Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco," 192.
[516] Graves and Watson, "Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco," 158.
[517] Schuyler Mitchell, "How Did LA Become a City Without Lesbian Bars?, Los Angeles Magazine, June 2020, accessed July 24, 2023, https://www.lamag.com/culturefiles/lesbian-bars-los-angeles/.
[518] Faderman and Timmons, *Gay L.A*, 102.
[519] Faderman and Timmons, *Gay L.A.*, 285.
[520] Paul Detwiler, "San Diego's Gay Bar History: Reflections on Community History and the Documentary Film Process," *Journal of San Diego History* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2019).
[521] Susan D. Anderson, "Black California History and LGBTQ+ Rights," California African American Museum, accessed July 24, 2023, https://caamuseum.org/learn/600state/black-history/black-california-history-and-lgbtq-rights.
[522] Graves and Watson, "Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco," 147.

African Americans Cleo "Glenn" Bonner and Pat "Dubby" Walker. The Daughters of Bilitis also formed a Los Angeles Chapter in 1957, and a San Diego Chapter c. 1960s.

As the period of study ends in 1974, later developments related to LGBTQ rights as they relate to the African American community are not included herein but could be added in the future. Members of the gay Black community were active in the fight for LGBTQ rights and AIDS activism in the 1980s and beyond.

Theme: Making a Living

African Americans have historically held many different roles in the state's workforce, including distinct sectors of the economy such as labor, civic employment, business, military, and professional work. Black Californians were afforded limited opportunities as a result of racism and discrimination by White labor unions. Despite these challenges, Black workers in California prospered in several sectors of business and established Black-owned and operated "race businesses."

Beginning with enslavement and the Compromise of 1850, the section below ranges from Black workers engaged in hard labor (including lower-paid occupations) to Black professionals who broke the color barrier. The theme will also cover African American participation in the military, from the early role of Buffalo Soldiers in California's national parks to racially motivated protests at several military bases during the Vietnam War.

Sub-Theme: Labor

Enslavement and the Compromise of 1850

Enslavement was one of the earliest forms of Black labor in California, and was present under Spanish, Mexican, and early American rule.[523] While Black enslavement is introduced in the Making a Nation theme, this section investigates the types of labor that enslaved persons of African descent were most frequently subjected to in early California.

The era of European exploration marks the entrance of persons of African descent to the territory of California. From the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, the Spanish Empire tasked explorers with traveling the West Coast of North America. Both free and enslaved Blacks served in the Spanish Navy and Merchant Marine and were likely involved in several expeditions. The English crown also set its sights on the West Coast; Sir Francis Drake's expedition in 1579 included four Black sailors in the crew.[524]

By the 1760s, political and economic conditions—as well as leadership—had changed in Spain. The Spanish Empire now faced a greater threat to its territory in America from Russia and England, both of whom had claimed adjacent lands in present-day Alaska and Canada, respectively.[525] To better establish its dominion in North America, the Spanish crown transitioned from exploration to permanent settlement of Alta California. In 1769, the Spanish government dispatched an expedition led by Captain Gaspar de Portolá, the newly appointed governor of Baja California, and Franciscan Father Junipero Serra to establish the first Spanish settlement in Alta California. The Spanish Empire and Franciscan Order subsequently founded 21 missions between 1769 and 1823. These missions subjected thousands of California Native Americans who had been converted to Christianity,

[523] Clyde Duniway, ''Slavery in California after 1848,'' *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1 (1905), 241–48; Stacey Smith, ''Remaking Slavery in a Free State: Masters and Slaves in Gold Rush California,'' *Pacific Historical Review* (2011), 80.
[524] Lapp, Blacks in Gold Rush California, 1-2.
[525] Zoeth Skinner Eldredge, *The March of Portolá and the Discovery of the Bay of San Francisco* (San Francisco: The California Promotion Committee, 1909), 23.

known as "neophytes," to forced labor. Enslaved and free Blacks traveling to California on expeditions and trading ships also settled in the territory.[526]

In 1821, California became a possession of Mexico. Although Mexico outlawed slavery in its territories in 1829, the practice of institutionalized slavery continued in California until 1836 when Mexico officially disbanded the mission system. Even after the dissolution of the missions, enslavement continued in the state, and was further exacerbated by the discovery of gold in 1849. That year, thousands of prospectors made their way to Northern California in search of fortune. Several plantation owners from the Deep South embarked on the migration, forcing hundreds of enslaved persons across the plains to the gold mines. The population of Black laborers in the territory grew exponentially during this period; by 1849, California had more enslaved Blacks than any state or territory west of Texas.[527]

The most abundant proof that slavery was practiced in the state was the establishment of a "hiring-out system," in which enslaved Black laborers were made available to work for others when mining did not prove profitable for their owners. Enslavers monetized the labor of those enslaved as additional income by offering their services as domestic servants, cooks, waiters, or general laborers.[528]

California entered the United States in 1850 as a free state, although, in practice, slavery still existed. The constitution read "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, unless for the punishment of crimes, shall ever be tolerated in this state."[529] However, the state's new laws discriminated against Black persons. In 1852, California lawmakers passed the Fugitive Slave Law, which decreed that all Black persons who had entered California as an enslaved person prior to statehood remained the legal property of the slaveholder who brought them. In the seminal California Supreme Court case *In re Perkins* (1852), the court justices—all hailing from slave states—decided that an enslaved person brought into the free state did not become "ipso facto free." Instead, people were allowed to immigrate to California with "every species of property they had," including human property. Thus, in practical terms California operated during this period as a slave state. While the practice of enslavement mostly disappeared from the Golden State following the Civil War, many of the roles held by previously enslaved persons—mostly domestic and personal services—continued to be filled by free Black men and women.

Mining

Droves of prospectors traveled to California following the discovery of gold in January 1848; by 1849, nearly 100,000 people had migrated to the state. With "Gold Fever" came an increase in California's African American population. In 1850, there were approximately 1,000 Black residents in California; by 1852, that number doubled to over 2,000, doubling again to over 4,000 by 1860.[530] Exponential growth of the Black population continued despite the migration of between 700 and 800 African Americans from California to Victoria, Canada in 1858 when gold was discovered on the Fraser River.[531]

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[526] Delilah L. Beasley, "Slavery in California," *The Journal of Negro History* 3, no. 1 (January 1918): 33; Quintard Taylor, "African American Men in the American West, 1528-1990," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 569 (May 2000): 104.

[527] The exact number of enslaved African Americans present in California during the Gold Rush is unknown, as census takers did not distinguish between enslaved and free Black residents. It is known that the Black California population in 1850 was less than one percent of the total population. See the California population table, page 10.

[528] Lapp, Blacks in Gold Rush California, 132-133.

[529] Jean Pfaelzer, "None but Colored Testimony Against Him," 333.

[530] Rudolph M. Lapp, "The Negro in Gold Rush California," 81.

[531] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "'Do You Think I'll Lug Trunks?' African Americans in Gold Rush California," in *Riches for All*, ed. Kenneth N. Owens (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 162-163.

African Americans accounted for a small but noteworthy percentage of workers active in the mines of California. The Black mining population was composed of both enslaved and free Blacks. It is estimated that approximately 500 to 600 enslaved persons were involved in the Gold Rush.[532]

Enslaved Blacks often made the journey west with enslavers from the American South, and some were even sent to California on their own to represent their owner's interests.[533] Although most miners refused to allow a man to hire or control another man's labor—because it gave them an unfair advantage—many slave owners found ways around this practice. Enslavers would occasionally congregate in certain camps or stage their mining so that it appeared that the enslaved laborers were autonomous miners working their own claims. For enslaved Blacks, mining on successful claims could mean the opportunity to buy their or their families' freedom.

The Old Kentucky Ridge Mine site (Nevada County) was the largest mining enterprise in California to be operated by enslaved Black laborers. Following his discovery of gold in 1851, Colonel William F. English, a Florida plantation owner, brought approximately 40 enslaved persons to mine the site. Following English's death, many of the workers remained in the area, settling in the nearby town of Grass Valley.[534] In 1870, the school register showed eighteen Black children enrolled in the public school.[535] Grass Valley and Nevada City, also in Nevada County, later established important quartz mining enterprises.[536] In 1865, miner Edward Booth from Nevada County addressed the Second Colored Convention in California:

> …I will endeavor briefly to present a few facts respecting the condition of our people in my county. There are about five hundred colored people residing there, various employed… the majority of them are miners. It is with pride I say, we are showing to our White fellow-citizens, that we have some natural abilities. We are resolved to let them see that all we want is an equal chance, an open field and a fair fight… We intend to disprove the allegation that we are naturally inferior to them. The colored people of Nevada County possess property to the amount of $3,000,000 in mining claims, water, ditch stock, and some real estate. We have one church, no permanent school-house. A Company is forming to build one.[537]

Gold fever infected many African American communities in the northern free states. Reports of gold mining successes in leading African American newspapers, including Frederick Douglass' *North Star* and William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*, lured Black entrepreneurs westward. One African American miner, Henry Hall, returned to New York after making his fortune in gold and gave an address entitled "Hopes and Prospects of Colored People in California."[538]

In 1849, five men, including three Black men, established the Little Negro Hill Mine (El Dorado County) on the banks of the American River.[539] The Little Negro Hill and Big Negro Hill camps and neighboring town of Negro Hill attracted a diverse population of Black, White, Chinese, Spanish, Mexican, and Portuguese miners, peaking with a population of 1,200 by 1853. In 1855, a White mob attacked the Black quarters and killed a resident.[540]

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[532] Moore, "African Americans in Gold Rush California," 162.
[533] W. Sherman Savage, "The Negro on the Mining Frontier," *The Journal of Negro History* 30, no. 1 (January 1945): 35.
[534] "Kentucky Ridge Mine Slave Colony," Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission Application for Registration of Historical Landmark, March 6, 2021; Savage, 36.
[535] Russ Whiting, "Nevada County," *The Morning Union,* August 1, 1928, 1.
[536] Ralph Mann, "The Decade After the Gold Rush: Social Structure in Grass Valley and Nevada City, California, 1850-1860," *Pacific Historical Review* 41, no. 4 (November 1972), 484.
[537] Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 116; Juliet E.K. Walker, *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship* vol. 1 (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2009), 151.
[538] Gordon, 75.
[539] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 51.
[540] Paolo Sioli, *History of El Dorado County, California* (Oakland: Paolo Sioli, 1883), 201-202.

Mounting violence against Black inhabitants led many to leave the town, and it was fully abandoned by the 1860s. The site of Negro Hill town is now located beneath Folsom Lake.[541]

Other mines run by Black miners included the Sweet Vengeance Mine and the Rare Ripe Gold and Silver Mining Company in Brown's Valley (Yorba County). The Sweet Vengeance Mine in Brown's Valley was claimed by Fritz Vosburg, Abraham Holland, Gabriel Simms, Edward Duplex, and several other Black miners. The Sweet Vengeance mine was active from 1848 to 1854 and reaped notable profits during its run, earning upwards of $1,000 a week.[542] The Rare Ripe Gold and Silver Mining Company was a Black-operated quartz mine incorporated in 1868. With offices in Maysville, the company had a capital stock of 1,200 shares at $10 per share.[543]

One notable African American miner was Moses Rodgers, a freed person who taught himself to read and became a prominent mining engineer. As recalled by historian W. Sherman Savage, Rodgers' "knowledge made him one of the most distinguished workers in all of California and one who was consulted on all subjects dealing with mining."[544] Rodgers founded the Washington Mine in 1869 and served as its superintendent. By the 1880s, the Washington Mine employed over 30 men, including several Chinese workers. The mine had five main shafts, over 10,000 feet of underground workings, and reaped over a half million dollars in gold a year.[545]

In 1869, Fred Coleman, likely a former enslaved man from Kentucky, struck gold in Julian (San Diego County). The following year, several Confederate soldiers founded the town of Julian, which became a destination for many early Black settlers in San Diego County. America Newton, a formerly enslaved Black woman, and her young daughter settled in Julian and began a laundry business.

As in other sectors of the workforce, Black miners faced discrimination in mining towns. African Americans typically bunked together and, although they could freely drink and gamble alongside Whites, were limited in their lodging and dining options. This led to the establishment of "race businesses," or African American-owned and operated hotels and other businesses catering to Black miners.[546] Black workers who lived in mining counties and were not employed as miners often worked as laborers or cooks at these establishments.[547] In Julian, Black residents Albert and Margaret Robinson founded the Hotel Robinson (now the Julian Gold Rush Hotel) in 1897 as one such establishment; the hotel remains one of the oldest extant Black-owned businesses in the state.[548]

Overall, Black miners were heavily involved in the California Gold Rush, and a substantial number of African Americans migrated westward to California in search of fortune. Mining was a physical hardship for all Black miners, enslaved and free, but for some, it was also an opportunity for freedom and enrichment.

Railroads

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the railroads were both a means of migration, as well as a reason for the relocation of many African Americans to California. In the post-Civil War years, many Black men and

[541] Residents of the community were reburied in the Mormon Island Memorial Cemetery. Negro Hill was listed in 1957 as California Historical Landmark No. 570. "Negro Hill," *California Office of Historic Preservation,* accessed December 9, 2022, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/Detail/570.
[542] Gordon, 69.
[543] Savage, 43; Walker, *The History of Black Business in America*, 150.
[544] Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California,* 107; W. Sherman Savage, "The Negro in the Westward Movement," *The Journal of Negro History* 25, no. 4 (October 1940): 536.
[545] "Moses Rodgers, Mining Engineer Born," *African American Registry,* accessed December 9, 2022, https://aaregistry.org/story/moses-rodgers-pioneering-california-miner/.
[546] Savage, 35; California Department of Transportation, *A Historical Context and Archaeological Research Design for Mining Properties in California* (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Transportation, 2008), 66-67.
[547] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 85.
[548] Marisa Agha, "The Trailblazing Black Entrepreneurs Who Shaped a 19th Century California Boomtown," *Smithsonian Magazine* (April 28, 2022).

women gained employment on the transcontinental railroad. The largest company to hire African Americans was the Pullman Palace Car Company, which employed Black men as railroad porters. The company's founder, George Pullman, strategically recruited formerly enslaved people from the Deep South to wait on his passengers. As recounted by general manager L.S. Hungerford, "the old southern colored man makes the best porter on the car…He is more adapted to waiting on the passengers and gives them better attention and has a better manner."[549] The first Black porter for the company was hired as early as 1867. A common mantra among porters was that "Abe Lincoln freed the slaves and George Pullman hired 'em."[550] Some passengers derogatorily called Black porters "George," after George Pullman, a racial epithet from the Southern legacy of naming the enslaved after their owners.

In many ways, the porter job exploited Black workers. Porters were paid low wages, worked long hours, endured routine discrimination, and were denied promotion to conductor and other management jobs. Porters were expected to serve as maid, valet, nanny, doctor, and concierge to cars full of White passengers. Their pay was also unreliable. As compensation fluctuated, porters were forced to rely on tips from passengers. By the turn of the twentieth century, Porters increasingly sought to become salaried employees. Daily tips dropped by approximately 70% between 1890 and 1900, evidencing the job's financial instability and a reliance on public tipping.

Despite these drawbacks, many Black workers chose the position of porter over other limited employment options, because of the opportunities it afforded. For the most part, Pullman porter jobs provided workers with steady employment and the ability to travel around the country. It came to be considered one of the best jobs in the Black community, socially on par with teachers, funeral directors, and even doctors and lawyers. Porters often owned their own homes and cars and served as examples of Black upward mobility. They were considered "racial diplomats, mediating between their all-Negro, mainly poor world and their riders' all-White, mainly middle-class one."[551] Porters spread word of higher wages and opportunities, thereby galvanizing the Great Migration. By the 1920s, the Pullman company hired the largest number of African Americans of any company in the U.S.[552]

In addition to Pullman porters, in major urban centers Black workers found employment at railroad stations and roundhouses. Railroads hired Black workers as waiters, cooks, maintenance laborers, and maids. Black workers also worked as brakemen, yard switchmen, and firemen shoveling coal in the boiler. Thousands of Pullman porters and railroad workers traveled through and settled in California. Black railroad workers often built communities near railroad termini, such as the Black settlement of West Oakland. By 1930, over 60 percent of Black paychecks in Oakland came from either the Pullman Company or the Southern Pacific Railroad.[553]

Black railroad workers also revolutionized previously White-only labor unions in the United States. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (the Brotherhood) was the nation's first Black-led trade union and is discussed in greater detail below in the "Labor Unions" section.

Agriculture

[549] Commission on Industrial Relations, Industrial Relations: Final Report and Testimony Submitted to Congress by the Commission on Industrial Relations (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 9553-9554 as cited in Larry Tye, *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2004), 25.
[550] Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 23-26, 27, 33.
[551] Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 73.
[552] Quintard Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier: African American History in the Reshaping of the Twentieth-Century American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 7; Alison Rose Jefferson, "The Transcontinental Railroad, African Americans, and the California Dream," *California Historical Society* (June 17, 2019), accessed October 24, 2022, https://californiahistoricalsociety.org/blog/the-transcontinental-railroad-african-americans-and-the-california-dream/.
[553] Thomas Tramble and Wilma Tramble, *The Pullman Porters and West Oakland* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2007); Alison Rose Jefferson, "The Transcontinental Railroad"; Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier," 8.

In California during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, agriculture was not the most lucrative nor appealing labor opportunity available to Black workers. For some African Americans, agricultural work was seen as akin to the labor of slavery in the Deep South. Agricultural employment typically meant low wages; the need for seasonal migration; social disorganization and exploitation; a lack of public facilities; and hostility in nearby communities. These factors combined to make agricultural work often a last resort for Black laborers in California. As such, Black agricultural labor was limited in California as many African Americans sought employment in other sectors of the state's economy.

Most African Americans who migrated to California tended to arrive by rail and enter larger cities where they were able to find work, thus avoiding agricultural labor altogether. In turn, Blacks began to establish communities and gain political power in the major cities where they resided in substantial numbers, such as Los Angeles, Oakland, Bakersfield, San Francisco, and Sacramento.[554]

However, there were exceptions to this pattern. Two notable types of Black farm labor were established in California during this period. The first type was associated with the establishment of all-Black enterprises and communities, often focusing on an ideological view of agrarian life. The founding of these all-Black communities, such as Allensworth, is discussed in the Making a Nation theme. The second phenomenon, which is the focus of this sub-theme, was the direct recruitment of Black farm labor by landholders in Central California during periods of labor shortage. Black farm labor recruitment primarily took place during three distinct periods: at the turn of the twentieth century, during the Great Depression, and in the years following World War II. These waves of migration and labor are explored in greater detail below. While some Black agricultural workers did branch out to more rural areas for work, many maintained footholds in nearby cities, often through familial ties and friendships. Mobility and fluidity between rural and urban centers remained a strong aspect of Black life in California.

Beginning in the 1880s, Black laborers were actively recruited by landholders in the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys. The recruitment of African American labor was used to directly replace Chinese laborers, for whom there was mounting discrimination and immigration restriction during the period.

In 1884, the large landowning company of Haggin & Carr[555] in Bakersfield brought over 1,100 African Americans from Tennessee to Kern County. A few months later, 400 African Americans from South Carolina moved to Fresno County, and in 1888, 400 additional Black laborers migrated to the Fresno and Fowler areas.[556]

The scheme to recruit Black labor in the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys was recounted by F.M. Quimbey of the Missouri Pacific Railroad and R.A. Williams of the Memphis and Little Rock Railroad:

> The fact which led to the colored labor agency whose interest we represent was the reports in the south of the agitation in California against Chinese labor. As the south has tens of thousands of negroes who can barely make a living, we conceived [of] the idea of contracting for negro help here and shipping them out to take the place of the Chinese. So far, the scheme has been successful and satisfactory.[557]

Transportation for Southern Black laborers was paid by large landowners, to be taken from their wages until repaid. Conditions were poor, and many Black workers found that their new situation was no better than the one

[554] Wilson Record, "Negroes in the California Agricultural Labor Force," *Social Problems* 6, no. 4 (Spring 1959): 357.
[555] There is conflicting information as to whether the entity was named Haggin & Tevis or Haggin & Carr.
[556] Michael Eissinger, "Transplantation of African American and Cotton Culture to California's Rural San Joaquin Valley," unpublished transcript, n.d., accessed October 25, 2022, https://www.valleyhistory.org/_files/ugd/50b680_825de7953cc042b3a9519ac6e65ae723.pdf.
[557] *Pacific Rural Press,* April 28, 1888, 376, as recorded in: Lloyd H. Fisher, *The Harvest Labor Market in California* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 24.

they left in the South. While many Black laborers fulfilled their labor contracts, others set off to pursue better paying opportunities, or to find more stable employment.[558]

Recruitment occurred again in the 1910s and 1920s in the Imperial Valley, and several hundred Black laborers began working in the region, mostly picking cotton.[559] Between 1900 and 1920, the African American population in the San Joaquin Valley doubled to over 2,500.[560]

Two periods during which a notable number of African Americans sought jobs in the field were the Great Depression and post-World War II, when discriminatory hiring practices barred many Black workers from available jobs. African American agricultural labor continued in the 1930s and 1940s, as tens of thousands of Black "Oakies" traveled westward during the Great Depression and World War II era.[561] Alongside the thousands of African Americans fleeing the Deep South and heading to major urban centers, approximately 40,000 Black migrants arrived in the San Joaquin Valley, 7,000 of them settling in the Tulare Lake basin.[562] Notable Black communities were established in South Dos Palos and Cookseyville in Merced County, Teviston and Corcoran in Tulare County, and Lanare in Fresno County.[563]

In 1948, Robert "Boots" Parker, began transporting Black sharecroppers and tenant farmers from plantations in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas to cotton fields in the San Joaquin Valley. Many of the Black laborers who made the journey were escaping exploitative situations in which they could never escape debt.[564] In California, the workers were met with difficult conditions not dissimilar to the South. Many African Americans migrated from farm to farm depending on the harvesting season. Workers often thinned cotton in May, dug up onions, potatoes, and carrots in June, picked grapes in July, and returned to the cotton fields in October.[565] Despite increased Black involvement in California's agriculture during this period, few farms were owned or operated by African Americans.[566] Instead, African Americans mostly took agricultural jobs as a last resort during periods of economic turmoil.

Animosity between Black farm laborers and the communities they inhabited climaxed in the post-World War II years. For example, in 1951, *The Crisis* published a story titled "The Chico Story: A Black and White Harvest" that placed Black farm labor discrimination in California within the greater exploitation of a majority White owned and operated industry. As recounted in the story, several fruit and nut growing companies in Chico recruited several hundred African American workers from Richmond for the 1946 season with aid from the Emergency Farm Labor Project.[567] Upon arrival in Chico, Black laborers were met with discriminatorily low wages, subjected to vicious rumors and ostracization, and were barred from public establishments with "White

[558] Ultimately, it was the Japanese that filled the labor gap created by the exclusion of the Chinese.
[559] California Department of Transportation, *Work Camps: Historic Context and Archaeological Research Design* (Sacramento: California Department of Transportation, 2013), 30.
[560] Eissinger, "Transplantation of African American and Cotton Culture to California's Rural San Joaquin Valley," 9.
[561] Mark Arax, "A Lost Drive's Journey to a Lake of Broken Promises," *Los Angeles Times,* August 25, 2002, 192.
[562] Susan D. Anderson estimates that as many as 50,000 Black "Oakies" made the trip west whereas Mark Arax and Rick Wartzman estimate between 30,000 to 40,000 migrants. Susan D. Anderson, "We Are Not Strangers Here: African American Histories in Rural California," (Exhibition Envoy, 2021); Mark Arax and Rick Wartzman, *The King of California* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2003), 264.
[563] Arax and Wartzman, *The King of California*, 93, 96; Alex Hall, "Black Farmworkers in the Central Valley: Escaping Jim Crow for a Subtler Kind of Racism," *KQED,* February 22, 2019, accessed December 12, 2022, https://www.kqed.org/news/11727455/black-farmworkers-in-the-central-valley-escaping-jim-crow-for-a-subtler-kind-of-racism; Michael Essinger, "Cookseyville and Lanare: Two Rural African American Settlements," unpublished transcript, n.d.
[564] Mark Arax, "A Lost Tribe's Journey to a Land of Broken Promises," *Los Angeles Times,* August 25, 2002.
[565] Arax and Wartzman, *The King of California*, 264.
[566] California Department of Transportation, *Historical Context and Archaeological Resource Design for Agricultural Properties in California* (Sacramento: California Department of Transportation, 2007), 117.
[567] "Negro Labor to Be Used Here in Almond Harvest," *The Chico Enterprise,* August 3, 1946, 1.

Trade Only" signs. As a result, many Black farm laborers left Chico, mainly returning to Richmond. The article concluded:

> The experience of Negroes in the 1946 harvest around Chico was duplicated elsewhere in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. Chico is not an isolated case, but an example. The "factories in the fields" of California are adding another marginal race minority to their peculiar labor force.[568]

By the 1960s, the increased number of Mexican farm laborers, coupled with mechanized cotton harvesters and chemical defoliants, led many African Americans to leave the agricultural workforce. Over the course of the twentieth century, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and Mexican laborers all represented a greater proportion of the workforce in the state, although some Black communities continued to work in agriculture.

Domestic and Personal Service

Following the abolition of enslavement, domestic and personal service nonetheless remained a common source of employment for African Americans. Black women served as the foremost providers of domestic and personal services in the United States well into the twentieth century. Nationwide, Black female "breadwinners" accounted for 40 to 50 percent of the Black population between 1890 and 1920.[569] By 1900, 86 percent of working Black women were employed in domestic and personal service.[570] The four leading occupations of Black women in the West (including California) were servant, seamstress, laundress/washerwoman, and midwife. While some women were hired specifically to clean, cook, wash, or care for children, others were employed as general domestic workers, typically performing all of those tasks.

Perhaps the most famous free woman of African descent in early California was Mary Ellen Pleasant, who arrived in San Francisco in 1849. A sought-after cook, Pleasant auctioned off her culinary services, ultimately taking a position that paid $500 a month. She then invested her savings in an accounting firm, West and Harper, which was particularly sympathetic to African Americans.[571] Pleasant earned the title of "Mother" of California's early civil rights movement and established a local Underground Railroad.[572]

Nationwide, many Black women "remained in domestic service for generations due to the pervasiveness of racial discrimination, which limited all other occupational opportunities."[573] Domestic service was physically demanding and emotionally taxing, and as the twentieth century progressed, fewer White women were employed in the field, whereas the number of Black women increased. After 1900, the racial/regional delineation of the type of person engaged in domestic work blurred, as "racial/ethnic minority women, particularly black women, became engaged in domestic service nationwide."[574]

During the Great Depression, New Deal legislation excluded household service workers, many of whom were African American, from collective bargaining and minimum wage rights.[575] Domestic workers were explicitly excluded from the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, a move that denied workers from gaining equality in fair wages and overtime protections.

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[568] C. Wilson Record, "The Chico Story: A Black and White Harvest," *The Crisis* 58, no. 2 (February 1951): 133.
[569] Lawrence B. de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region," 297.
[570] Coleman, "African American Women and Community Development in California," 114.
[571] Nancy Taniguchi, "Weaving a Different World: Women and the California Gold Rush," *California History* 79, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 161.
[572] Turkiya Lowe, "Mary Ellen Pleasant," *BlackPast,* January 30, 2007, accessed June 19, 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/pleasant-mary-ellen-1814-1904/.
[573] Enobong Hannah Branch and Melissa E. Wooten, "Suited for Service: Racialized Rationalizations for the Ideal Domestic Servant from the Nineteenth to the Early Twentieth Century," *Social Science History* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 180.
[574] Branch and Wooten, "Suited for Service," 182.
[575] Joe William Trotter, *Workers on Arrival: Black Labor and the Making of America* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 117.

The issue of inequality in domestic work appeared in Los Angeles that same year. Recounting the year 1938 in review, the *California Eagle* reported that a "new, more fearful form of exploitation" for the Black domestic worker in Los Angeles was the private "House Work Service" bureau. The bureau matched employees with clients, took 20 percent of their earnings, and held their earnings until they could be "checked up on." The article continued:

> Here, you everlasting enemies of iniquity—you investigating committees and Reform movements—HERE is the material for which you yearn. Working women deliberately have been denied wages for honest labor. No more perfect object for reform could be discovered. We might even hint that this, an instance of brazen economic injustice, is more worthy of investigating than any three gambling games on Central Avenue.[576]

Although they most frequently found employment in domestic service in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Black women in California increasingly seized upon other opportunities that arose from the Fair Employment Practices Commission and anti-discrimination protections of the mid-twentieth century. Black women gained employment in teaching, hospitality, and hairdressing professions, among others.[577] Those who continued to work in domestic service received some protections with the 1976 Household Occupations Wage Order, which provided minimum wage, overtime, and other labor securities for domestic workers.

Logging and Milling

Timber harvesting in California dates to the first Native American inhabitants of the state, and continued through the Spanish, Mexican, and American eras. With the arrival of the California Gold Rush, the demand for lumber skyrocketed, leading to a "lumber boom" and revolution of the California lumber industry. Timber was an established enterprise by the 1850s, as California's vast timber reserves were exploited in the central and northern Coast Ranges and the Sierra Nevada. The demand for milled lumber consistently outpaced supply, a result of the unique requirements of the state's mining industry and the boom towns it created. The frequency with which virtually every town in California burned down further added to the demand.[578] In 1852, the first sawmills were established in the regions of Mariposa County, Madera County, and Fresno County now encompassed in the Sierra National Forest.[579]

African American workers were active in lumber mills across the state, with the largest concentration in Siskiyou, Shasta, Lassen, and Plumas Counties in Northern California beginning in the 1920s. During this period, Southern lumber industries, which had historically employed large numbers of African American laborers in the pine mills, were in decline as they exhausted the supply of available trees. The trend, coupled with the availability of large quantities of western lumber, incentivized many Southern milling companies to relocate their industries to the West Coast. Several of these relocated companies recruited laborers from the South to their new mills in California. What resulted was a veritable exodus of Black lumbermen from the South to northwestern California. The Long-Bell Lumber Company and its resultant community of Weed in Siskiyou County reflect this phenomenon.

The Long-Bell Lumber Company of Louisiana purchased an interest in the Weed Lumber Company in the first decade of the twentieth century, fully acquiring the company in 1922.[580] The company recruited Black workers

[576] "On the Sidewalk," *California Eagle,* January 5, 1939, 14.
[577] These careers are discussed in the "Employment" section of this theme.
[578] Brian D. Dillon and Richard H. Dillon, "Timberland Historical Archaeology Notes 3: A Brief History of Logging in California," *Timberland Historical Archaeology Notes* 16 (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, July 1995): 147-148.
[579] Bert Hurt, *A Sawmill History of the Sierra National Forest, 1852-1940* (San Francisco: U.S. Forest Service, 1941); Dillon and Dillon, 149.
[580] "Development at Weed is Planned by Long-Bell Co.," *Record Searchlight,* January 27, 1922, 1.

from its sawmills in De Ridder and Longville, Louisiana, fronting the $89 train fare from Louisiana to Weed.[581] Once workers had repaid the cost of their ticket, they often sent money back to Louisiana for additional train fares so that their friends and family could join them in California.

The practice of recruiting Black loggers from the South was a point of racial contention in the lumber industry's labor sector. At Weed and elsewhere, racial tensions surrounding the recruitment of Black workers surfaced in logging labor union disputes. In an attempt to gain membership and support, some labor unions seized on racist prejudices and a fear of unemployment, claiming that lumber companies were replacing White workers with Black ones. Numerous companies released newspaper statements disputing these claims. For example, in 1923, when a labor group distributed pamphlets claiming 30 White men in the Oroville Mill Yards in Butte County were replaced with "imported negro labor," the lumber company officials published an article clarifying that while some yard men were replaced by Black laborers, they were all offered employment by the company in other positions.[582]

Another company that denied replacing White laborers with Black labor was the Powell Lumber Company. In 1926, the Powell Lumber Company—originally out of Lake Charles, Louisiana—purchased two mills in Quincy (Plumas County) and founded the Quincy Lumber Company. A year after its founding, the Quincy Lumber Company issued a statement denying rumors that the company had recruited Black laborers to take the place of White men. As recorded in the *Feather River Bulletin*:

> There has been no importation of negro labor whatsoever by us to work in our plant, either at Quincy or Sloat…although other lumber companies have found it necessary to import labor to take care of such shortage of labor as has existed. Such has not been our policy and will not be.[583]

Regardless of the specific recruiting methods, Black loggers came to represent a significant sector of the lumber industry's workforce. Over the course of the 1930s, Quincy Lumber employed hundreds of White and Black migrants from Louisiana and Arkansas; by 1940, the 400 African Americans in town comprised 40% of Quincy's population.[584] Weed also had a significant number of African Americans. In 1922, there were approximately 150 Black men and 75 Black women in Weed—within a few years, that number had grown to approximately 1,000 Black residents.[585]

Prejudice infiltrated many sectors of life for Black mill workers. Black workers were typically delegated the most dangerous jobs in the mill. In Weed, African Americans often worked as the choker setters on a skidder called the "Titanic." The skidder was a machine used to cable-haul felled timber powered by steam boilers. It was estimated that a Black worker died at the job every week at Weed.[586]

Many mill camps, including Weed and Quincy, were strictly segregated with specific areas designated for African American workers.[587] The Long-Bell Lumber Company segregated its Black workers into the "the Quarters," now known as the Lincoln Heights neighborhood of Weed.[588] In Lincoln Heights, Black residents developed businesses, boarding houses, inns, churches, and a cemetery to serve the burgeoning Black

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[581] "Women Will Get Jobs Back and Back Pay," *The Searchlight,* July 30, 1921, 1.
[582] "Alleged I.W.W. Base at Oroville is Broken Up with Four Arrests," *The Sacramento Bee,* March 24, 1923, 19.
[583] "Quincy Lumber Company Issues Statement on Negro Question," *Feather River Bulletin,* August 18, 1927, 1.
[584] Jeff Crawford, "Working the Quincy Mill," *Black Past,* January 8, 2008.
[585] "Star Reporter Interviews Leader of Weed Negroes," *The Sacramento Star,* August 7, 1922, 2; James Langford, "African Americans in the Shadow of Mt. Shasta: The Black Community of Weed, California," *Black Past,* March 15, 2020; Caltrans, *Work Camps*, 30.
[586] Geoff Mann, "Race, Skill, and Section in Northern California," *Politics & Society* 30, no. 3 (September 2002): 466.
[587] "Negro Cremated in Fire at Sawmill," *Plumas Independent,* October 3, 1929, 1.
[588] Linda E. Freeman, "Using Historical GIS to Map Segregation in the Company Town of Weed, Siskiyou County, California During the 1930 United States Census" (Master's Thesis, California State University, Dominguez Hills, Summer 2012).

community.[589] The Mt. Shasta Baptist Church was founded in 1924, and the Wayside Church of God in Christ was established in 1930.[590] Some mills also refused to hire Black workers with school-age children in an attempt to prevent Black children from attending mill-run schools.[591]

Defense Industries

Black workers had a complicated and often tenuous relationship with the defense and wartime industry in California, with discrimination and exclusion, punctuated by periods of intense involvement. Prior to the 1940s, California's booming aircraft industry only accepted African Americans in custodial positions.[592]

By the 1930s, Black men holding industrial jobs reached over 50 percent in major cities of the Northeast and Midwest, whereas the West Coast population was limited to below 30 percent.[593] This changed during World War II, when defense industries recruited increasing numbers of African Americans. Between 1942 and 1945, over 340,000 African Americans moved to California seeking work in the expanded defense industries.[594]

The African American population in the Bay Area, one of the major locations of the defense industry, grew exponentially in the 1940s; between 1940 and 1944, the Black population increased by 227 percent in San Francisco; 157 percent in Oakland; and 2,000 percent in Richmond.[595] Approximately seventy percent of the employed Black newcomers worked in the shipbuilding industry. Two of the main employers of Black defense workers in the Bay Area were the Kaiser shipyards in Richmond and the Marinship shipyards in Sausalito.[596] To meet wartime demands, Kaiser and Marinship shipyards innovated assembly line production techniques. Although they initially attempted to hire only Whites in skilled trades, by the war years, the companies were forced to hire Black workers because of labor shortages. By 1942, both Kaiser and Marinship were actively recruiting workers from the South by distributing circulars that lauded California's climate and employment opportunities. African Americans came to account for ten percent of laborers at Marinship and twenty percent of Kaiser's workforce during this period.[597] By 1943, there were approximately 1,000 Black women working at the four Kaiser shipyards.[598]

In Los Angeles County, shipyard workers were employed by the "Big 3" ship-building companies on Terminal Island: Consolidated Steel's Shipbuilding Division, Western Pipe and Steel Company, and the California Shipbuilding Company (Calship). African Americans were hired directly by the companies; however, they were not accepted into the shipyard International Brotherhood of Boilermakers labor union and therefore were not protected by the union. By 1944, they comprised fifteen percent of the workforce in the "Big 3" shipyards.[599] This

[589] Two examples of these resources included the Shasta Inn and the Weed Lumber Company Boarding House at 829 and 877 N. Davis Avenue, respectively. These properties were listed in the National Register of Historic Places; they no longer appear to be extant.
[590] The Mt. Shasta Baptist Church is located at 1245 Church Avenue; the Wayside Church of God and Christ is located at 1147 Church Avenue, Weed; "Five Views: The Quarters (Lincoln Heights)," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2h83.htm.
[591] "Quincy Lumber Company Issues Statement on Negro Question," *Feather River Bulletin,* August 18, 1927, 1.
[592] Josh Sides, "Battle on the Home Front: African American Shipyard Workers in World War II Los Angeles," *California History* 75, no. 3 (Fall 1996): 251.
[593] Trotter, *Workers on Arrival*, 80.
[594] California Department of Transportation, *Tract Housing in California, 1945-1974* (Sacramento: California Department of Transportation, 2011), 29; Fisher, "Political Development of the Black Community in California," 262.
[595] Marilynn S. Johnson, "Urban Arsenals: War Housing and Social Change in Richmond and Oakland, California, 1941-1945," *Pacific Historical Review* 60, no. 3 (August 1991): 287.
[596] Charles Wollenberg, *Marinship at War: Shipbuilding and Social Change in Wartime Sausalito* (Berkeley: Western Heritage Press, 1990), 74-72.
[597] Trotter, *Workers on Arrival*, 81.
[598] "Rushing the SS Washington Carver to Completion," *Library of Congress,* accessed January 3, 2023, https://www.loc.gov/item/2017697669/.
[599] Sides, *L.A. City Limits*, 252.

racial discrimination by the Boilermakers and its greater legal repercussions influenced labor union racial policies well into the future, as discussed in greater detail below. Black workers also found a permanent foothold in several industries in Los Angeles County, including the steel, rubber, and food processing industries.[600] Some African American workers gained employment at aircraft manufacturing companies, such as North American Aviation, Vultee, and Douglas Aircraft Company. These workers were represented by the United Auto Workers (UAW), which actively pursued discrimination-related grievances and supported "Negro Victory" movements. Some of those African Americans employed were Black women.[601]

Labor Unions

> Shall the labor unions use their influence to deprive the black man of his opportunity to labor, and shall they, as far as possible, push the Negro into the position of a professional 'strikebreaker'; or will the labor unions…unite with those who want to give every man, regardless of color, race or creed, what Colonel Roosevelt calls the 'square deal' in the matters of labor, using their influence to widen rather than to narrow the Negro's present opportunities?[602]
>
> -Booker T. Washington, 1913

Black workers in California and nationwide had a fraught relationship with organized labor. Several seminal events influenced Black engagement with, and representation within, labor unions in California and nationwide over the course of the twentieth century.[603] As articulated by Booker T. Washington in 1913, the Black worker's relationship with American organized labor was complicated. In the early part of the twentieth century, most unions in the United States at the time discriminated against non-White laborers, and limited membership to White workers. African Americans, otherwise barred from holding specialized labor jobs in unionized companies, were occasionally brought in as strikebreakers, or "scabs."[604] Some African Americans, most famously Booker T. Washington, distrusted organized unions and thus had no qualms about breaking a strike to seize an employment opportunity.[605] One example of Black strikebreaking occurred in 1903 when a majority Mexican workforce walked off their jobs constructing the Pacific Electric Railway in Los Angeles because of unlivable wages. Owner and developer Henry Huntington responded by recruiting thousands of Black workers from Southern states, essentially doubling the size of Los Angeles' Black community.[606]

Other Black activists, such as George Washington Whitley, did not agree with strikebreaking. Whitley ran an employment agency and established the Mutual Organization League for the purpose of organizing Black workers. In 1910, he stated that, "under no circumstances would we again be used as strikebreakers…We now know that we must organize industrially and politically along with our white brothers."[607] Whitley believed that holding strong during strikes was one way to gain political strength and thus equality.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids (Brotherhood) was a prominent symbol of the Black labor movement from 1925 to the 1940s. Founded by A. Phillip Randolph in 1925, the Brotherhood was the nation's first Black-led trade union. The Brotherhood, which demanded improved wages and better working conditions,

[600] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 88.
[601] Fred B. Glass, *From Mission to Microchip: A History of the California Labor Movement* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 765.
[602] Booker T. Washington, "The Negro and Labor Unions," *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1913): 757.
[603] While the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) also made important labor gains, this organization is discussed in the "Making a Democracy" theme.
[604] Eric Arnesen, "Specter of the Black Strikebreaker: Race, Employment and Labor Activism in the Industrial Era," *Labor History* 44, no. 3, (2003): 320.
[605] Peter Cole, *Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 134.
[606] Glass, *From Mission to Microchip*, 495.
[607] Glass, *From Mission to Microchip*, 521.

was faced with opposition from the Pullman Company, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and the anti-union pro-Pullman sentiments of the Black community. Despite these odds, Randolph ultimately convinced the Black community that Pullman's paternalism "masked what was in fact a servile position for blacks within the company and a subtle recapitulation of the master-slave relationship."[608] The union adopted the motto "Service not Servitude," and came to reflect a growing race consciousness of Black workers.[609] The Brotherhood was finally recognized by the Pullman company and granted an international charter by the AFL in 1935, the first Black labor union to do so. It won its first contract in 1937.[610]

From its inception, the Brotherhood maintained a West Coast office in Oakland. C.L. (Cottrell Laurence) Dellums, who ran the Oakland branches of the Brotherhood and the NAACP, later took over from Randolph as president of the Brotherhood. According to Dellums, he and Randolph "were the only ones generally that saw the Brotherhood as a racial movement and as part of the civil rights struggle."[611] The Brotherhood became a vehicle and a symbol of Black advancement and one of the earliest installments of the civil rights movement.

The 1930s saw a dramatic rise of organized labor in the United States, largely because of the Roosevelt administration's pro-union stance and legislation enacted during the early New Deal. The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 provided for collective bargaining, whereas the National Labor Relations Act (also known as the Wagner Act) required businesses to bargain with labor unions in good faith.[612]

It was in this environment that California's longshoremen organized what would become one of the longest and most important strikes in the state's labor history, the 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike. In May 1934, demanding recognition and representation on the docks, thousands of longshoremen belonging to the Pacific Coast District of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) walked off their jobs. In order to stymie the hiring of scabs, union leaders promised that, should Black workers support the longshoremen's strike, they would be allowed to join the union and work at any dock on the West Coast. The strike lasted 83 days and expanded to include a general strike of some 150,000 workers in San Francisco for four days. In July, over 2,000 strikers gathered, and the U.S. government called in National Guardsmen toting machine guns and bayoneted rifles.[613]

The strike ultimately ended in victory for the longshoremen, leading to the unionization of all the West Coast ports, union control of hiring, and a standardized six-hour workday.[614] In 1937, the union was racially integrated, and was later renamed the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) and affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). By the mid- 1940s, the ILWU was twenty-five percent Black.[615] Even more dramatic a shift was Local 10 of the ILWU in the Bay Area, which was a nearly all-White union in the 1930s but transformed into a majority Black group by the 1960s.[616] Even after integration, some African Americans continued to have a tenuous relationship with the ILWU. For example, following the end of World War II, the union demanded that some Black workers quit with the return of White servicemen seeking jobs.

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[608] Daren Salter, "Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (1925-1978)," *Black Past,* November 24, 2007, accessed November 23, 2022, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/brotherhood-sleeping-car-porters-1925-1978/.
[609] Trotter, *Workers on Arrival*, 115.
[610] Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 204-206.
[611] Earl Warren Oral History Project, University of California Berkeley. Interview by Joyce Henderson of C. L. Dellums, 1973, 140 qtd. in: Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 219.
[612] "Labor Unions During the Great Depression and New Deal," *Library of Congress,* accessed December 19, 2022, https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/united-states-history-primary-source-timeline/great-depression-and-world-war-ii-1929-1945/labor-unions-during-great-depression-and-new-deal.
[613] The protest was centered on the headquarters of the International Longshoremen Association Local 38-79 Hall at 113 Steuart Street. "2,000 Face Guardsmen's Machine Guns, Bayonets Along S.F. Waterfront," *Oakland Tribune,* July 6, 1934, 1.
[614] Bruce Nelson, "The 'Lords of the Docks' Reconsidered: Race Relations among West Coast Longshoremen, 1933-61," *Waterfront Workers: New Perspectives on Race and Class* ed. Calvin Winslow (1998), 157.
[615] Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier," 16.
[616] Cole, Dockworker Power, 29.

During the World War II era, shipbuilding emerged as a major wartime defense industry centered in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. The demand for Liberty ships made the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers (Boilermakers) one of the most powerful labor unions in the country.[617] The Boilermakers was a "lily-white" organization that systematically excluded Blacks from full membership and represented about seventy percent of the craft workers at Marinship and other Bay Area shipyards.

In 1937, the Boilermakers finally modified their racial policies to authorize the establishment of all-Black "auxiliaries," which were not full union locals but instead were subordinate to White locals and received smaller insurance benefits and fewer securities than White members. Auxiliaries also had no independent grievance procedures and were otherwise limited in their powers. Many Black workers resented being forced to join and pay dues to an auxiliary that did not offer them comparable benefits and rights as their White counterparts. In 1943, 2,000 Black shipyard workers employed at Calship, Consolidated, and Western Pope and Steel plants picketed outside of the union headquarters' grand opening in Los Angeles.[618]

In the Bay Area, when several hundred Black workers refused to pay their auxiliary dues for work clearance, the union ordered Marinship management to fire the workers, resulting in a labor protest of about 1,000 workers.[619] The Boilermakers continued to force Black workers into separate auxiliaries, an issue that came to a head in 1944 with the court case of *Marinship v. James.* That year, NAACP president Joseph James filed suit against his employer Marinship and the Boilermakers for discrimination and inequality. The California Supreme Court ruled in his favor.[620] In 1948, the Boilermakers union in the Bay Area's shipyards was racially integrated.

Sub-Theme: Public Employment

Civic employment for Black Californians has a complicated history fraught with discrimination, segregation, and perseverance. African American civic employment has been impacted by several major events and notable legislation, particularly those enacted as part of the New Deal. This section explores the various aspects of employment in the public sector, notably in city, state, and federal positions. These include emergency services, such as fire departments and law enforcement, as well as other public roles, such as education, health care, social welfare, clerical, and postal work. Jobs were skilled and unskilled, but in both cases, Black employees faced a glass ceiling on advancement.

Public Works Programs and the New Deal

During the Great Depression, government jobs and work projects were the largest source of new employment for Black Californians. African Americans were disproportionately affected by the economic depression. The National Urban League's 1931 *Annual Report* found that in 106 major cities in the United States, "the proportion of Negroes unemployed was 30 to 50 percent greater than for whites."[621] By 1933, Black Californians on relief comprised 17.8 percent of the state's population, while making up only 1.4 percent of the state's inhabitants.[622] In 1934, African American unemployment in Los Angeles fell to fifty percent.

To combat high unemployment rates, President Franklin Roosevelt enacted a series of programs, public works projects, financial reforms, and regulations between 1933 and 1939, collectively known as the New Deal. The New Deal sought to provide "relief, recovery, and reform" for the American public, and stimulate the economy. Nationwide, New Deal-era work-relief and public works programs hired approximately two million African

[617] Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier," 10.
[618] "Picket Jim-Crowers," *California Eagle,* July 8, 1943, 1.
[619] "Parley to Seek Solution of Marinship Race Problem," *Oakland Tribune,* November 28, 1943, 1.
[620] Taylor, "Facing the Urban Frontier," 11.
[621] Cole, *Dockworker Power*, 121.
[622] "James A. Fisher, "The Political Development of the Black Community in California, 1850-1950," *California Historical Quarterly* 50 No 3 (September 1971): 261.

Americans. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), Civil Works Administration (CWA), Works Progress Administration (WPA), and National Youth Administration (NYA) were responsible for hiring the largest number of Black workers. While some of these programs were racially segregated, others were integrated.[623]

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was one federal program intended to put the unemployed to work beginning in 1933. Although the program at first mandated that no discrimination be made on account of "race, color, or creed," by 1935, White and non-White enrollees were completely segregated.[624] This was accomplished with the formation of five all Black companies in California. Each company averaged about 150 men and performed a variety of tasks. Four of these companies were located in Southern California. African American CCC companies undertook projects at Cleveland National Forest, Los Angeles National Forest, Los Padres National Forest, and San Bernardino National Forest. These companies were instrumental in the development of campgrounds, landscaping, fire suppression, and removal of hazards from roads and trails. Nationwide, 20,000 Black youths worked in the CCC between 1933 and 1942.[625] The CCC was officially terminated in 1942.[626]

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was arguably the most significant New Deal program of the 1930s, especially for African Americans. The WPA program hired about 425,000 Black relief workers by 1939. The WPA also focused on disadvantaged Black communities, providing health clinics, hospitals, new schools, and recreational facilities.[627] The WPA had a section on racial relations that advised the WPA on racial problems; investigated complaints charging racial discrimination; prepared special informational material; and collected and analyzed data concerning the employment needs of Black workers. Despite these precautions, some Black workers were still subjected to discrimination and segregation in the WPA.

Black workers also had difficulty finding jobs after leaving the WPA. In its internal studies, the WPA found that Black individuals were "at a disadvantage in obtaining private jobs in competition with white workers," a phenomenon "reflected in the steadily growing proportion of Negro workers on the WPA rolls in the later years of the program."[628] Another study on the impact of the WPA on African Americans mused that it would be difficult to say if the number of Black workers given WPA employment represented a "fair distribution" of jobs, "since needs among Negroes are undoubtedly relatively greater than among white workers."[629]

Following the New Deal, the next major federal legislation aimed at stymieing discrimination in employment was Executive Order 8802, signed into law by President Roosevelt in 1941 at the start of the United States' involvement in World War II. Executive Order 8802 banned racial discrimination in the defense industries and formed an office tasked with ensuring non-discrimination policies in the military; Executive Order 8802 is discussed in greater detail in the "African Americans in the Military" section below.[630]

Fair Employment Legislation

[623] "African Americans," *The Living New Deal,* accessed April 26, 2023, https://livingnewdeal.org/the-new-deal-and-racism/new-deal-inclusion/african-americans-2/.
[624] Cole, *Dockworker Power*, 122.
[625] James M. Sears, "Black Americans and the New Deal," *The History Teacher* 10, no. 1 (November 1976), 91.
[626] Cole, *Dockworker Power*, 122-123.
[627] Federal Works Agency, *Way of Progress: Negro Participation in the Federal Works Agency Program,* United States Federal Works Agency (Washington, D.C.: Federal Works Agency, 1940).
[628] "Negroes on the WPA Rolls," *Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-43,* United States Federal Works Agency (Washington, D.C.: Federal Works Agency, 1943), 45.
[629] Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943), 289.
[630] Executive Order 8802 is discussed in more detail in the "Military" section of this theme.

One of the next major interventions of the government in improving African American access to jobs, this time at the state level, was the establishment of the California Fair Employment Practices Act of 1959, followed by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 at the federal level.

The California Fair Employment Practices Act was first introduced in 1945 by civil rights activist Edward Howden, although it was not until fourteen years later in 1959 that the law was adopted. The legislation sought to "protect and safeguard the right and opportunity of all persons to seek, obtain, and hold employment without discrimination or abridgement on account of race, religious creed, color, national origin, or ancestry." To effectuate the policy, the Act created the Fair Employment Practice Commission (FEPA), which was tasked with adopting, amending, and rescinding suitable rules and regulations and investigating complaints alleging discrimination.[631] The agency established offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles in 1959 and in San Diego and Fresno in 1963.[632]

The successes of the FEPA were mixed, and many critics decried the slow process of bringing individual suits against discriminating employers. As argued by Herbert Hill in April of 1964:

> The time has now come to insist upon a fundamentally new approach in the operation of state fair employment commissions and for the adoption of a strong federal fair employment practices law that operated with new standards and enforcement procedures. For the Negro wage earner, the limited and inadequate state FEP commissions are no substitute for broad federal actions to eliminate the deeply entrenched patters of employment discrimination.[633]

California experienced some of the largest and most dramatic public demonstrations against job discrimination in the early 1960s.[634] In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, a benchmark legislation that prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The Act prohibited discrimination in public accommodations and federally funded programs and strengthened the enforcement of voting rights and the desegregation of schools. The Civil Rights Act ended "Jim Crow" laws, or the constitutionality of "separate but equal."[635] However, although discrimination was officially outlawed, it continued in practice.

Shortly thereafter, in 1963, the California Fair Housing Act (also known as the Rumford Act) was enacted. (This legislation is discussed in greater detail in the Making a Democracy theme.) In 1980, the Fair Employment Practices Act (1959) and the Fair Housing Act (1968) were consolidated to form the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA).

Representative Public Positions

Fire Department

African Americans have worked as firefighters[636] in California since the nineteenth century but have continuously faced discrimination and segregation. Nationally, some of the earliest firemen were associated with the railroads or with the U.S. Navy. In California, a common pattern in municipal fire departments was the early hiring of several Black firemen in segregated units, with widespread hiring not occurring until the 1960s Fire departments were often the last city departments to hire African Americans in proportion to their population. Integration of

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631 CAL. Labor Code § 1411, Approved by Governor April 16, 1959.
632 Eileen Boris, "Fair Employment and the Origins of Affirmative Action in the 1940s," *NWSA Journal* 10, no. 3 (Autumn 1998): 188.
633 Herbert Hill, "Twenty Years of State Fair Employment Practice Commissions: A Critical Analysis with Recommendations," *Buffalo Law Review* 14, no. 1 (1964): 23.
634 For more on this, see the Making a Democracy theme.
635 "Legal Highlight: The Civil Rights Act of 1964," *U.S. Department of Labor,* Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management, accessed April 26, 2023, https://www.dol.gov/agencies/oasam/civil-rights-center/statutes/civil-rights-act-of-1964.
636 The term "fireman" was used until the 1970s when women became eligible for these jobs. After that, the term was changed to the gender-neutral term "firefighter."

Fire Departments is particularly complicated because many firefighters live together, and stations are located throughout cities. White firefighters frequently protested living with Black or female firefighters. Even the establishment of segregated, Black fire stations could elicit protest from surrounding White neighbors, who did not want Black firefighters stationed nearby.[637] This pattern played out in several case study cities: Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland, and Bakersfield.

In Los Angeles, Sam Haskins was the first Black fireman to be hired by the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). Hired in 1888, Haskins was run over by a fire engine in 1895.[638] In 1902, a majority of the city's African American firemen were segregated to Hose Company No. 4, located on Loma Drive near Beverly Boulevard. One exception seems to have been B.F. Anderson, a Black fireman stationed out of Chemical Engine No. 1 on Loma Drive, who single-handedly tamed a chemical fire in the Westlake neighborhood in 1906.[639] Another example was Jake Clark, a Black fireman who worked at the city incinerator on Santa Fe Avenue in 1913.[640]

By 1924, the LAFD assigned all Black firefighters in the city to Fire Station No. 30 on Central Avenue, later adding Fire Station No. 14.[641] In the 1950s and 1960s, under the leadership of Thomas Neusom, Loren Miller, and Rev. H.H. Brookins, the NAACP waged campaigns to desegregate the Los Angeles Fire Department. The Stentorians, an all-Black firefighter advocacy organization formed in 1954, also fought segregation. The department was racially integrated in 1956, though discrimination and racism remained a commonplace occurrence for decades to come.[642] Racial animosity towards Black firefighters continued in the department, to such an extent that the number of Black firefighters actually declined following integration. By the early 1970s, African Americans represented 18 percent of the city's population but only 3 percent of the department. In 1972, the U.S. Department of Justice sued the City of Los Angeles for racial discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. In 1974, a consent decree required the City to appoint minority applicants until the department reflected the population; changed the civil service classification from fireman to firefighter; and opened the position to women.[643]

In San Diego, the second decade of the twentieth century saw several African Americans in the fire department. Black firefighters joined the force in 1917, followed by the establishment of Hose Company No. 19 in September 1919 that was stationed at Oceanview Boulevard and 36th Street. In 1923, a proposal to locate a station with Black firemen in the Logan Heights neighborhood of San Diego was met with strong community opposition. A local petition signed by 400 residents declared that locating Black firemen in the area would result in Black residents moving to the neighborhood, ultimately leading to "injury and damage to and dissatisfaction of the White residents."[644] Black firefighters became common in San Diego only after the 1960s.

In 1920, the Oakland Fire Department appointed four Black men as firefighters, including Roy Treece, creating a separate company for them in West Oakland.[645] The hiring of these Black firefighters was met with community

[637] "Citizens Protest 'Colored' Fire Station," *California Eagle,* March 27, 1931, 1.
[638] "Fireman Run Over and Killed," *The Evening Mail,* November 20, 1895, 3.
[639] "Negro Fireman Saves District," *Los Angeles Times,* June 18, 1906, 13.
[640] "Used Distillate to Start Fire; Burned," *Los Angeles Evening Post-record,* September 3, 1913, 2.
[641] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 89-90. Fire Station No. 30 is listed as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No. 289.
[642] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 89; Rachel Brown and Danielle Nelson, "All-Black Firefighter Advocacy Group Continues to Promote Equality for those in Fire Service," *ABC 7,* February 15, 2023; "125 Attend Local Meeting of NAACP," *Pomona Progress Bulletin,* September 10, 1956, 11.
[643] Teresa Grimes, "Historic-Cultural Monument Nomination for Fire Station No. 14," June 3, 2021, 5.
[644] "Would Oust San Diego Negro Fireman," *California Eagle,* November 30, 1923, 1.
[645] Tramble and Tramble, The Pullman Porters and West Oakland, 190.

protest, and residents near Engine House No. 11 requested the company be relocated.[646] In 1925, the first segregated station was founded as Engine No. 22 at 3320 Magnolia Street.

Bakersfield had Black firemen serving at the Kern County fire station on Cottonwood Road by 1948.[647] This continued to be the only Black, and fully segregated, fire station into the mid-1950s. In 1954, James Benjamin, chairman of the executive committee of the Bakersfield chapter of the NAACP wrote a report claiming that one Bakersfield fire station had Black firemen, while the rest had none. As a result, the Bakersfield City Council ordered an investigation of racial segregation in local firehouses in 1954.[648]

Police Department/Law Enforcement

Like that of other civic departments, the history of Black involvement in California law enforcement began in major cities including Los Angeles, San Diego, and Oakland. Police departments in these cities often had several early Black police officers hired in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Early Black law enforcement officers were often assigned to largely Black neighborhoods, such as the Central Avenue corridor in Los Angeles and "Darktown" in San Diego.[649]

Black police officers were also often limited in their duties; they were often prohibited from driving cars at night and carrying a firearm or handcuffs. Many early Black police officers were assigned to "special duty," such as serving as chauffeurs or lifeguards.[650] By the 1920s, the hiring of Black police officers had ebbed in many cities, largely due to increased prejudices and segregation.

Animosity and prejudice limited advancement in the law enforcement for those African Americans already on the police force. It was not until after World War II, when the NAACP and other civil rights organizations began exerting concerted pressure to improve law enforcement opportunities, that many departments enacted meaningful increases in the number of Black officers on their staff. Many did not fully integrate until the 1950s or 1960s.

Los Angeles was the first city in California to appoint an African American to law enforcement. Robert William Stewart was the first Black man hired in Los Angeles law enforcement, beginning his career in 1889. Following Stewart, Frank White (1910), Charles S. Broady (1914), and Jesse Kimbrough (1916), were the next four Black police officers hired by the Department.[651] The City's first Black female police officer, Georgia Ann Robinson, was hired in 1916.[652] Maceo B. Sheffield was one of the first Black police detectives.[653] By the 1920s, the Los Angeles Police Department had limited its hiring of Black police officers. In 1931, the *California Eagle* recorded that of the 2,500 police officers, only 44 were African American, and because "there are about sixty thousand Negro inhabitants, ten thousand of them taxpayers, we consider this an unequal proportion." It continued that "not since 1928 has there been a promotion in Negro police ranks."[654] Eight years later, there were 46 Black police officers.[655] While the Los Angeles Police Department maintained that it didn't practice segregation or

[646] "Protest Filed Over Firemen," *Oakland Tribune,* May 27, 1920, 7.
[647] "Home Owner Lauds Work of Firemen," *Bakersfield Californian,* July 6, 1948, 18.
[648] "Bakersfield Probes Color Line Charges," *Tulare Advance-Register,* November 10, 1954, 1.
[649] "Det. Jesse Kimbrough Retires," *California Eagle,* September 14, 1939, 3; "Garrott Seeks Permanent Job as Newton St. Captain," *California Eagle,* January 20, 1938, 1; "On the Sidewalk," *California Eagle,* September 25, 1931, 1; "First Big Change Since Advent of New Regime," *California Eagle,* February 2, 1934, 1.
[650] "Timeline," *San Diego Police Museum,* accessed August 3, 2023, http://www.sdpolicemuseum.com/BLACK-OFFICERS.html.
[651] "Det. Jesse Kimbrough Retires," *California Eagle,* September 14, 1939, 3.
[652] "On the Sidewalk," *California Eagle,* April 8, 1932, 9.
[653] Mose Sheffield was the defendant in a murder and bribery trial in 1927; he was found not guilty. "Acquitted of Murder," *Fresno Morning Republican,* July 24, 1927, 1.
[654] "On the Sidewalk," *California Eagle,* October 9, 1931, 1.
[655] "Det. Jesse Kimbrough Retires," *California Eagle,* September 14, 1939, 3.

discrimination, as late as 1959 only 3 percent of the department's officers were Black, while African Americans represented 13.5 percent of the total population.[656]

The Los Angeles County' Sheriff's Department hired the city's first Black deputy, Julius Boyd Loving in 1899. Loving served as the vice president of the Afro American League and was active in several African American fraternal orders. Stationed at the county jail, he served as the County's only African American deputy sheriff for several decades.[657] In 1944, after mounting community pressure, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department hired their first African American female deputy sheriff, Doris Spears. The following year, the department hired eight additional African Americans, bringing the total to twenty-seven Black deputy sheriffs. After substantial pressure, African Americans were increasingly assigned to the same duties and responsibilities as their White counterparts. It was not until the 1950s, however, that the department was fully integrated.[658]

In San Diego, Black patrolman Frank McCarter was hired in 1909 with patrol duties limited to the largely Black area of San Diego along Union Street between Market and J Streets.[659] J.C. Roark and Charles Swain were hired in 1913. Reginald Stuart Townsend was hired as the city's first Black Detective in 1915. By the late 1910s, the department was increasingly prejudiced against non-White officers, and in 1919, Townsend was fired. Several Black men were hired by the Department, in such roles as patrolman, chauffeur, and lifeguards, over the course of the following decades. It was not until the 1960s that the department was integrated.

In the Bay Area, the first Black police officers included Arthur Sanderson (1915) and Walter A. Gordon (1919) in Oakland and Berkeley, respectively. Gordon served on the Berkeley police force for ten years. In 1923, he became the first African American to receive a Doctor of Law from UC Berkeley, and he went on to serve as President of the Alameda County NAACP from 1923 to 1933.[660]

The San Francisco Police Department was a largely White police force into the twentieth century. While it technically desegregated its workforce in the late 1940s, Black officers remained a small percentage of the overall department for decades thereafter.

Despite discrimination within departments, Black officers were often admired within their community. Some officers, such as Walter Gordon in Berkeley and Tom Bradley in Los Angeles, used the position as a steppingstone to law or politics.[661]

Postal Service

Positions with the U.S. Postal Service were increasingly sought after in the Black community over the course of the twentieth century. The post office had government status, which meant civil service protection and insulation from the economic ups and downs that plagued private companies, but without the physical requirements or danger inherent in firefighting or law enforcement. Under President Theodore Roosevelt's administration from 1901 to 1909, post offices were integrated, with Black and White postal employees working together. Employment segregation provisions enacted by states could not be applied to federal positions. However, under President Woodrow Wilson from 1913 to 1921, the post office was segregated. In 1914, the Civil Service Commission began requiring applicants for federal jobs to submit a photograph, allowing officials to screen out Black applicants. Black workers were relegated to separate facilities, often sorting and delivering mail, which

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[656] Teresa Grimes, "Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles Multiple Property Documentation Form," National Register of Historic Places, 2008, 31.
[657] John J. Stanley, "Julius Boyd Loving: The First African American Deputy in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department," *Southern California Quarterly* 93, no. 4 (Winter 2011-2012): 460.
[658] Stanley, 488.
[659] This area was unofficially known as "Darktown" and the "Harlem of the West." Mooney & Associates, "Centre City.".
[660] "Walter Gordon," *Riversider,* n.d., accessed August 3, 2023: http://riversider.org/etienne/our-community/unsung-heroes/969-2/.
[661] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 34, 37.

were less desirable positions.[662] By the 1920s, the general postal policy began to improve, and some African American postal workers began to be promoted based on seniority, rather than an antiquated point system. In the 1940s, President Franklin Roosevelt issued numerous executive orders to battle racial discrimination in the federal workplace, including eliminating the photograph requirement.

In 1946, just twenty-four hours after he was confirmed as Los Angeles Postmaster, Michael Fanning appointed four new African American supervisors to the Los Angeles Post Office. At that time, Black workers accounted for approximately one third of the Los Angeles workforce.[663]

In the 1960s African Americans were employed in record numbers compared with prior decades. However, they were infrequently promoted to leadership positions, which limited upward mobility. In 1962, the *California Eagle* reported that although African Americans constituted over fifty percent of the post office personnel, there were only eight Black superintendents at the city's sixty-five carrier and finance stations.[664] That year, Postmaster Otto K. Olsen of Los Angeles was stripped of his authority to promote postal employees on the grounds that he had refused a direct order to promote Black post office worker Perry Parks. Parks, who served as President of the National Alliance of Postal Employees (NAPE) was outspoken in protesting discrimination in the postal service.[665]

In the following years, several African Americans in California were appointed to high-profile positions in the postal service. In 1961, Angeleno Christopher S. Scott was appointed deputy to the Assistant Postmaster General for Transportation, making him the highest-ranking African American in the United States Post Office Department (USPOD) to that date. That same year, Nancy C. Avery was appointed acting Postmaster of the Pacoima, California Post Office, reportedly the first African American to head a first-class Post Office.[666] In 1964, Leslie N. Shaw was appointed Postmaster of Los Angeles, the first African American Postmaster in a major American city.

Schools and Education

The state constitution spelled out logistics for the establishment of public schools and spelled out means to fund it in 1849. However, it was not until 1867 that schools became free for all children. The state legislation passed a law in 1852 barring African American children from attending public schools, and schools often excluded Black children from enrolling, including in cities with substantial African American populations, such as Grass Valley and Nevada City.[667] In 1860, the state passed a law requiring local school boards to provide regular funding for segregated schools, though in practice Black schools were not well-funded.[668] Public education did not exist until 1867, when schools became free for all children. Several segregated Black schools were formed across California in the 1850s and 1860s, including in San Francisco (1854), Sacramento (1854), Oakland (1857), Marysville (1858), Watsonville (1866), and Stockton (1867), among others. Abolitionist, minister, and barber Jeremiah B.

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[662] Tye, 76.
[663] United States Postal Service Historian, "Postal History: African-American Postal Workers in the 20th Century," 2012, accessed December 20, 2022, https://about.usps.com/who/profile/history/african-american-workers-20thc.htm.
[664] "Few Negroes Given Top Posts in P.O.," *California Eagle,* October 25, 1962, 4
[665] "L.A. Postmaster Olsen Stripped of Power to Make Promotions," *California Eagle,* October 18, 1962, 1.
[666] United States Postal Service Historian, Postal History," 2012.
[667] Ralph Mann, *After the Gold Rush: Society in Grass Valley and Nevada City, California, 1845-1870* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 119.
[668] Mann, *After the Gold Rush*, 102.

Sanderson was placed in charge of the first public school for Black children in San Francisco.[669] Sanderson and Elizabeth Scott Thorn Flood were both associated with the operation of the first "Colored" school in Sacramento. Flood, after her remarriage and move to Oakland, opened the first known "Colored" school in Oakland in 1857.[670] (Segregation in education is discussed further in the Making a Democracy theme.)

One of the earliest careers open to African Americans, particularly African American women, was that of teacher in schools, including both integrated and segregated schools.[671] Clara Logan-Robinson was one of the first Black women to be admitted to, and graduate from, Red Bluff High School in the 1870s.[672] Logan-Robinson was the first Black woman to receive a teaching certificate, with which she was able to teach at one of the Red Bluff public schools.[673] Rev. John Jamison Moore was the first teacher at the first segregated public school for Black children in San Francisco, which opened in 1854. Three years later he was appointed principal of the Negro Children's School.[674] Ida Louise Jackson was a graduate of the University of California (UC) and the first Black woman to teach at Prescott Junior High, the only school that assigned Black student teachers. In Sacramento, Sarah Mildred Jones, a Black woman and graduate of Oberlin College in Ohio, was appointed as principal of the racially integrated Fremont School in 1894.[675]

The 1930s brought collaboration between White and Black reformers, as evidenced in the fight for the first African American school teacher in Berkeley. Black teachers were not permitted to teach in San Diego public schools until 1942, and in San Francisco public schools in 1944.[676]

The 1960s and 1970s brought about a new battle for equal rights and representation: the establishment of Black studies in higher education (discussed further in the Making a Democracy theme). In 1968 and 1969, violence and force led to several universities adopting ethnic studies programs. The Department of Africana Studies at San Francisco State University was the first Black Studies department established on a four-year college campus in the United States. Other schools in California, including UC Berkeley, and UCLA, soon thereafter also adopted Black Studies departments. This movement was fed by institutional racism, educational irrelevance, and Black nationalism. The formation of Black student organizations, sometimes called Black Student Unions, were instrumental in demanding these educational programs.[677]

Other Civic Jobs

There was some civic employment that did accept African Americans workers from early on, such as sanitation workers and clerks, among many others. In the 1920s, Sacramento hired a number of Black sanitation workers, making them the city's first Black employees.[678]

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669 Rudolph M. Lapp, "Jeremiah B. Sanderson: Early California Negro Leader," *The Journal of Negro History* 53, no. 4 (October 1968), 329.
670 Beasley, The Negro Trail Blazers of California, 174, 177.
671 de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region," 295-298; "Susan Bragg, "'Anxious Foot Soldiers,' Sacramento's Black Women and Education in Nineteenth Century California," in *African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000* ed. Quintard Taylor and Shirley Ann Wilson Moore (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 102.
672 "Clara L. Frazier Passes Away," *Red Bluff Tehama County Daily News,"* March 28, 1938, 1.
673 Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California,* 123. A specific date is not given for her graduation from Red Bluff High School but appears to have been in the 1860s based upon the date of her family's arrival in California.
674 Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 167.
675 Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 43.
676 Albert S. Broussard, "Percy H, Steele Jr., and the Urban League: Race Relations and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Post-World War II San Diego," *California History* 83, no. 4 (2006): 10.
677 Karen Karlette Miller, "Black Studies and Higher Education, 1960s-1970s,"in *Peoples of Color in the American West,* eds. Sucheng Chan, Douglas Henry Daniels, Mario T. Garcia, Terry P. Wilson (Lexington: D.C. Health and Company, 1994).
678 Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 43.

In 1921, when White sanitation workers walked out on strike, the City of Sacramento hired its first group of Black employees as garbage collectors. The City established a municipal sanitation force with a policy of hiring Black workers, spearheaded by the local branch of the NAACP. In Sacramento, sanitation jobs were some of the most attractive jobs for Black workers, because they offered regular wages and benefits.[679]

In Bakersfield, Black sanitation workers led by local Black radio host James Mason staged a strike in 1966. Sanitation workers demanded a ten percent pay increase, overtime pay, and an end to a racist administration. The strikers prevented scabs from removing the public trash, and after three days the city agreed to negotiate terms. One striker recalled, "We've been having nothing but slavery here… it's time we got us some black power."[680]

The 1960s also brought around the unionization and organization of other groups of Black civic employees. For example, the National Association of Black Social Workers was founded in San Francisco in 1968. The association was founded to enhance the quality of life and empower people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services, and research.[681]

Sub-Theme: Business and Commerce

Black-Owned Enterprises

As Blacks were systematically denied service at a broad array of commercial and public establishments, Black-owned and operated businesses emerged in cities and towns across California where Black residential enclaves formed, to fill needs in a broad array of sectors. Some of the most successful were those that catered to personal needs, including undertakers, barbers and beauticians, and insurance agents, businesses where Black people were uniquely prone to unfair treatment. The notion of a "Black economy" was articulated by many African Americans, most prominently by Booker T. Washington, who advocated an ideology of economic self-dependence for Black people. Strong Black commercial districts had a symbiotic relationship to Black residential enclaves; businesses provided residents with the services they needed in a convenient local location, while residents provided businesses with customers and sales they needed to stay afloat. Some Black business owners attained high status within their communities, gaining trust through daily interactions and support, and rising to roles of community leadership.

Black businessmen and businesswomen have been establishing enterprises in California since before the time of its entrance into the union. In particular, the Gold Rush provided some of the earliest business opportunities available to free Black settlers and formerly enslaved people in the state, including shops, restaurants, and boarding houses.

The California frontier lacked many of the social strictures of more established towns and cities, and thus permitted the success of Black California enterprises. Black entrepreneurs often entered into business ventures they believed the White majority would patronize. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, White businessmen migrating westward began to intensify the prevailing racial prejudice. As a result, many Blacks were limited to service-related enterprises, most commonly hotels and boarding houses, barbering and beauty salons, livery businesses, and restaurants.[682] Early communities that had Black businesses included San Francisco, Maysville, Red Bluff, and Sacramento.

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[679] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 50.
[680] Alfred De Venado, "Black Power in Bakersfield: Sanitation Workers Strike," *The Movement* 2, no. 11 (December 1966): 3; Dominique LaVigne, "Hidden History: The Man Who Led the 1966 Bakersfield Sanitation Workers' Strike," *23 ABC,* February 20, 2023, accessed April 28, 2023, https://www.turnto23.com/news/black-history-month/hidden-history-the-man-who-led-the-1966-bakersfield-sanitation-workers-strike.
[681] "Mission Statement," *National Association of Black Social Workers*, accessed April 28, 2023, https://www.nabsw.org/page/MissionStatement.
[682] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 96-97.

By the early twentieth century, Black residents had established businesses in virtually every town they occupied, most commonly in personal service enterprises. However, unlike in the East and Midwest, which had rigidly segregated populations, the limited size of the Black population in California overall allowed for the development of Black businesses only in cities with the largest African American populations, such as Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Francisco.[683] In these cities, Black businesses were often concentrated along commercial corridors, such as Central Avenue in Los Angeles; J, K, and M Streets in Sacramento; and 7th Street in West Oakland.[684]

As Black businesses and professional infrastructure took root and spread across California, they were consistently met with discriminatory municipal ordinances, licensing laws, and bank lending practices. These circumstances dramatically limited access to local resources and thus restricted the growth of many Black businesses. Insurance companies typically denied Black people insurance coverage. These restrictions often forced Black businesses into financing strategies that blurred the line between legitimate and illegitimate business as a way to circumvent otherwise limiting regulations.[685]

As a result, the Black community sought their own solutions, with the establishment of Black-owned savings and loan associations (discussed in greater detail below). Discriminatory business practices also catalyzed the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" (or "Buy Where You Can Work") protests of the 1930s held in cities across the country. These movements urged the boycotting of stores that refused to hire African Americans and encouraged Black patrons to support Black-owned businesses. This in turn fostered the advancement of the African American population and directly challenged White supremacy and discrimination.

In 1938, the U.S. Government printed a pamphlet titled *The Negro Woman Worker,* that outlined typical employment for African American women in America. The types of occupations listed included domestic and personal services, such as household service; laundresses and laundry operatives; hotels and restaurants; and beauty shops.[686]

Beauty shops, barbershops, insurance companies, and funeral parlors were typically "protected" or safe Black ventures in towns with a concentrated Black population.[687] However, other enterprises, such as grocery stores, restaurants, and retail outfits, could prove more precarious in their successes, despite a large booster push within the Black community to support what are sometimes referred to as "race enterprises." White-owned businesses were more mainstream and had a larger consumer base, and as such were in a better position to offer more competitive prices. For example, in Los Angeles, African Americans buyers often patronized White-owned stores, believing they offered lower prices and better service than Black-owned businesses.[688]

Many Black-owned and operated businesses were recorded and recommended within the Black community using the *Green Book*, (described in more detail above under the Public Accommodations subtheme), the *Los Angeles Negro Directory*, and *Negro Who's Who in California*. First published in 1936 and founded by postal employee Victor Green, the *Green Book* was a travel guide that provided listings of businesses across America that were safe for Black travelers to patronize. The publication promised travelers "Travel Without Embarrassment," and

[683] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, *To Place Our Deeds: The African American Community in Richmond, California, 1910-1963* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 22.
[684] James, 13.
[685] Trotter, *Workers on Arrival*, 125.
[686] Jean Collier Brown, "The Negro Woman Worker," *Bulletin of the Women's Bureau,* no. 165 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1938): 1-6.
[687] Juliet E.K. Walker, *Encyclopedia of African American Business History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999); Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 230.
[688] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 230.

listed restaurants, hotels, hair salons, barbers, gas stations, tailors, liquor stores, vacation resorts, and country clubs that welcomed African Americans.[689]

In California, the *Green Book* listed businesses in major cities, such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as smaller towns, including Madera, Needles, Perris, and El Centro.[690] Listed businesses include the Dunbar Hotel (1939) in Los Angeles; Murray's Dude Ranch (1941) in Victorville; Edison Hotel (1947) in San Francisco; Dunlap's Dining Room (1952) and Mo-Mo Sacramento Night Club (1953) in Sacramento; and the California Hotel (1957) in Oakland.[691] Black-owned newspapers also regularly featured businesses in their pages, advertising them to potential customers.

Representative Business Types

Restaurants and Food

Cooking was an important aspect of Black commerce in California. In the mid- to late-nineteenth century, many Blacks worked as cooks and waiters at existing restaurants, many of which catered to White clientele. In Sacramento, being a chef was the most common occupation for free Blacks in the 1850s, with 64 men listed as cooks in the area. A dozen Black men owned eateries or coffee houses, which likely had a large Black clientele.[692] A similar pattern occurred in Santa Barbara, where many of the Black male residents worked as cooks.[693]

With the organization of the Cooks' and Waiters' Union in San Francisco in 1883, many restaurants replaced Black workers with White union workers in the face of boycotts. The union was likely responsible for the replacement of 200 Black workers with White union workers at the Black Palace Hotel San Francisco in 1889.[694] This pattern was reflected in cities across Northern California.[695]

Into the twentieth century, some food establishments refused to serve Black patrons in California. For example, in 1939, Harry Stewart, a student at Santa Barbara State College, won a civil suit against the owner of Elmer's Café after a waiter refused him service because he was Black.[696]

California was not as overt in its racism and discrimination as the Jim Crow South. However, as historian Douglas Henry Daniels notes, "Despite…the difficulty of assessing California's racial climate, it is certain that prejudice did humiliate and degrade Afro-Americans, even if only occasionally."[697] This discrimination was reflected in eating establishments and catalyzed the proliferation of Black restaurants to serve the burgeoning Black communities across the state. Even so, many Black restaurant owners continued to contend with discrimination. Black-owned restaurants were proportionally more likely to be harassed by police and cited for liquor violations than their White counterparts. Despite these issues, the businesses persevered.

Black cooks and restaurant owners came to serve important roles in their local contexts. In Sacramento, George Dunlap, originally a cook for the Southern Pacific Railroad dining cars, opened several restaurants, including Dunlap's Dining Room out of his house in the Oak Park neighborhood. The restaurant operated from 1930 to

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[689] National Park Service, "Green Book Historic Context and AACRN Listing Guidance," *NPS,* accessed March 20, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/green-book-historic-context-and-aacrn-listing-guidance-african-american-civil-rights-network.htm.
[690] *The Negro Travelers' Green Book* (New York, NY: Victor H. Green & Co., 1957), 8-9.
[691] California Humanities, "The Green Book in California: Places of Note," *California Humanities Blog,* January 8, 2019, accessed March 20, 2023, https://calhum.org/the-green-book-in-california-places-of-note/.
[692] Clarence Caesar, "The Historical Demographics of Sacramento's Black Community, 1848-1900," *California History* 75, no. 3 (Fall 1996): 201.
[693] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 35, 41.
[694] Douglas Henry Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites: A Social and Cultural History of Black San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 36-37.
[695] Caesar, "The Historical Demographics of Sacramento's Black Community, 1848-1900," 211.
[696] Page & Turnbull, "Santa Barbara African American/Black Historic Context Statement," 45.
[697] Daniels, *Pioneer Urbanites*, 108.

1968.[698] In Los Angeles, numerous Black-owned restaurants and cafés proliferated along the business corridor of Central Avenue, flourishing from the 1920s through the 1950s. Black-owned restaurants, including the Golden Bird Café, opened along East Haley Street in Santa Barbara.[699] Two of the oldest continuously-operated Black-owned food establishments in the state are in the Bay Area: Lois the Pie Queen in Berkeley, established in 1951, and Sam Jordan's in San Francisco, opened in the late 1950s. Lawrence L. Crossley opened a successful café and founded the Palm Springs Desert Tea Co. in Section 14, the Black neighborhood of Palm Springs.[700]

Restaurants also served as a popular means of Black entrepreneurship. Franchising was one method of Black restaurant ownership. Beginning in 1968, McDonald's began to enlist Black franchise owners. That same year, Black businessman and economist Thomas B. Jones wrote a book entitled *How the Negro Can Start His Own Business*, which described franchising as "a type of business particularly adaptable to the Negro in the disadvantaged neighborhood…Right now franchises under Black ownership are operating successfully. It is a field which puts financial independence within your grasp."[701] McDonald's and other fast-food companies played an increasingly important role in Black communities by offering food, jobs, and sponsorships. However, the relationship was not without dispute, and one Black franchisee in Los Angeles sued McDonald's, alleging that Black operators were systematically kept from buying restaurants in White neighborhoods.[702]

Hotels/Boarding Houses

Managing hotels and boarding houses was another profession open to African Americans in California. Lodging accommodations were often only available to Black people at Black establishments. As a result, Black boarding houses and hotels proliferated across the state, typically in urban areas, but also in more rural settings. For example, the Julian Gold Rush Hotel (Hotel Robinson), a Black-owned hotel in Julian (San Diego County) has been in operation since 1897.[703]

The operation of these establishments was also occasionally done by Black women. By 1900, seventy hotels west of the Mississippi were run by Black operators, many of them by women. The most famous antebellum free Black boardinghouse keeper was Mary Ellen "Mammy" Pleasant, who lived in San Francisco. Pleasant speculated in real estate and issued loans. She also owned a restaurant, an informal employment agency, and several laundries.[704] Other Black women also entered the lodging business, including Elizabeth Martell, who operated a board and lodging house in Oakland.[705]

Barber Shops/Beauty Salons

Barbering and hairdressing establishments were important within the Black community. Antebellum African Americans brought the barbering business to California, and in 1852 there were 18 Black barbers in San Francisco and 23 in Sacramento.[706] Hairdressing was a business where Black men and women alike could thrive.

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[698] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 47.
[699] Page & Turnbull, "Santa Barbara African American/Black Historic Context Statement," 113-114.
[700] "Black Pioneers of Palm Springs," *Visit Palm Springs,* February 2, 2021, accessed April 28, 2023, https://visitpalmsprings.com/black-history-month/.
[701] Thomas Burton Jones, *How the Negro Can Start His Own Business* (Brooklyn, NY: Albert Press Inc., 1968), 9.
[702] Marcia Chatelain, "The Miracle of the Golden Arches: Race and Fast Food in Los Angeles," *Pacific Historical Review* 85, no. 3 (August 2016): 325; Susan Berfield, "How McDonald's Made Enemies of Black Franchisees," *Bloomberg,* December 17, 2021, accessed April 28, 2023, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2021-12-17/black-mcdonald-s-franchise-owners-face-off-with-fast-food-restaurant-over-racism.
[703] Marisa Agha, "The Trailblazing Black Entrepreneurs Who Shaped a 19th Century California Boomtown," *Smithsonian Magazine* (April 28, 2022).
[704] Walker, *The History of Black Business in America*, 186-187.
[705] Tramble and Tramble, *The Pullman Porters*, 189.
[706] Walker, *The History of Black Business in America*, 140.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Black women operated hair salons in Los Angeles, Pasadena, and San Francisco.[707]

Barbers became important community centers in large cities and smaller towns alike. Because barbers came into close contact with their White clientele, they were often able to advance socially further than their peers. Many Black barbers held significant roles in their community as civic leaders.

In Wheatland (Yuba County) Black barber Edward Park Duplex opened a shaving saloon in 1875 at 415 Main Street. Duplex's job brought him into contact with other civic leaders, and in 1888, he was elected Mayor of Wheatland, possibly the first Black person to hold the office in the western United States.[708] Another example of a notable barber and civic leader was Jeremiah B. Sanderson, originally of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Throughout his career, Sanderson worked as a barber, abolitionist, and teacher at the state's first segregated school for Black children in San Francisco. He went on to serve as a representative for Sacramento at the First State Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California.[709]

By the 1930s, beauty shops were a common occupation for African American women in the United States. A study by the U.S. Government in 1938 found that "while in 1910 there were only about 3,800 Negro women workers in such employment [beauty shops], in 1930 the number was 3 ½ times as large, or about 13,000."[710]

Funeral Homes

Black-owned funeral homes were among the earliest family businesses established by African Americans following the abolition of enslavement. These businesses came to serve as cultural institutions and provided service for bereaved Black residents. African American funeral homes maintain traditions around death that catered to the needs of the Black community. These traditions include "homegoings," where bodies are typically viewed in a richly adorned open casket.[711]

In California, one of the first Black-owned funeral homes, the A.J. Roberts Funeral Home in Los Angeles, was established in 1905. In Oakland, undertaker Luther M. Hudson founded the Hudson Funeral Home (later Fouchés Hudson Funeral Home) in 1915.[712]

In Los Angeles, the Angelus Funeral Home was established in 1922.[713] In the twentieth century, the funeral business was the only industry, nationally, in which Blacks are proportionately represented.[714] The first Angelus Funeral Home building was constructed in the mid-1920s. The second location on Jefferson Boulevard was designed in 1934 by Paul Revere Williams, a prolific and accomplished Black architect active in Los Angeles throughout much of the twentieth century. Williams broke his own racial barriers as the first Black architect to gain membership in the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1923 and became the AIA's first African

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[707] de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region," 301.
[708] "Hairdressing and Shaving Saloon, Wheatland, Yuba County," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California,* National Park Service, November 17, 2004.
[709] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 322.
[710] Brown, "The Negro Woman Worker," 6.
[711] Lynn Weinstein, "Honoring African Americans: Celebrating Life in Death- African American Funeral Homes," *Library of Congress Blog,* February 16, 2021; Tiffany Stanley, "The Disappearance of a Distinctively Black Way to Mourn," *The Atlantic,* January 26, 2016.
[712] Tramble and Tramble, *The Pullman Porters*, 189; "Our History," Fouchés Hudson Funeral Home, accessed April 25, 2023, https://www.fouchesfuneralhome.com/our-history; The funeral home was later forced to relocated as a result of eminent domain, establishing a new located at 3665 Telegraph Avenue in 1966.
[713] Angelus Funeral Home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Teresa Grimes, "Angelus Funeral Home," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service (June 2008).
[714] Walker, *Encyclopedia of African American Business History*.

American fellow in 1957.[715] Angelus Funeral Home brought Paul R. Williams back in the 1950s to design their new facility on South Crenshaw Boulevard, in the Leimert Park neighborhood of Los Angeles.[716]

Banks and Other Financial Institutions

Restrictive city ordinances, real estate covenants, and other racially discriminatory lending practices made access to capital and starting a business difficult if not impossible for many would-be Black entrepreneurs. As a result, Black-owned and operated banks and financial institutions were founded to provide the community with the necessary resources, such as the Golden State Guarantee Fund Insurance Company. Founded in 1925 in Los Angeles, the Golden State Guarantee Fund Insurance Company (later known as Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company) was expressly created to provide life insurance coverage for Black people. One of the company's early offices was located at 4261 South Central Avenue in Los Angeles. The building was designed by notable African American architect James H. Garrott in 1928. The Golden State Mutual Building was one of his first commissions after licensure and was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.[717] The company established branch offices across California.[718] In San Francisco, the African American-operated Saving Fund and Land Association owned land and made small loans to local African Americans.

Health Care and Medicine

Black Californians have contributed to the health care and medical fields since prior to the state's founding. Segregation and racism within the medical profession deeply impacted the African American communities of California. In response, many Black practitioners sought to address these wrongs by providing care for their own communities.

The first Black doctor to practice in the state was Dr. W.J.O. Bryant of San Francisco, who specialized in herbal medicine beginning in 1849. Another early Black herb doctor to practice in San Francisco was Dr. Albert Bevitt, who was active as early as 1852. The use of herbal medicine was common in Black communities in America. With roots reaching to African traditions of medicinal plant use, Black herb doctors established a new American tradition that combined African, European, and Indigenous healing modalities, medicinal herbs, and spiritual practices. Firmly rooted during enslavement, folk medicine in the Black community continued into the era after emancipation. The continued practice of herbal medicine persisted likely due to a lack of access to mainstream medicine (due to racist and economic barriers) as well as a strong cultural tradition of herbal medicine within the community.[719]

In Sacramento, Black residents William Ellis and J.S. Potter were listed as physicians in the 1860 and 1870 censuses.[720] Virgin Islands-born podiatrist Robert R. Fletcher settled in Sacramento in the 1960s. In 1913, historian Delilah Beasley wrote:

> The State of California has not been blessed by many colored doctors until recent years. During the past ten years Los Angeles has had some ten or twelve doctors to locate in the immediate city,

[715] "Paul R. Williams," *Los Angeles Conservancy,* accessed December 20, 2022, https://www.laconservancy.org/architects/paul-r-williams.
[716] The existing building was constructed in 1966.
[717] The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Christy Johnson McAvoy, "Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service (March 1998); Dai'quiriya Martinez, "James H. Garrott," *BlackPast,* November 27, 2017, accessed April 28, 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/garrott-james-h-1897-1991/.
[718] Ramsey and Janice S. Lewis, "Business," Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California.
[719] Erin Brooke Hamby, "The Roots of Healing Archaeological and Historical Investigations of African-American Herbal Medicine" (PhD Diss. University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2004), 6.
[720] Page & Turnbull, "Sacramento African American Experience Historic Context Statement," 43.

> after a period of over twenty-five years since the first colored doctor located in that city, and nearly if not fifty years since the first one located in San Francisco.[721]

Black hospitals and medical institutions were crucial for providing many Blacks with medical care and serving as places of employment for Black medical professionals. The Home for Aged and Infirm Colored People of California was established in 1892 in Oakland to provide elderly care and housing for Black senior citizens. Founded by several Black women, the home served as an important location for local Black health care until it closed in 1940. Also in Oakland, Doctor William M. Watts founded the W.M. Watt's Private Hospital for African Americans in 1926.[722]

Dunbar Hospital, the first Black hospital in Los Angeles, was founded in 1924 by Doctor Richard S. Whittiker, with notable physicians including Doctors J. T. Whittaker and Charles S. Diggs. The Dunbar Hospital was lauded as "a haven of mercy to the fast growing population" in the city.[723] Following the deaths of J.T. Whittaker and Diggs, the Dunbar Hospital closed in 1938. Another prominent Los Angeles-based doctor was N. Curtis King, who helped found the Rose Netta Hospital, one of the "most modern and best-equipped [hospitals] in America, and one of the first truly integrated hospitals." [724] The first interracial blood bank in the city was established at Rose Netta Hospital in 1942, gaining international attention.

Like Black doctors, Black nurses also faced discrimination in largely White medical institutions. The Los Angeles County Hospital refused to hire Black women as nurses until 1918, and only then because they were faced with the threat of a strike by White nurses.[725] San Diego County Hospital accepted its first Black nurses, Hallie Annie Dee Williams and Frances Louise Hamilton, in 1927 after the community and NAACP president Dennis Volyer Allen campaigned on their behalf.[726] In 1920s San Diego, there was a small group of Black medical professionals, including medical doctors Fred C. Calvert and Fred T. Moore, and dentist Jesse D. Moses. In 1935, Jack Kimbrough began his dental practice in San Diego, becoming just one of a handful of Black medical professions in the city prior to World War II.[727]

Around 1951, two of Bakersfield's Black physicians built a medical clinic (234 Baker Street). Dr. Ernest W. Williams, Jr., M.D. was a front-line surgeon during World War II. In 1947, he came to Bakersfield to build a practice. In 1949, he advertised in a Bay Area professional journal for a partner in medicine. Dr. Homer Myles answered the call, and for many years was the only African American dentist between Los Angeles and San Francisco."[728]

In the 1960s, a figurative health care "Second Reconstruction" occurred as the government launched programs to provide health care for Blacks and other disadvantaged groups through the mid-1970s.[729] The Civil Rights Act, hospital desegregation rulings, and Medicare/Medicaid legislation improved health care for Black Americans across the country. The change for Black doctors and other health care professionals was mixed. It was not until passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 that the American Medical Association prohibited racial discrimination. In 1970, a task force consisting of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the AMA, American Hospital Association, and medical associations announced an objective of 12 percent "representative" minority

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[721] Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 245.
[722] Delilah Beasley, "The Opening of Watts Hospital," *Oakland Tribune,* March 14, 1926, 48.
[723] "Negros Who's Who in California," 1948, 31.
[724] "Negros Who's Who in California," 1948, 32.
[725] de Graaf, "Race, Sex, and Region," 303.
[726] Robert Fikes, "Go Anyplace but Here, Please: The Fight to Train Black Nurses in San Diego," *Black Past,* May 5, 2021.
[727] Broussard, "Percy H, Steele Jr., and the Urban League," 10.
[728] Gilbert Peter Gia, *Race, Sports and Black Unity: 1875-1988* (Bakersfield, CA: Gilbert Peter Gia, 2019), 197.
[729] W. Michael Byrd and Linda A. Calyton, MD, "An American Health Dilemma: A History of Blacks in the Health System," *Journal of the National Medical Association,* 84, no. 2 (1992): 189-192.

enrollment (including Blacks) in American medical institutions by 1975. Black enrollment in medical schools was only two percent in 1965, reaching six percent in 1974.[730]

In Los Angeles, the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science was founded in 1966 following the Watts Riots to improve access to medical care in South Los Angeles and reduce racial disparities in health care.[731] The Los Angeles Metropolitan Medical Center opened in 1971 in the West Adams community.

Sub-Theme: African Americans in the Military

African Americans have fought in every American war since the Revolution and have a long and complex relationship with the U.S. military. Negotiations between activists and the United States government regarding the role of the Black service members within the military complex have been widespread among leading Black activists from the time of the country's inception to present day.

Wartime evidenced the racial discrimination in the U.S. military. At the same time, the need for Black participation in the military gave African American activists the leverage they required to demand change within the military industrial complex. For example, during World War I, W.E.B. DuBois used the NAACP support of the war to win concessions from the War Department, including permitting Black servicemen to become officers, and allowing more Black men to serve in combat units. During World War II, A. Philip Randolph threatened to march on Washington, D.C. unless President Roosevelt signed an executive order prohibiting hiring discrimination in defense industries. Black protests during the Vietnam War forced the Pentagon to limit the number of Black men in frontline elite units, where they took greater casualties in excess of their proportions in the military.[732]

For some, serving in the military was seen as a means of upwards social mobility in the Black community by providing education and skills that could translate to better employment opportunities after the war. For others, the relationship was one of conflict and discrimination. This section explores the role of the Black service member in California during several major wars, as well as periods of peace. It seeks to shed light on the nuances of Black engagement with the U.S. military in California and nationwide from the Civil War to present day.

The Civil War

The Civil War changed the status of Black persons living in the United States. Lasting from 1861 to 1865, the war sought to settle the dispute over whether enslavement would be permitted to expand into the Western territories of the United States. Enthusiasm for the war ran high among Black Americans in the North, South, and West. Numerous Black Californians signed up as body servants to White army officers in order to be near the front. Although no Black California military units served in combat during the war, several organized to be ready should they be asked to join the fighting. In 1863, Captain Alexander Ferguson formed Company A of the Army reserves in Sacramento, which consisted of 25 African Americans.[733]

President Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union's success in the Civil War led to the establishment of several Black military companies in California, including the "Sacramento Zouaves" in Sacramento in 1867; the Branan Guards in San Francisco in 1867; and the Colfax Guard in Sonoma in 1869,

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[730] "Affirmative Action in Medicine," in *Reforming Medicine: Lessons of the Last Quarter Century*, eds. Victor W. Sidel and Ruth Sidel (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 157.
[731] Soumya Karlamangla, "Charles Drew University in South Los Angeles Starts its Own Medical School," *New York Times,* September 13, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/13/us/charles-drew-university-south-los-angeles-medical-school.html.
[732] Clyde Taylor, "Black Consciousness and the Vietnam War," *The Black Scholar* 5, no. 2 (October 1973): 2-8.
[733] Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 279.

among others.[734] In subsequent years, African Americans served in the military with the formation of what became known as "Buffalo Soldier" units.

Buffalo Soldiers and the National Parks

In 1866, following the end of the Civil War, Congress passed a law that allowed African Americans to enter the ranks of the U.S. Army. Known as "An Act to Increase and Fix the Military Peace Establishment of the United States," the law formed two all-Black (Colored) Cavalries and four all-Black (Colored) Infantries. Black soldiers serving in these military units were informally known as "Buffalo Soldiers," the etymology of which is debated, but was possibly of Native American origin.[735]

Buffalo Soldiers fought in many significant wars, including the Plains Wars, Spanish American War, the Philippine-American War, and the Punitive Expedition in Mexico, among others. Buffalo Soldiers also helped the United States' westward expansion by building roads and fighting in significant military actions against Native Americans.[736]

Buffalo Soldiers were also significant for their role as some of the first national park rangers. Before the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, the U.S. Army protected and improved the parks in California. Buffalo Soldiers, including those of the 9th Cavalry and 24th and 25th Infantry, patrolled the national parks of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, including Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant (now King's Canyon) national parks, during the summer months from 1891 through 1913.[737] The soldiers were tasked with protecting the parks from poachers, squatters, fires, loggers, and other threats. They were also responsible for completing stewardship and construction projects, including building roads and trails.

In 1902, the 9th Cavalry, under the command of Colonel Charles Young, was stationed at the Presidio of San Francisco. Colonel Young was the third African American to graduate from West Point, a veteran of the Civil War, and the first military attaché to Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Liberia.[738] Young later rose to serve as the first Black superintendent of the National Park Service.[739] While at the Presidio, the soldiers were tasked with protecting the national parks of the Sierra Nevada, including Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant (now King's Canyon) national parks during the summer months. Among many other feats, Buffalo Soldiers under Young were responsible for building trails to the top of Mount Whitney, the highest mountain in the contiguous United States, from Lone Pine.

In 1904, Buffalo Soldiers at Yosemite National Park under the leadership of Major John Bigelow Jr. constructed a seventy-five- to one hundred-acre arboretum, including thirty-six plants and trees, and the first marked nature trail in the national parks. The Yosemite arboretum promoted the ecology of the park and is considered the first museum in the national park system.[740] The important role played by the Buffalo Soldiers at these three important California sites--the Presidio, Sequoia National Park, and Yosemite National Park--has consistently been recognized by the National Park Service.[741]

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[734] Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 280.
[735] Krewasky A. Salter, "The Buffalo Robe," *National Museum of African American History and Culture,* accessed January 3, 2023, https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/buffalo-soldiers.
[736] "Forming the Buffalo Soldier Regiments," *National Park Service,* February 13, 2022, accessed January 3, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/forming-buso.htm.
[737] National Park Service, *Buffalo Soldiers Study* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, March 2019), 7.
[738] Brian G. Shellum, *Black Officer in a Buffalo Soldier Regiment: The Military Career of Charles Young* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2010).
[739] In 2004, a giant sequoia in Sequoia National Park was named after Young. Kiel Maddox, "Colonel Charles Young Tree," *National Park Service,* December 7, 2021, accessed January 3, 2023, https://www.nps.gov/places/000/colonel-charles-young-tree.htm.
[740] National Park Service, *Buffalo Soldiers Study,* 8.
[741] National Park Service, *Buffalo Soldiers Study,* 14.

World War I

During World War I, new military technologies combined with the practices of trench warfare resulted in one of the deadliest global conflicts in history. While the United States originally maintained a stance of neutrality, the U.S. Congress ultimately declared war on Germany in April of 1917. A month later, in May 1917, President Woodrow Wilson passed the Selective Service Act, which required all able-bodied young men to register for military duty, making no distinction as to race, color, position, or wealth. Historian Delilah Beasley optimistically recalled the Act two years later, when she wrote: "Thus, by signing this bill…the commander-in-chief of all the armies of the United States broke the first ground for a New Democracy in the United States of America."[742]

Like their White counterparts, many Black men sought to serve in the war. On registration day, over 700,000 Black men enrolled. A separate training camp was established for the training of Black officers at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. A number of Black Californians trained at the camp.

Over 350,000 African Americans served overseas for the American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F.) during the war, in which American soldiers were sent abroad to defend France. While most of these soldiers toiled in important but menial positions, approximately 40,000 to 50,000 Black soldiers saw action serving under French commanders. By the end of the war, over 2.3 million Black servicemen had served in the U.S. military.[743]

W.E.B. DuBois recounted the confliction Black soldiers felt in his poem "Returning Soldiers":

> We are returning from war! *The Crisis* and tens of thousands of black men were drafted into a great struggle. For bleeding France and what she means and has meant and will mean to us and humanity and against the threat of German race arrogance, we fought gladly and to the last drop of blood; for America and her highest ideals, we fought in far-off hope; for the dominant southern oligarchy entrenched in Washington, we fought in bitter resignation. For the America that represents and gloats in lynching, disfranchisement, caste, brutality and devilish insult—for this, in the hateful upturning and mixing of things, we were forced by vindictive fate to fight also.
>
> We *return.*
>
> We *return from fighting.*
>
> We *return fighting.*[744]

Inter-War Years

African Americans continued to fight for increased representation among the ranks of the military between the two world wars. While the Navy had allowed Blacks to enlist during World War I, enlistments were halted after the war, only to resume in the early 1930s with Blacks relegated to roles as messmen, cooks, and waiters.

Another arena for the struggle of opportunity and equality was in the aviation defense industry. Prior to the late 1920s, Black Americans had to travel to France for aviation training. Bessie Coleman was the first Black woman to earn an international pilot's license. Coleman achieved a flying education in France in 1922, thereby inspiring other Black aviators, including several prominent leaders in California: William J. Powell, James Herman Banning, and Thomas C. Allen.

In 1929, William J. Powell established the Bessie Coleman Aero Club in Los Angeles, which was the world's first association of African American aviators and the first all-Black flight school. The club's office was located at

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[742] Beasley, The Negro Trail Blazers of California, 282.
[743] "World War I and the Great Migration," *History Art & Archives: United States House of Representatives,* accessed January 3, 2023, https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/BAIC/Historical-Essays/Temporary-Farewell/World-War-I-And-Great-Migration/.
[744] W.E.B. DuBois, "Returning Soldiers," *The Crisis* 18 (May 1919): 13.

1423 W. Jefferson Boulevard and the school was out of the Los Angeles Eastside Airport in the present-day City of Commerce.[745] Powell was a pioneer in Black aviation, and called for equal opportunities for African American pilots, mechanics, and businessmen.[746] Powell and others began the fight for equality in the Air Corps prior to the United States' entrance into World War II, although the war accelerated their demands.

World War II and Executive Order 8802

At the start of World War II, the racism and discrimination experienced by African Americans was pervasive across all sectors of the military. As recorded by the New York newspaper *PM* in 1940, African Americans were "barred completely from the Air Corps and Marines, practically excluded from the Navy and so restricted in the Army that applications outnumber[ed] vacancies, Negroes cannot help but feel that their country does not want them to defend it."[747]

The newspaper *The Crisis* included several anonymous articles recounting discrimination by the few Black soldiers permitted in the Navy and Army. Two newspaper covers of *The Crisis* from 1940 labeled "For Whites Only" evidence the struggle for equality in the armed forces.

As recalled by an anonymous Black serviceman in the Navy stationed in Long Beach, California in 1940:

> It is indeed galling to watch the type of seamen that enlist in the navy, and who in a very short time rise to positions of prominence by means of contact, while the real merit men, men of greater intelligence must be servants simply because of the color of their skin. The navy is open to any man born in the United States…Yet we, whose ancestors came over in 1619 and whose forefathers bled and died for white freedom, are the only race discriminated against…Let's not sit and talk and wait for sympathy. The Navy department, and the government, can and will give you your equal rights, when, and only when you have fought and successfully demanded them.[748]

An anonymous Black soldier recounted similar oppression and racial prejudice on an Army base, lamenting "How can we be trained to protect America, which is called a *free* nation, when all around us rears the ugly head of segregation?"[749]

In January 1941, A. Phillip Randolph and other prominent Black leaders organized the March on Washington Movement. The march sought to rally 100,000 citizens and demand Roosevelt abolish discrimination in the defense industries and segregation in the military. To prevent the march from happening, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802, which banned racial discrimination in the defense industries and formed the office of the civilian aide to the secretary of war which was tasked with ensuring non-discrimination policies in the military. Thus, only with direct White House intervention did the military allow African Americans to enlist in all branches.[750] By 1945, one million African Americans had joined the military.[751]

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[745] Advertisement, "Congressman Oscar Depriest Flies!," *California Eagle,* October 4, 1929, 1.
[746] National Air and Space Museum, "Black Wings: The Life of African American Aviation Pioneer William Powell," February 02, 2016, https://airandspace.si.edu/stories/editorial/black-wings-life-african-american-aviation-pioneer-william-powell, accessed August 2024.
[747] "Negro Patriotism Feels Rebuffed," *PM,* October 5, 1940, as cited in James L. H. Peck, "When Do We Fly," *The Crisis* 47, no. 12 (December 1940): 376.
[748] Anonymous, "The Negro in the United States Navy," *The Crisis* 47, no. 7 (July 1940): 201, 210.
[749] A Negro Enlisted Man, "Jim Crow in the Army Camps," *The Crisis* 47, no. 12 (December 1940): 385.
[750] Richard M. Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces: Fighting on Two Fronts, 1939-1953* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1969), 29, 45.
[751] Douglas Walter Bristol, "Terror, Anger, and Patriotism: Understanding the Resistance of Black Soldiers during World War I," in *Integrating the U.S. Military: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation Since World War II,* ed. Douglas Walter Bristol, Jr. and Heather Marie Stur (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2017), 11, 14.

While African Americans were now permitted to join all branches of the armed forces, segregation of military units continued throughout the war. Black soldiers were often diverted from combat assignments, and by the end of 1943, just twenty percent of Black troops were serving in combat units, compared with 40 percent of their White counterparts. Instead, most Black soldiers were forced into service units, working as drivers, mechanics, and administrative clerks.[752] Segregation continued to be a common cause for tension between African Americans and the U.S. military throughout the course of the war.

The Cold War, Korean War, and Defense Industry

In 1948, President Harry Truman ordered the desegregation of the U.S. armed services with Executive Order 9981. This order impacted all military bases, but one California base came to be seen as a test case for desegregation: Fort Ord in Seaside, Monterey County.

Fort Ord became the first integrated training division, offering Black soldiers an opportunity for advancement. In turn, the number of Black military personnel and their families nearly doubled the population of Seaside in less than a decade. African Americans who moved to Seaside between World War II and 1980 were often well-traveled, educated, and steeped in the Civil Rights Movement.[753] These residents were organized and often active in local politics, and became a formidable political force in the city, often building coalitions with Whites, Latinos, and Asian Americans.

As recounted by historian Richard M. Dalfiume: "The hypocrisy involved in fighting with a segregated military force against aggression by an enemy preaching a master race ideology [was] readily apparent to black Americans."[754]

Despite a move to integrate the Army, lack of enforcement meant that discrimination and segregation was still practiced into the 1950s, and Black recruits remained a small fraction of those enlisting. This changed statewide with the onset of the Korean War, which forced the Army into complete integration. Partly responsible for this move was the 1950 abolishment of the racial quota that had previously limited the Army's African American population to 10 percent. This change led to a dramatic increase in the number of Blacks who signed up for service. While Black enlistments had accounted for just 8.2 percent of the total in March 1950, they increased to 25 percent by July of that year.[755] During the war, integrated troops performed well in the field. Project Clear, which was the Army's pivotal "desegregation" study of 1951, found that "Integration enhances the effectiveness of the army." [756]

In October 1954, the Pentagon announced that the few remaining all-Black military units had been officially integrated.[757] By this time, the armed forces were integrated to such an extent that sociologist Charles C. Moskos referred to stateside military installations as "Island[s] of integration in a sea of Jim Crow."[758]

Vietnam War and Resistance

During the Vietnam War, the Black population, like the country at large, both served in, and sometimes opposed, the war. Anti-war activists saw the war as futile and often faced racism from within their own ranks. Frustration at

[752] Bristol, "Terror, Anger, and Patriotism," 24.
[753] Carol Lynn McKibben, "Race and Color in a California Coastal Community: The Seaside Story," *Black Past,* July 29, 2009, accessed October 25, 2022, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/race-and-color-california-coastal-community-seaside-story/.
[754] Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces*, 43.
[755] Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces*, 201-202.
[756] Paul N. Foreman, "The Implications of Project Clear," *Phylon* 16, no. 3 (1955): 263-274.
[757] James E. Westheider, "African Americans, Civil Rights, and the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War," in *Integrating the U.S. Military,* 102.
[758] James E. Westheider, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African-Americans and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 68.

the situation, coupled with the growing sentiments of the Civil Rights Movement, led some Black soldiers to question why they should be required to fight on behalf of a country that systematically denied their equality. As recalled by historian David Cortwright, "many Blacks asked why they should risk death to defend freedom in Vietnam when they were denied basic rights back home."[759]

As historian Clyde Taylor wrote in 1973:

> One attitude, then, towards the Vietnamese revolutionaries among resistant black people is "No Vietnamese ever called me n----r!" A more radical reaction is, "We are all in the same boat." The most radical response has been, "We are allies."[760]

Draft resisters included famous Black public figures, including boxer Muhammad Ali. In 1967, Ali denied his call for military service and cited his Muslim religion. He was subsequently convicted of draft evasion, suspended from boxing, sentenced to prison, fined, and stripped of his heavyweight title. Other Black activists, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, also gave prominent anti-war speeches.[761] Frustration at discrimination in the military and a general anti-war sentiment ignited protests at military bases across the country, including several major events in California. In 1969, non-violent protests and boycotts were held by Black servicemen at Fort Ord in Monterey County. Tensions rose to violence at other military bases that same year. In September, after a series of protests, hundreds of prisoners at Camp Pendleton in San Diego County broke from their barracks and set fires to the camp.[762]

One of the largest protests was at Travis Air Force Base in Solano County in May of 1971. The rampant discrimination against Black airmen and growing unpopularity of the war resulted in perhaps the largest mass rebellion in the history of the Air Force. Fighting began between Black enlistees and the base security police in the barracks area, which led to the arrest of several Black airmen. With mounting anger and resentment, over 200 servicemen, Black and White, attempted to free the imprisoned Black airmen and were met by military and civilian police. This led to a major brawl involving 600 airmen and resulting in the burning of the officers' club, injury of several dozen people, and the arrest of 135 airmen, most of whom were Black. The base was in a virtual state of siege for the following few days.[763] The race riot left one dead, ten injured, and 115 arrested.[764]

In the wake of the revolt, the Pentagon established a racial harmony program at the base, although this program did nothing to address systemic discrimination in the military or the growing dissatisfaction with the war. More significantly, the Secretary of Defense signed Directive 1322.1, establishing the Race Relations Education Board, which set guidelines and established policy for race relation education in the armed forces.[765]

Theme: Making a Life

As African Americans migrated to California and their numbers grew, they built their lives and brought aspects of Black culture and social life to California. African American life in in the Golden State was both a continuation of patterns seen in other parts of the country and a unique response to the ways in which the Black community developed in California. Though in some aspects California represented a place of relative opportunity and freedom in the U.S., African Americans nonetheless faced discrimination and racism, which impacted their lives

[759] David Cortwright, "Black GI Resistance During the Vietnam War," *Vietnam Generation* 2, no. 1 (1990): 52.
[760] Clyde Taylor, "Black Consciousness and the Vietnam War," *The Black Scholar* 5, no. 2 (October 1973): 6.
[761] Westheider, "African Americans, Civil Rights, and the Armed Forces," 99.
[762] Cortwright, "Black GI Resistance During the Vietnam War," 54.
[763] Cortwright, "Black GI Resistance During the Vietnam War," 58.
[764] Issac Hampton II, "Reform in Ranks: The History of the Defense Race Relations Institute, 1971—2014," in *Integrating the U.S. Military,* 124.
[765] Hampton, "Reform in Ranks," 124

in numerous ways. As a result of this racism, Black Californians developed social life and culture that was in some ways a parallel of – and in other ways, distinctive from – White culture.

The section below discusses the multi-faceted ways in which African Americans have built their lives and developed their communities in California since the nineteenth century. It includes a discussion of the importance of religion and the Black Church as well as social organizations as cornerstones of the Black community. It also explores how African Americans have expressed themselves, spent their free time, and socialized, all of which have been in direct response to other forces shaping their lives.

Sub-theme: Religion and Spirituality

The church has been an important center of the African American community in the United States since the eighteenth century. Enslaved Africans brought their religious beliefs with them when they were forcibly moved to the Americas; this included those rooted in both Islamic and West African religious traditions. These religious beliefs were unable to survive in their unaltered forms due to the cultural genocide experienced during slavery but nonetheless remained influential in the lives of enslaved Africans and African Americans.[766] Though these religious traditions survived initially, missionaries increasingly enforced Christian baptism on enslaved people, especially after legislation passed in several American colonies that prevented baptism from affecting their status or right to freedom. In the case of enslaved African Muslims, they endeavored to pass along Islamic religious beliefs and traditions to their children but were often unable to. Historian Dawn-Marie Gibson notes that because of this conversion, "Islam and African traditional religions all but vanished" though echoes of these religions remained.[767] Islam would not reemerge among African Americans in the U.S. until the early twentieth century.[768]

In the antebellum period, many White enslavers restricted or forbade African American church attendance initially. When they were allowed to attend, sermons by White clergy often stressed the importance of obedience and subservience to Whites. Black subjugation in White churches, both in message and practice, eventually led to the creation of separate African American congregations. Separate Black churches began to form as early as the 1760s on the East Coast, though they remained few until the abolition of slavery a century later.[769] Many of these fell under the umbrella of the Methodist and Baptist churches. These denominations became cornerstones of African American faith during the antebellum period, in large part because many Methodist and Baptist evangelical preachers stressed the idea that all Christians were equal in the eyes of God.[770] African Americans were also allowed to preach in the Methodist and Baptist churches, which was not the case in many other denominations.[771] The first Black Protestant church, the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, was founded in 1816 after Black churchgoers were interrupted during prayer for occupying a section of a Methodist church where they were not allowed. The AME Zion Church was founded in 1821 under similar circumstances.[772] In the face of racism and the dehumanizing institution of slavery, religion provided African Americans with a beacon of hope and "presented an alternative view of their human worth in God's eyes."[773] It became a means of maintaining their own culture and humanity within an inhumane and barbaric system, and the idea of freedom played a central role in African American religion. Black spirituals, Christian music associated with African

[766] Dawn-Marie Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam: Race, Islam, and the Quest for Freedom* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2012), 1.
[767] Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam*, 5.
[768] Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam*, 5-6.
[769] Harvard University, "African American Christianity," The Pluralism Project, 1-2, accessed May 2023, https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/pluralism/files/african_american_christianity_0.pdf.
[770] Harvard University, "African American Christianity," 1.
[771] C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 65.
[772] Besheer Mohamed, Kiana Cox, Jeff Diamant and Claire Gecewicz, "Faith Among Black Americans," Pew Research Center, 153-154.
[773] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 201.

Americans, often focused on themes of freedom and deliverance from the horrors of slavery. One included the lyrics, "Free at last, free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."[774]

The church was one of the few African American institutions allowed to develop to any significant degree and the only social outlet outside the family following the end of enslavement. Churches were one of the few stable institutions that carried over from slavery and were among the first permanent institutions that African Americans formed.[775] Thus, it became key to the African American community and "took on multiple roles and burdens that differed from its white counterpart."[776] Churches served as incubators for other aspects of African American life and culture not allowed to develop independently, including the arts, music, and theater.[777] Churches became centers of social life, provided social and community services, housed schools, and nurtured the creation of social and community organizations. Churches also provided a safe space for political activity, and religious leaders were often otherwise involved in their communities and civil rights. In some instances, churches were the only space where African Americans could meet or hold an event.[778] It also became an incubator for a variety of social, cultural, and political organizations outside the sphere of religion when discriminatory practices barred Black people from accessing a variety of public amenities and spaces. Churches offered a variety of programs, including "job training programs, insurance cooperatives, circulating libraries, and athletic clubs," to name a few.[779]

Early Black Churches in California (1850-1929)

Churches were among the first institutions established by burgeoning African American communities in California. Initially, the state's relatively small African American population attended White churches, either alongside Whites or in segregated facilities. It was a testament to the importance of the Black church and "the centrality of the black church to the individual lives and sense of identity of African Americans" that Black congregations were formed in California, which was removed from the majority of the country's Black population.[780] Nevertheless, churches were often founded in a community as soon as the population could support one. They became anchors for African American communities throughout the state. Often, one of the mainline churches, such as Baptist or African Methodist Episcopal, formed relatively quickly. Other denominations often came later as the community grew and became more diverse socially and economically.

The earliest Black churches were founded primarily in Northern California due to the concentration of African Americans there.[781] The first Black church established in California was Saint Andrews African Methodist Episcopal in Sacramento, which was founded in 1850 and was the first African American church established on the West Coast.[782] The congregation initially met in the home of Daniel Blue. By the end of the year, church members raised enough money for the construction of a church building. Saint Andrew's quickly expanded over the next several decades, and its church building served as a meeting place for numerous community, social, and political groups.[783]

Other early congregations in Northern California included the St. Cyprian AME Church (later Bethel AME), First AME Zion Church, and First Colored Baptist Church (later Third Baptist Church) in San Francisco (all founded 1852); the AME Church in Grass Valley (Nevada County, founded 1854); and the AME Church in Chico

[774] It would later be famously quoted in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963 during the March on Washington.
[775] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 8.
[776] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 201.
[777] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 201.
[778] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 8, 152.
[779] Mohamed, "Faith Among Black Americans," 154-155.
[780] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 12.
[781] Beasley, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, 160.
[782] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 11; Page & Turnbull, "Sacramento African American Experience Historic Context Statement," 66.
[783] Page & Turnbull, "Sacramento African American Experience Historic Context Statement," 66.

(founded 1870).[784] In Southern California, where community growth began later, early congregations included the First AME Church and Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles, organized in 1872 and 1889 respectively; and the AME Church (1887), Calvary Baptist Church (1889), and Bethel AME Church (1890) in San Diego.[785]

The establishment and growth of Black churches serves as one of the most significant indicators of population and community growth in the state. By 1906, California had sixty-three Black churches; this number had grown to 192 by 1926. These numbers may also have been higher, as these indicate the number of mainline Black churches and likely does not take into account smaller, storefront churches established in towns and cities throughout the state.[786] Greater numbers were concentrated in the state's urban centers, since they had a higher concentration of African Americans, but many rural communities also had churches. In rural areas in the Central Valley, the church took on an even more central role due to a dearth of businesses and services owned by or catering to African Americans.

Almost from the outset, Black churches gave birth to or worked closely with other community organizations, including building and loan associations, banks, insurance companies, and funeral homes. They also became significant financial institutions in and of themselves.[787] In California, as in the rest of the country, "churches were among the first institutions organized and controlled by African Americans."[788] Charlotta Bass, editor of the Black-owned newspaper the *California Eagle* in Los Angeles, observed "church was not only a place of worship; it was likewise the social, civic, and political headquarters where people assembled for spiritual guidance, and civic analysis, political discussions, and social welfare talks and lectures."[789] Some churches provided social services during times of need. For example, they assisted those affected by a flood in 1861 in Sacramento and raised money to help wounded Black soldiers during the Civil War.[790] The Good Samaritan Benevolent Society, created by Second Baptist Church in Los Angeles, was founded in 1906 and remained in operation until 1960.[791]

The state's early Black churches were active in the push for civil rights in the nineteenth century. Historian Dylan Penningroth observes that in some senses, the church served as a proving ground for civil rights activism. In the nineteenth century, civil rights were defined differently than they were later. Then, civil rights often referred to "the rights of property, contract, and the right to sue and testify in a court. … They were explicitly racial: civil rights were the rights of free people, the rights that enslaved people lacked and that free Black people could never count on."[792] They were, Pennigroth notes, "rights of everyday use."[793] The creation of churches as an independent entity was in and of itself an exercise in civil rights. They became a setting in which African Americans could not only govern themselves but could also exercise their everyday rights in a safe, independent space.[794] Early Black churches provided a place in which they could organize themselves, push for civil rights, and exercise political power. They served as meeting spaces for political activities in addition to the numerous social service functions they provided, and prominent church members often also became involved in politics.

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[784] Beasley, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, 160; San Francisco Planning Department, 35.
[785] Beasley, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, 160; Marne L. Campbell, ""The Newest Religious Sect Has Started in Los Angeles: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and the Origins of The Pentecostal Movement, 1906-1913," *Journal of African American History* 95, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 6; Mooney & Associates, II-5. For further details on specific congregations and their founding, see Beasley, *The Negro Trailblazers of California*, 158-160.
[786] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 20.
[787] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 253.
[788] Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 6.
[789] Bass, *Forty Years*, 21, 13, quoted in Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 116.
[790] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 11-12.
[791] Lorn S. Foster, "First Churches Los Angeles Project: Studying African American Churches in the First Half of the Twentieth Century," *Western Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2014): 63.
[792] Dylan C. Penningroth, "Everyday Use: A History of Civil Rights in Black Churches," *The Journal of American History* (March 2021), 872.
[793] Penningroth, "Everyday Use," 872.
[794] Penningroth, "Everyday Use," 876.

Between 1855 and 1865, for example, African Americans organized four States Conventions of the Colored Citizens of California to gain full citizenship. Sacramento's AME Church hosted three of these conventions.[795] The remaining convention was hosted at St. Cyprian AME Church in San Francisco.[796]

Churches continued to play a central role in social and civic life as the state's African American population grew. They commonly served as meeting spaces for other social and political organizations, and church membership often overlapped with involvement elsewhere in the community. The Los Angeles Forum, established in 1903, met at the First AME Church to discuss issues in the Black community. One of its founding members was the pastor of the First AME Church, along with other community leaders. It was active politically in the 1910s, and though its influence waned in the 1920s, it remained active into the 1940s.[797] In communities around the state, as in the rest of the country, local NAACP or Urban League chapters were founded with church membership often overlapping.[798] Rev. Thomas Harvey, pastor of the Kyles Temple AMEZ Church in Sacramento, founded the city's NAACP chapter; it was one of the earliest chapters of the NAACP on the West Coast.[799] Rev. Henry Benjamin Thomas of the Second Baptist Church in Santa Barbara led the formation of the local chapter of the NAACP in about 1924. The Los Angeles NAACP and Urban League initially met in churches.[800] Churches would continue to provide a place in which African Americans could politically organize during the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-twentieth century.

The church remained an important institution in the lives of African Americans during the Great Migration. Churches often helped new migrants find a sense of community in their new homes and provided social services when needed.[801] Most migrants sought out local equivalents to the congregations they had left; scholars C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya note that "if they did not feel comfortable in the large established black churches, they helped to create smaller ones by first meeting in homes, then renting storefronts, and later purchasing their own church edifices."[802]

One of the most well-known religious movements to arise out of this storefront church tradition was the Azusa Street Revival, which gave birth to Pentecostalism. The movement grew out of the Holiness movement, which arose from the evangelical revival movement of the late nineteenth century. The Holiness movement attracted working-class and lower-class Whites, as well as African Americans; the latter group was attracted to the religion's emotionalism and spirituality, both of which echoed Black cultural practices. Pentecostalism, however, was distinct from the Holiness movement in its belief in the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and the ability to "speak in tongues." Both of these religious doctrines became closely associated with Pentecostalism.[803] The Azusa Street Revival was led by African American minister William J. Seymour beginning in 1906.[804] After moving to Los Angeles, Rev. Seymour began holding Bible study meetings and eventually formed a group known as the Apostolic Faith Mission. As it grew, the Apostolic Faith Mission moved to an abandoned church in what is today Little Tokyo near downtown Los Angeles. The religion had a preaching and worship style rooted in African and African American cultural traditions. Its egalitarian nature made it popular with working class people and people of color. Many early members were new African American migrants to Los Angeles from the South. Services attracted several hundred people at a time, who stood on the street due to overflow, and police tried to stop prayer

[795] Ramsay and Lewis, *Five Views*, 4.
[796] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 36.
[797] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 77.
[798] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 9.
[799] Burg, "From Civil War to Civil Rights" qtd. in Page & Turnbull with Fisher, 85.
[800] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 21.
[801] Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect,"6.
[802] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 117.
[803] Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect,"7-8.
[804] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 76; Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 8.

meetings because they blocked traffic.[805] People came from all over the country to join services at the mission. Seymour trained other ministers, often those coming from denominations rooted in the Holiness movement, who then took the new religion back to their own congregations. By 1910, there were at least 25 Pentecostal churches in Los Angeles alone. It spread from Los Angeles as new congregations, both Black and White, formed.

The Azusa Street Revival was unique in two ways. First, its meetings attracted a multi-racial and multi-ethnic following, including a substantial number of newly arrived African Americans from the South, and transcended class lines.[806] Second, the Pentecostal movement was unique in its origins. Unlike Black Methodist and Baptist churches, which traced their origins to White denominations, Black Pentecostal churches did not.[807] The Apostolic Faith Mission itself, however, was short lived due to power struggles within the church, competition for members, and doctrinal disagreements.[808] Though the Azusa Street Revival itself petered out in Los Angeles quickly, Pentecostalism continued to spread throughout the world; today it is one of the most widespread religions in the world and ranks second only to Catholicism in its number of followers. The Holiness movement also gave rise to the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), the largest of the Black Pentecostal denominations in the country today. Originating with Rev. Charles P. Jones in Mississippi in the 1890s, COGIC also spread quickly throughout the country.[809]

In addition to the establishment of churches in larger towns and cities, pastors from urban churches often traveled to smaller cities or towns that did not have a large enough African American population to sustain their own congregations. In this way, the church provided "a vital link among isolated African American communities" and was able to provide various services to new migrants outside larger cities.[810] In some rural areas with a smaller African American population, a church would serve multiple communities, as was the case for Blacks in Atwater and Castle Air Force Base in the Central Valley.[811]

Black Churches from the Great Depression to the Civil Rights Movement (1930-1953)

The onset of the Great Depression and continued population growth during the Great Migration further highlighted the pivotal role of the Black Church. Many churches helped residents and incoming migrants find employment, and some larger churches had welfare departments during the Depression. In some communities, churches raised funds for those in need or sponsored social services, such as the housing constructed by Second Baptist Church (originally Mount Olive Baptist Church) in Santa Barbara.[812] This provision of social services would continue into the next several decades, and examples can be found throughout the state of churches funding or developing housing for those in need.[813]

[805] Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 13, 18.
[806] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 20; Douglas Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 115; Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 4, 18. The interracial nature of the movement did not last, unfortunately. Soon, all-White or all-Black congregations formed.
[807] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 76.
[808] Campbell, "The Newest Religious Sect," 20.
[809] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 80.
[810] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 21.
[811] Michael Eissinger, "Growing Along the Side of the Road: Rural African American Settlements in Central California," 21.
[812] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 66; de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 21.
[813] One example can be found in San Francisco, where several churches, including Jones Memorial United Methodist Church, Bethel AME Church, and Third Baptist Church, constructed housing in the Western Addition during the area's redevelopment in the late 1960s. Source: San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 167.

The 1920s and 1930s also saw the founding of a number of Black religions outside the mainline churches, including the Nation of Islam (NOI) and the Moorish Science Temple. The United States has had a small Islamic community since the sixteenth century, when African Muslims were brought to the English colonies as part of the Transatlantic slave trade, though traditional African Islamic practices did not survive slavery.[814] It reemerged in the United States in the early twentieth century with the founding of the Moorish Science Temple of America by Noble Drew Ali in 1913. The Moorish Science Temple juxtaposed Islam with White hegemonic culture and religion; it rejected the inferior status forced upon African Americans.[815] The movement was influenced by the ideas of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA, and one of its foremost teachings was its identification of its members with the Moors of North Africa.[816]

Though African Muslims immigrated to the United States in increasing numbers in the 1920s, Islam remained peripheral in the African American community until the mid-twentieth century. The NOI was founded in 1930 by Master Fard Muhammad in Detroit, Michigan; it was initially made up of former UNIA and Moorish Science Temple members.[817] Following Fard Muhammad's disappearance in 1934, Elijah Muhammad assumed leadership until 1975. The Black religious and social movement emphasized "a message of self-reliance, independence, and respect." This resonated especially with African Americans in urban neighborhoods that suffered from disinvestment, racism, and discrimination during the Depression and into the post-World War II period.[818]

During this period, the definition of civil rights began to shift. Between the 1920s and the 1960s, historian Dylan Penningroth notes, "a growing number of racial justice advocates began to coalesce around an agenda of fighting racial discrimination and subordination through law, an agenda they increasingly identified as 'civil rights.'"[819] It was the Black Church that provided a setting in which ideas concerning civil rights coalesced into action.[820] Churches began supporting civil rights and political causes prior to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. In San Francisco, African Americans launched the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign in the mid-1940s, which emphasized patronizing Black-owned businesses and eschewing those that would not hire them as employees.[821] Several of the community's churches, including the Second Baptist Church, backed the effort. Los Angeles had a similar "Don't' Spend Your Money Where You Cannot Work" campaign that was also supported by its churches.[822]

The Black Church and the Civil Rights Movement (1954-1974)

By mid-century, Black churches had extensive experience in political and social activism, and they brought that experience to bear in the 1950s and 1960s during the nationwide struggle for civil rights. Black churches were instrumental during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. During this period, African Americans united, with the church as an anchor, behind the cause of civil rights.[823] Churches also influenced the form and direction the Civil Rights Movement took. They often hosted fundraising events, provided space for meetings and organizing, and church members supported civil rights workers in religious and secular groups by providing food

[814] Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam*, 1.
[815] Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam*, 6.
[816] Patrick D. Bowen, "The African American Islamic Renaissance and the Rise of the Nation of Islam" (PhD diss, University of Denver, November 2013), 165.
[817] Bowen, "The African American Islamic Renaissance," 42.
[818] Nafeesa Muhammad, "The Nation of Islam's Economic Program, 1934-1975," Black Past, accessed May 18, 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/the-nation-of-islams-economic-program-1934-1975/.
[819] Penningroth, "Everyday Use," 886.
[820] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 165.
[821] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 129.
[822] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 300.
[823] James F. Findlay, Jr., *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4.

and housing.[824] A study of African American Christianity notes that "protest marches took on characteristics of a church service with prayers, songs, and sermons," indicating the integral role the church played in the Civil Rights Movement.[825]

African American churches supported civil rights efforts in a variety of ways. Some created groups to educate their members about current events, and others were active in the movement – for example, helping organize protests and supporting the efforts of the NAACP. As a result of the far-reaching influence of the church in matters beyond religion, Black clergy were also expected to speak out about important contemporary issues.[826] While they were often involved in politics and civil rights before this, the Civil Rights Movement added a new dimension to their leadership. Nationally, clergy members such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcom X, and John Lewis were instrumental in the fight for civil rights. Likewise, Black clergy throughout California became involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Leadership in the mainline churches in California's larger cities, including Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, often became active in civil rights issues. They were involved in other organizations like the NAACP, lent their voices to civil rights issues, and sometimes ran for political office.[827] For example, Rev. Hamel Hartford Brookins of First AME in Los Angeles became a prominent civil rights advocate in the 1960s. Soon after his arrival in Los Angeles in 1960, Brookins helped found the United Civil Rights Committee, which advocated for a number of civil rights issues, including fair housing and equal education.[828]

African American churches continued to be closely linked to secular efforts during the Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The NOI was increasingly linked to Black nationalism and rose to prominence after Malcom X became its primary spokesperson (discussed further in the Making a Democracy theme). It rejected the integrationist goals of the broader Civil Rights Movement and emphasized creating independent Black institutions, including religious organizations.[829] The NOI founded its own mosques, also called temples, throughout the country in the second half of the twentieth century. Among the temples founded in California were Temple No. 8 in San Diego (1949, today Masjidul Taqwa), Mosque No. 27 in Los Angeles (1956), and Mosque No. 26 in San Francisco. Malcom X was instrumental in the growth of Mosque No. 27. San Diego's Temple No. 8 was at the center of a thriving NOI community with several affiliated businesses near the temple on Imperial Avenue. This included a restaurant, clothing store, small grocery store, barber shop, and fabric shop where they produced their own uniforms. The temple also had a newspaper at one time; it went by different titles over the years, including *Message to the Black Man*.[830]

The National Committee of Negro Churchmen (later called the National Committee of Black Churchmen) was organized in 1967 and served as "the religious counterpart of the secular black power movement."[831] The Committee released a "Black Power" statement in 1966 in the *New York Times*. It began a dialogue about the role of the Black church in both the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement. Regional conferences were held around the country on the topic, including the Third Annual Convocation of the National Conference of Black Churchmen, hosted in Berkeley in 1969.[832] Churches around the state reassessed their roles in their communities, and many became more directly involved in helping in areas such as education and housing. In

[824] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 211-212.
[825] Harvard University, "African American Christianity," 3.
[826] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 207.
[827] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 206.
[828] "Hamel Hartford Brookins," Black Past, accessed April 14, 2023, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/brookins-hamel-hartford-1926/.
[829] National Museum of African American History and Culture, "Religion and Black Power," accessed May 23, 2023, https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/religion-and-black-power.
[830] Ameerah A. Johnson and Nennah Salaam, Zoom video chat with author, August 22, 2023.
[831] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 192.
[832] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 223-224.

Oakland, where the Black Panther Party was centered, several community organizations assumed prominent roles, including St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, where the Black Panther Party hosted its first Free Breakfast Program for School Children. The program soon spread throughout the state and beyond.

The Black Power Movement also gave rise to Black liberation theology, elucidated by James Cone in the 1960s. Cone's black liberation theology emphasized itself as "a theology that sees God as concerned with the poor and the weak" and contrasted with White Christianity, which had been used to justify centuries of racism and discrimination. Black liberation theology illustrated shifts in the Black church during this period, and its evolution would continue in the 1970s and beyond.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, Black churches lost some of their earlier prominence as a multi-faceted organization, though they continued to play an important role in California's African American community. This was in part because other organizations, such as public agencies, were formed and assumed roles previously assumed by the church. The role of Black clergy also changed as the century progressed, as members of the growing Black professional class assumed leadership roles previously held by church leaders.[833] Yet, despite this, the church retained a central role in the lives of California's African Americans, and churches continue to hold a crucial place in the Black community.

Sub-Theme: The Black Media

The Black Press

John B. Russwurm and Samuel Cornish founded the nation's first African American newspaper, New York City's *Freedom's Journal*, in 1827. In its first issue, the paper clearly stated goals that would go on to guide the Black press for the next century and a half: "We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. Too long has the publick (*sic*) been deceived by misrepresentations, in things which concern us dearly…The civil rights of a people being of the greatest value, it shall ever be our duty to vindicate our brethren, when oppressed; and to lay the case before the publick."[834] Because mainstream White-owned newspapers historically did not cover news associated with the Black community unless it involved crime (or to a lesser extent, entertainment and athletics), African Americans created periodicals of their own to report news affecting their communities. This lent the journalists, editors, and publishers of the Black press great social and political influence. At least thirty-six other African American newspapers followed the short-lived *Freedom's Journal* (and its successor *Rights of All*) before the end of the Civil War; most were in the Northeast, with three in New Orleans and two – the *Mirror of the Times* (1856) and the *Pacific Appeal* (1862)– in San Francisco.[835]

California's first African American newspapers arose in this atmosphere of racial discrimination and inequity, with the first, San Francisco's *Mirror of the Times,* birthed from the 1855 California Colored Convention. William H. Newby founded the *Mirror of the Times* after delegates to the Colored Convention decided Black Californians needed a voice; the first editors were fellow San Franciscans Jonas H. Townsend and Mifflin W. Gibbs.[836] Newby also reported California happenings in over a dozen columns as the Western Contributor to *Frederick Douglass' Paper*.[837] The first *Mirror of the Times* appears to have been published on October 31, 1856, with subsequent editions published weekly.[838] The four-page paper was read throughout the state and included advertisements from businesses in San Francisco, Sacramento, and Marysville. However, the *Mirror of the Times*

[833] de Graaf and Taylor, "African Americans in California History," 51.
[834] Cited in Patrick S. Washburn, *The African American Newspaper: Voice of Freedom* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2006), 18-19.
[835] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 23-24.
[836] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 41; J. William Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1856-1900," *California History* 60 no. 4 (Winter 1981-1982): 306.
[837] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 41-42.
[838] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 306 and note 1, 317.

struggled financially, and the lack of a Black-owned print shop meant it could not even employ African American pressmen.[839] The paper folded in 1858, when Gibbs moved to Victoria, British Columbia with a group of other Black San Franciscans fed up with the lack of progress in the state. The *Mirror of the Times*' direct association with political activism was more common than not for Black newspapers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rather than just conveying newsworthy events, African American periodicals also openly advocated for racial justice and served as a predominant voice for the Civil Rights Movement for decades.[840]

California remained without a Black newspaper until 1862, when Peter Anderson founded the San Francisco *Pacific Appeal* with editor Philip A. Bell. [841] Bell, who had previously founded and co-edited the New York-based *Colored American*, continued the mission of the *Mirror of the Times* by campaigning fiercely against California's law that prevented Black people from testifying in court against a White person and other discriminatory laws and practices. The *Appeal* hired the Bay Area's first Black woman journalist, J. Stella Martin, to write a "Miscellaneous" column for the paper.[842]

Bell left the *Pacific Appeal* after only a few months, likely due to conflicts with Peter Anderson, and started *The Elevator: A Weekly Journal of Progress* in 1865.[843] Anderson took over as editor of the *Appeal* and ran it, with a more conservative and conciliatory voice than Bell's, until 1879; former assistant editor William H. Carter kept the paper running until closing up in 1882.[844] Bell's *The Elevator* was quickly recognized by Black journalists nationwide for its strong progressive voice, summed up in its motto "Equality Before the Law" – as Bell wrote in the first issue, "we desire nothing more, we will be satisfied with nothing less."[845] Among the paper's contributors was Jennie Carter of Nevada City, who wrote over seventy pieces for *The Elevator* under the pen names "Ann J. Trask" and "Semper Fidelis" between 1867 and her death in 1881.[846] Her contributions from the Gold Rush-era town in the Sierra Nevada foothills illustrate the broad reach of San Francisco's Black press at that time, as well as the early and significant involvement of Black women in California journalism. The *Elevator* occupied several different office locations, none of which is extant today.[847]

Bell retired due to illness in 1885, after working over fifty years in journalism and editing *The Elevator* for twenty; he died in 1889. *The Elevator*'s publishing company appears to have continued producing the paper until at least 1891,[848] though sources differ on how long it continued. The Kansas City, Missouri *Gate City Press* eulogized Bell: "Educated, original, capable of fine powers of analysis, he flung the sparkling rays of his imagination over the productions of his pen, and came to be regarded as the Napoleon of the Colored press."[849]

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[839] Lapp, *Blacks in Gold Rush California*, 230-231.
[840] Journalist Phyl Garland summarized this idea in the 1999 documentary film "The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords": "The Black press never pretended to be objective because it didn't see the white press being objective, and it often took a position. It had an attitude. This was a press of advocacy. There was news, but the news had an admitted and deliberate slant." Accessed June 2023 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo8Pvr7TyP4. Charlotta Bass (and subsequent journalists and historians) considered the Black press and Black churches equally powerful as community-builders and advocates for equality. Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 104.
[841] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 307 notes that San Francisco's first Black magazine, John J. Moore's *Luna Visitor*, also began in 1862, but little is known about it. One source (https://thelunarvisitor.com/) states it actually began in 1852, and has been continuously published ever since, but that has not been confirmed with primary sources.
[842] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 308.
[843] Clint C. Wilson II, *Black Journalists in Paradox: Historical Perspectives and Current Dilemmas* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 30; I. Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Willey & Co., 1891; Reprinted 1969, New York: Arnos Press and the New York Times), 96; Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 308.
[844] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 308.
[845] *The Elevator*, April 7, 1865.
[846] Eric Gardner, ed., *Jennie Carter: A Black Journalist of the Early West* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), VII-VIII.
[847] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 43.
[848] Penn, The Afro-American Press and Its Editors, 95.
[849] Reprinted in Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors*, 96.

Many more Black newspapers emerged across the country after the Civil War. For a population that was still largely disenfranchised, the Black press provided a rare outlet for expression, representation, and assertion of rights long denied. By 1890, 154 African American periodicals had been started, with the majority in the South.[850] Like the earlier papers, most of them were short-lived, due to the low incomes, physical isolation, and widespread illiteracy among formerly enslaved people who had been prohibited from learning to read during enslavement. Historians Armistead S. Pride and Clint C. Wilson II noted the numerous papers established in the late nineteenth century "were to come and go by the scores, like foot soldiers storming a fortress."[851] Circulation of each was relatively low – most papers had less than 1,000 subscribers – but papers were typically read by many more people than the official circulation number, as a single copy could pass hand to hand through an entire neighborhood, and literate readers could read the news to those who were not yet literate.[852]

San Francisco saw the publication of several more influential African American newspapers in the late nineteenth century, including James E. Brown's *Vindicator* (1884-1896), Robert Charles O'Harra Benjamin's *Sentinel* (1890-1891), and the *Western Outlook*, founded by Joseph S. Francis, Walter George Maddox, and Joseph S. Francis in 1894 (Francis and J. Lincoln Derrick co-edited).[853] The *Western Outlook* moved its main office to Oakland in 1911, leaving an outpost in San Francisco, and continued publication until at least 1928 (it later became part of E.A. Daly's *California Voice*). The *Outlook* was not Oakland's first Black paper – John A. Wilds founded the *Oakland Sunshine* in 1897, and it was later co-edited and published by J.M. Bridges and E. Marshall; the *Sunshine* published until 1922.[854] No buildings associated with these publications are known to be extant.

All of these 1880s and 1890s Bay Area papers started later than Los Angeles's first African American newspaper, the *Owl.* Founded in 1879 by John J. Neimore, a formerly enslaved Texan, the *Owl* survived only a short time; Neimore next founded the *Weekly Observer* with Thomas Pearson and William Sampson in 1888, but later that same year separated from Pearson and Sampson and started the *Advocate*.[855] Much vitriol was exchanged between the former partners, motivated in part by the rigidity of nineteenth century party politics; most journalism at this time, in the Black press as well as the White, "amounted to no-holds-barred partisanship laced with slander and sensationalism."[856] The *Observer* became the *Western News*, but all of these battling papers were out of business by 1890.[857] In 1892, Neimore founded the *Southern California Guide,* which ran until 1895, around which time he started the *Eagle*.[858] This newspaper, later renamed the *California Eagle,* would prove to have staying power: it became one of the longest-lived and most influential Black papers in the nation under the leadership of Charlotta Bass starting in 1912. Among other Los Angeles newspapers founded around the same time as the *Eagle* was the *Pasadena Searchlight,* established by Jefferson L. Edmonds in 1896. Born enslaved, Edmonds attended Freedmen's Bureau schools after emancipation and then became a teacher and farmer active in politics. He moved his family from Mississippi to Los Angeles in 1890 after threats of violence against them.[859] In the *Searchlight*, Edmonds supported Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryant, to the dismay of many Black

[850] Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors*, 114.
[851] Armistead S. Pride and Client C. Wilson II, *A History of the Black Press* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1997), 88-89.
[852] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 50.
[853] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 311-314; "Newspapers and Journalists," Oakland Public Library, accessed June 2023 at https://oaklandlibrary.org/content/newspapers-and-journalists/.
[854] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 314; "Newspapers and Journalists."
[855] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 104.
[856] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 105.
[857] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 104-106.
[858] The *California Eagle* listed 1879 on its masthead as its founding date and most sources use that date.
[859] "The Life of J.L. Edmonds," The J.L. Edmonds Project, accessed June 28 2023, https://www.jledmondsproject.com/life-of-jefferson; Lonnie G. Bunch III, "'The Greatest State for the Negro'": Jefferson L. Edmonds, Black Propagandist of the California Dream," in *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California* (Lawrence B. De Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, & Quintard Taylor, editors) (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 129-148.

Angelenos who supported the Republican "Party of Lincoln"; his publishing partners removed him from the editor position after public outcry.[860]

In 1900, Edmonds started the *Liberator* as a monthly publication and used it to report the news, advocate progressive ideals, and recruit African Americans to Los Angeles; it became a weekly paper by 1911. Edmonds is regarded as one of Los Angeles's most effective boosters during the early twentieth century. Historian Lonnie Bunch writes, "Edmonds felt that the conditions in Southern California in the early twentieth century were ripe for 'advancing the race.' What was needed was a clear vision of what was possible, a continuing influx of black migrants who were willing to work hard and vote often, and a means to communicate regularly and effectively to both black and white Angelenos. No one had more to contribute to the articulation, dissemination, and implantation of this effort than Edmonds."[861] He died in 1914 and the *Liberator* ceased publication.

In 1907, the *Eagle* and the *Liberator* were joined by a third Los Angeles Black paper when the Missouri-born Oscar Hudson established the Los Angeles *New Age*.[862] Hudson had moved to Los Angeles to attend law school and went on to become a prominent lawyer and the U.S. consul to Liberia. In 1912, Hudson sold the weekly publication to Frederick M. Roberts, who successfully ran it until 1948. In 1918, Roberts was elected to the state legislature and reduced his direct involvement with the *New Age*, but continued publishing; he was the first known African American person to be elected to public office on the West Coast and served for 16 years.

By 1910, the U.S. had an estimated 288 Black newspapers, with a combined circulation of about 500,000 and at least one paper in every city with a sizable African American population.[863] In California, this did not mean newspapers were limited to large urban areas – at least one short-lived publication arose in a smaller community as well. Robert H. Harbert founded the Redlands *Colored Citizen* in 1905 to serve the African American residents of Redlands, San Bernardino, and Riverside. In its first issue the *Colored Citizen* demanded, "give us a fair chance and a square deal and then leave the rest to us to do to prove ourselves worthy citizens."[864] It ran for a year and a half before folding but marked the first time the African American residents of the Inland Empire had a published voice of their own. At least two of the Harbert family's pre-1910 residences remain extant in Redlands.[865]

Charlotta Spear Bass became the editor/operator of the Los Angeles *California Eagle* in 1912, when its founder John Neimore asked her to take over the paper from him. She would go on to become one of California's most influential African American voices, and established the *Eagle* as one of its most respected and longest-lived publications. Born in South Carolina in 1874, Spear moved to Los Angeles for health reasons in 1910 and found work selling subscriptions for the *Eagle.* When she acquired the *Eagle*, she became "publisher, editor, reporter, business manager, distributor, printer, and janitor."[866] Spear hired Joseph Bass as a reporter in 1913, and they married in 1914; Joseph Bass became editor and the two worked together until his death in 1934. In the mid-1910s, the paper listed its location as "Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Oakland," broadcasting its ambition to reach the entire state.[867] After garnering attention for a crusade against the film "Birth of a Nation," Charlotta Bass became an in-demand speaker across the country, and the *Eagle's* circulation expanded nationwide as a result.

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[860] Bunch, "The Life of J.L. Edmonds," 134.
[861] Bunch "The Life of J.L. Edmonds," 130.
[862] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 106-107.
[863] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 83.
[864] Donald L. Singer, "A Glimpse at 'The Colored Citizen,' an Early Redlands Newspaper," *Redlands Daily Facts*, June 8, 2013.
[865] "Black Redlands 1910" Storymap; Architectural Resources Group, "City of Redlands Citywide Historic Context Statement," prepared for City of Redlands 2017, 202.
[866] Rodger Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice: African-American Women Journalists Who Changed History* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 96.
[867] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 108.

By 1925, the *California Eagle* had twelve people on staff and printed a twenty-page edition on a weekly basis for a circulation of 60,000.[868] Bass was very active in the fight for Black rights, using the *Eagle* "as a forum for blistering attacks on the motion picture industry, Ku Klux Klan, Southern California Telephone Company, Boulder Dam, restrictive housing covenants, among other discriminatory organizations and practices. She blasted wrong-doers on the pages of her newspaper and mobilized the African-American community of Los Angeles as no one before her had been able to."[869] The *Eagle* launched the careers of multiple prominent journalists and photographers, including Fay M. Jackson, Loren Miller, Leon Washington, Charles Williams, and Almena Lomax. Lomax founded her own successful publication, the *Herald Tribune*, in 1941 then closed it in 1959 to move to Alabama to more directly participate in the actions of the Civil Rights Movement; she later worked at the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Examiner.*[870] As a freelance photographer, Charles Williams also worked for the *Sentinel* (where, as discussed below, Washington, Jackson, and Miller all worked after the *Eagle)*. The *Eagle* occupied a series of locations, mostly on Central Avenue, over its lifespan. At least one is known to survive: 4071-75 S. Central Avenue, home of the paper from 1937 until approximately 1954.[871]

Another significant Black journalist began her California career around the same time as Charlotta Bass: the Ohio-born Delilah Leontium Beasley. After writing for multiple newspapers in Cleveland and Cincinnati, her journalistic ambitions were delayed following the death of her parents. She halted her education and started working. She moved to Berkeley in 1910, enrolled in history courses, and dove into archival research on the early African American history of California, producing the seminal work *The Negro Trail-Blazers of California* in 1919. Beasley began writing for both Black and White-owned California papers in 1915, including the *Oakland Sunshine* and the *Oakland Tribune.* As the only African American in the country to write a regular column for a major White newspaper ("Activities Among Negroes" in the *Tribune*), Beasley used her journalistic platform to fight both race and gender discrimination in California until her death in 1934.[872]

The Bay Area continued to gain new African American periodicals, like Errol Marshall's Oakland newspaper the *California Voice* (1919). In 1927, Elbert Allen "E.A." Daly and his wife Lillian McReynold Daly bought the *Voice*; like other new Californians, they had moved West from the South during the Great Migration (in their case, only five years earlier).[873] By the early 1930s, the Dalys had purchased three other local Black weeklies, the *Western Outlook*, *Western Appeal*, and *New Day Informer*, consolidating them into the *California Voice* and essentially gaining a monopoly of the Bay Area Black press.[874] The *California Voice* became part of a later, larger Black press syndicate, Carlton Benjamin Goodlett's Sun-Reporter Publishing Company, in 1971.

By 1921, the U.S. had at least 492 Black newspapers in thirty-eight states, with readership continuously growing as literacy and financial stability increased.[875] The number of African American newspapers dropped by over half in the Great Depression, with only 210 in operation in 1940.[876] However, the success of several of the larger national papers (most notably the *Pittsburgh Courier*, which reached every state in the nation) resulted in a rise in circulation – 1,276,000 in 1940, compared with only 600,000 in 1933.[877] The *California Eagle* remained strong through the Depression, and gained an important rival in 1933 when its former advertising manager, Leon H.

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[868] Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice*, 100.
[869] Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice*, 96.
[870] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 128.
[871] "California Eagle Publishing Co. Offices," HistoricPlacesLA, accessed June 28, 2023, http://historicplacesla.org/reports/fb21722c-b243-42e9-959b-d7cbe507edb8; *California Eagle* masthead and contact information, v.d.
[872] Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice*, 73-83.
[873] Albert S. Broussard, "In Search of the Promised Land: African American Migration to San Francisco, 1900-1945," in *Seeking El Dorado* 2001, 186-187; "E.A. Daly," Oakland Local Wiki, accessed March 2023, https://localwiki.org/oakland/E._A._Daly.
[874] Broussard, "In Search of the Promised Land," 187; https://oaklandlibrary.org/content/newspapers-and-journalists/
[875] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 121.
[876] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 140.
[877] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 140.

Washington, Jr. founded the *Los Angeles Sentinel*. Washington hired both Loren Miller, a rising journalist/lawyer/activist, and another talented journalist, Fay M. Jackson, away from the *Eagle*. Jackson became the *Sentinel*'s editor.[878] She had started the West Coast's first Black news magazine, the *Flash*, in 1928 and went on to become a Hollywood and foreign correspondent for the Associated Negro Press.[879] Washington's wife Ruth Washington was the paper's business manager, one of its photographers, and later (after Leon Washington's death) its editor and publisher. The *Sentinel* soon matched the *Eagle* in influence, and eventually surpassed it in lifespan – it is still active today, 90 years later.

As California's African American population surged in the second wave of the Great Migration during the early 1940s, multiple new publications appeared. Some, like the *Richmond Guide,* were short-lived but served a vital role during wartime. Margaret Starks, a recent migrant from Arkansas, began publishing the *Richmond Guide* in 1944 while still working in the shipyards.[880] Starks published weekly, first from her apartment, then from at least two of the blues clubs, Tappers Inn and Blue Haven Café, where she booked musicians and worked as a general manager. She found working from the clubs useful because everyone in the Black community came through their doors, and they knew where to find her if they had news for her; the clubs, along with wartime housing projects, also served as a primary distribution point for the *Richmond Guide*.[881] The paper ended sometime in the early postwar period. Other papers founded during the 1940s included the *Sacramento Outlook*, established by Reverend J.T. Muse in 1942; it was the longest-lived Black publication Sacramento had seen at that time, lasting into the 1960s, and would later shift into the *Sacramento Observer*.[882]

The San Francisco *Sun-Reporter* started as Thomas C. Fleming's *The Reporter* in 1944. Fleming had previously worked for John Pittman's Black Marxist weekly *The Spokesman*, founded in San Francisco in 1931 and housed at the corner of Baker and Sutter Streets.[883] In 1948, *The Reporter* merged with *The Sun*, owned by medical doctor Carlton B. Goodlett, to form the *Sun-Reporter* with Goodlett as editor and publisher, Fleming as managing editor, and Dan Collins as co-publisher.[884] Goodlett maintained an active medical practice and became a prominent leader in California's Black community, running for governor against incumbent Pat Brown in 1966. He eventually moved the paper's office to his building on Turk Street (no longer extant) "where he could more efficiently pursue both his medical practice and the business of running a newspaper."[885] The paper's community room became an important space for the local Black community and hosted events with the Black Panthers, Malcom X, Muhammad Ali, and Dick Gregory.[886] Fleming remained the managing editor and lead reporter for the *Sun-Reporter* until his retirement at age 89 in 1997; he died in 2006. In 1971, Goodlett (by then the sole publisher) acquired the *California Voice* and seven other Bay Area publications for his Sun-Reporter Publishing

[878] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 303.
[879] Penelope McMillan, "Granddaughter Keeps Memory of Pioneering Black Journalist Vivid," *Los Angeles Times*, September 5, 1988.
[880] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "'Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own': African American Women in Twentieth-Century California," *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, ed. Lawrence B. De Graff, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001), 50.
[881] Moore, "Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own," 134, 195.
[882] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 114-115.
[883] In 1943, the *Spokesman* building was replaced by the Westside Courts housing project (2501 Sutter Street), the only wartime era defense worker housing project in San Francisco that allowed African Americans at that time. Thomas C. Fleming, "Reflections on Black History: Black Communists in the 1930s," *Sun-Reporter* January 10, 1999, accessed July 2023, http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/45a/136.html; San Francisco African American Historic Context Statement 2019, 93-95.
[884] "Sun Reporter: History," accessed June 2023, https://thesunreporter.com/history/. Goodlett also earned a Ph.D. in psychology at UC Berkeley before attending medical school. In 1999, Fleming recounted how Goodlett won *The Sun* from Frank Lorent in a poker game: "Thomas Fleming (1907-2006) on the History of the Black Press in San Francisco," FoundSF, 1999 interview, accessed June 2023, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=The_Black_Press.
[885] "Sun Reporter: History," accessed June 2023, https://thesunreporter.com/history/.
[886] "Sun Reporter: History," accessed June 2023, https://thesunreporter.com/history/.

Group, which is still running today under new leadership; Goodlett died in 1997 after decades of being one of the most influential Black publisher-editors on the West Coast.[887]

California's Black press continued its civil rights advocacy after World War II, as African Americans nationwide gained economic power and refused to surrender gains they had made under government programs during the war. The papers heavily publicized the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign, which started in the 1930s and encouraged public protests of discriminatory businesses and institutions. Charlotta Bass and the *California Eagle* drew national attention to discriminatory housing practices including racially restrictive covenants, focusing on cases like that of Henry and Anna Laws in 1944. Forced from their home at 1235 E. 92nd Avenue (extant), the Laws lost their court battle against restrictive covenants, but the Bass-led outcry among Black Angelenos resulted in their being able to stay.[888] Their case was dropped after the 1948 *Shelley v. Kraemer* case found restrictive covenants unconstitutional.

During the Cold War, many Black newspapers came under scrutiny by government agencies suspicious that more militant language criticizing the government and advocating for civil rights was Communist-inspired. This federal surveillance had been happening since the late 1910s (the first Red Scare), accelerated during World War II, particularly under J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, and was joined by public scrutiny during the Red Scare period of the 1950s. The *California Eagle*, which had been investigated by both the FBI and the Post Office during World War II for supposed Communist sympathies, became a victim. Bass's paper lost advertisers and some of its progressive stances were viewed with suspicion by both African American and White Californians. Bass sold the paper in 1951, discouraged by the lack of community support and the competition from the rival *Los Angeles Sentinel*; the new owner was one of the *Sentinel*'s original founders, Loren Miller.[889] Bass continued her activism in other ways and ran for vice president on the Progressive Party's ticket in 1952. The *Eagle* shut down in the mid-1960s. The FBI monitored and reported on Bass until she was in her mid-90s; she died in 1969. In a testament to the central role of the *Eagle* in Bass's activism and in the burgeoning Black Power Movement, biographer Rodger Streitmatter noted "The bulk of the 563 pages in Bass's FBI file consist of summaries of *Eagle* articles, as the agents considered all statements in support of increased rights for African Americans to be evidence not that she advocated racial justice but that she advocated Communism over democracy."[890]

The *California Eagle* was only one of many Black newspapers to fold in the 1950s-60s, as White-owned mainstream papers influenced by the Civil Rights Movement began covering the African American community with less prejudice, and Black readers found their papers – which typically had fewer financial resources than White papers and had trouble competing once White papers began covering Black news - less necessary. White papers also began hiring African American journalists who could report on happenings in Black neighborhoods – like the Watts Uprising of 1965 – without being conspicuous interlopers. Some, like Clarence Page of the *Chicago Tribune*, were mere journalism students at the time, but having gained a foothold in mainstream newsrooms, went on to distinguished careers.[891] This "brain drain" benefited journalism in general but greatly decreased the talent pool available to Black newspapers. Along with the Red Scare, the papers also faced the same obstacles all papers did (and do): decreasing advertising revenue, management problems, uneven community support, and competition from television news and now also online news outlets.

In 1963, only two daily Black newspapers and 131 weeklies, semiweeklies, and biweeklies still survived nationwide, with a combined circulation of only 1.5 million (the nation's African American population, for

[887] "Sun Reporter: History," accessed June 2023, https://thesunreporter.com/history/; Wilson 1991, 70.
[888] Hadley Meares, "The Fearless Newspaper Publisher Who Crusaded for Fair Housing," CurbedLA February 21, 2019, accessed June 2023, https://la.curbed.com/2019/2/21/18228989/charlotta-bass-california-eagle-housing-segregation-history.
[889] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 188.
[890] Streitmatter, *Raising Her Voice*, 102-103.
[891] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, Foreword by Clarence Page, x-xi.

comparison, was about twenty million strong at that point).[892] But this is not to say newspapers were not being started – over a dozen major Black papers were started in California in the 1950s and 60s, including the Los Angeles *Herald-Dispatch*, the Menlo Park *Ravenswood Post*, multiple *Outlook* papers in Bakersfield, the *San Diego Voice & Viewpoint*, the *Sacramento Observer*, the *Oakland Post*, the *Richmond Post*, and the *California Advocate* in Fresno. Some lasted for decades.

Most of these postwar publications, with the *Sacramento Observer* and the *Oakland Post* as representative examples, were more mainstream/commercial, continuing to report general news as well as advocating for civil rights and providing a Black viewpoint. Founded in 1962 by Dr. William Hanford Lee and a group of partners, the *Sacramento Observer* started with the purchase of the *Sacramento Outlook*. Lee became sole proprietor in 1965; the newspaper had a circulation of 10,000 by the following year.[893] The *Observer* is still in publication under the leadership of the Lee family. Thomas L. and Velda M. Berkley started the weekly *Oakland Post* in 1963 and grew it into a group of five papers with a circulation of over 55,000, making it one of the largest African American newspapers in Northern California.[894] The *Post* is still running under new leadership following Thomas Berkley's death.

A number of new, more openly activist periodicals started across the country in the 1960s as part of the Black Power Movement, embodied by Oakland's *The Black Panther* (later renamed the *Black Panther Intercommunal News Service*). Historian Fred Carroll summarized the intent of this "partisan and idiosyncratic alternative black press": it "existed to advocate for racial and political perspectives that its editors believed the commercial black press – as well as other establishmentarian black institutions – either mischaracterized, unfairly denounced, or simply ignored."[895] The newly formed Black Panther Party established *The Black Panther* in 1967 as a monthly newsletter to broadcast the party's views and raise funds. It became a weekly newspaper in January 1968 and contained longer-form articles along with original art by the party's Minister of Culture, Emory Douglas.[896] *The Black Panther*'s uncompromising perspective was an inspiration to many young African Americans, as Minnesotan and future party member Craig L. Rice explained: "The centuries of degrading images that Black people had endured, the images of us as weak and subservient, the images of us 'getting long to get along' – went away. Instead, images of power and pride radiated from the pages."[897] Journalist David DuBois, the adopted son of W.E.B. DuBois, served as editor in chief between 1972 and 1975.[898] The publication continued until 1976.

Smaller community-based papers like *The Flatlands* in Oakland (1966-1968) provided news with a more local focus – in the case of *The Flatlands,* down to the neighborhood level. The Compton *Bulletin* started in 1970 and expanded in 1973 to cover all of South Los Angeles; today the weekly *Bulletin* combines *The Inglewood Tribune, Carson Bulletin, Weekender, Wilmington Beacon, The Californian,* and *The South L.A. Voice.* In 1976, Muhammad al-Kareem started *The New Bayview/The San Francisco Bay View National Black Newspaper* (commonly referred to as *The Bay View*) in and for the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood. Provided free of charge to the public, *The Bay View* is still in operation, has expanded its purview to include national and global topics, and has occupied multiple locations along the Third Street Corridor.[899]

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[892] Washburn, *The African American Newspaper*, 190.
[893] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 115.
[894] https://oaklandlibrary.org/content/newspapers-and-journalists/.
[895] Fred Carroll, *Race News: Black Journalists and the Fight for Racial Justice in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017), 5.
[896] Carroll, *Race News*, 170-171.
[897] Carroll, *Race News*, 172.
[898] "Obituary: David DuBois," *The Guardian* April 8, 2005, accessed October 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/apr/09/guardianobituaries.usa.
[899] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 195-196.

From the late 1960s through the 1980s, many of California's historically African American newspapers were combined into publishing groups like the *Sun-Reporter*, *Post*, and others described above. These entities have the advantage of uniform policies across multiple publications; a larger pool of financial and talent resources; greater circulation; and use of editorial pieces in multiple publications.[900] One of the largest is Los Angeles's Central News-Wave Publications, founded by Chester L. Washington. In 1949, Washington was the first African American writer for the *Los Angeles Mirror* (an afternoon paper by the *Los Angeles Times*); after the *Mirror* folder in 1962, Washington went to work for the *Sentinel*. He went on to purchase two local weeklies, the *Central News* and *Southwest News*, then in 1971 bought five more: the *Southwest Wave, Southwest Wave Star, Southwest Topics Wave, Southside Journal,* and *Southwestern Sun*. By the 1980s, Washington's group included 13 Southern California papers, making the Central News-Wave the largest Black publishing concern at that time.[901] The founder died in 1983.

Black Radio

Radio became popular in the United States in the 1920s. As in theater and movies, the portrayal of African Americans in radio was initially negative and based in stereotypes about Black speech and culture. They were also depicted by White performers, and routines took their cues from minstrel acts.[902] Even as minstrelsy began to die out in the early 20th century, radio shows such as *Amos 'n' Andy* (which aired in 1928) and *Beulah* (1945) continued to perpetuate negative, racist stereotypes about African Americans. For these reasons, radio was not initially a reliable source of realistic and relevant media for Black Americans, who mainly relied on Black-operated newspapers. At the same time, Black performers, if present, were more common in the early days of radio. Local radio stations, especially those in large cities, were more likely to host Black performers than the larger networks that arose in the 1930s.[903] Following the consolidation of radio broadcasting into a few large networks, Black performers (both actors and musicians) were rarely featured, and most Black radio characters were depicted by White actors.[904]

African Americans tried to counter the negative stereotypes prevalent in the early days of radio broadcasting. The *All-Negro Radio Hour* premiered in Chicago in 1929. Produced and hosted by African American radio pioneer Jack L. Cooper, the show featured musical numbers and comedy routines in a Black vaudeville format. It also hosted religious segments and broadcasts from Chicago's Black churches. Though the show went off the air in 1935, its success helped lead to the creation of other Black-oriented radio stations after World War II.[905] The Harlem Broadcasting Corporation, also formed in 1929, was the first independent African American radio company formed in the country.[906] Radio helped spread the talent of Black musicians of the era in New York and Chicago as well as that of Black vaudeville stars and church choirs.[907]

Eddie Anderson was one of the most well-known African American radio personalities of this era. He played Rochester on the show *The Jack Benny Show* in the 1930s. However, he was one of the few Black actors on radio

[900] Roland E. Wolseley, *The Black Press, U.S.A.* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1990), 94.
[901] Wolseley, *The Black Press*, 127-128.
[902] "African American Radio," Oxford Encyclopedia, accessed September 28, 2023, https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-640?p=emailAmBKKTGAVigoA&d=/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-640.
[903] William Barlow, *Voice Over: The Making of Black Radio* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 25.
[904] Barlow, *Voice Over*, 27.
[905] Dianne Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio," Soul-Patrol, accessed September 27, 2023, https://soul-patrol.com/short-history-of-black-radio/.
[906] William Barlow, *Voice Over: The Making of Black Radio* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 24.
[907] Barlow, *Voice Over*, 23-24.

before World War II. In addition, discrimination was rampant in the industry, and the major radio networks rarely discussed issues of concern to African Americans.[908]

In California, radio stations thrived in urban centers and mostly followed broader national trends. KGFJ became the most prominent Black-oriented radio station in Los Angeles (though it was initially White-owned). Founded in 1927, the station featured A.C.H. Bilbrew's show *The Golden Hour*, which broadcasted church news and music, between 1940 and 1942, as well as a news program hosted by Charlotta Bass of the *California Eagle*. In the early 1950s, the station began featuring blocks of rhythm and blues music and went on to become a popular soul music station.[909]

Several Black Angelenos also had radio shows of their own, initially on White-owned stations. Politician Fred Roberts produced a weekly radio show called *The New Age Talent Hour*, which featured local Black musicians beginning in 1937. Reverend Clayton D. Russell began hosting a radio show in 1938 which included a church service and featured Black-owned businesses. He later also promoted community social services and discussed civil rights issues.[910] Almena Lomax, who worked for the *California Eagle* for several years, hosted a radio news program beginning in 1940 as well as starting her own paper, the *Herald Tribune*. In addition, radio broadcasting brought renown to several area church choirs. Victory Baptist Church, for example, hosted a weekly radio station which featured its choir, and the choir of the St. Paul Baptist Church, called Echoes of Eden, became well-known after broadcasting weekly on KFWB.[911]

After World War II, African Americans gained more presence in radio. In 1949, a radio station in Memphis, Tennessee became the first station in the country to employ an all-Black announcing staff. This was soon followed by a Black-oriented news station in Nashville, Tennessee and a Black-owned radio station in Atlanta, Georgia. However, these remained few and far between.[912]

In Northern California, several stations in the Bay Area aimed their programming at African Americans. Station KWBR began gearing its music towards the Bay Area's African American population around 1945. By the late 1950s, it was joined by KSAN in San Francisco. In 1959, KWBR became KDIA and began focusing its programming solely on its Black audience. Popular disc jockeys on the station included Don Barksdale and Bill Doubleday, who would later become the station's general manager. At a time when Black artists like Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross, and Ray Charles were only heard on mainstream radio stations if their records made it onto the pop charts, Black radio stations featured Black disc jockeys, radio personalities, and musicians for an African American audience. In the San Francisco area, "if you wanted to hear anybody of color, you had to listen to KDIA," the station's first female DJ, Diane Blackmon, remembered.[913] The station hosted a number of other well-known radio personalities, featured soul and funk music, and made time for commentary and talk shows. Hosts included reports on the weather, sports, and hourly news with stories relevant to the community.[914]

It was not until the 1950s and 1960s that Black on-air hosts became more common. During this period, African American disc jockeys popularized music originating in the Black community and broadcasted the events of the Civil Rights Movement, becoming an important link between disparate Black populations around the country.[915] Many stations were also directly involved in their communities. KDIA and San Francisco-based KSOL, for

[908] Barlow, *Voice Over*, 32-33.
[909] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 184. KGFJ became KKTT and was purchased in 1979 by the Black-owned, New York City-based Inner City Broadcasting Corporation.
[910] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 22, 184.
[911] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 166.
[912] Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio."
[913] Ida Mojadad, "They Were the Souls of the Airwaves," Media Museum of Northern California, accessed September 27, 2023, https://www.norcalmediamuseum.org/?p=1191.
[914] Mojadad, "They Were the Souls of the Airwaves." KDIA remained on the air until the 1990s.
[915] Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio."

example, were known not only for their music but also for their involvement in the local African American community.[916] KDIA frequented local events in San Francisco's historically Black Fillmore district and promoted voting awareness.[917]

Following the 1965 Watts Uprising, African American businessman John Lamar Hill saw the need for a Black-oriented and owned radio station in Los Angeles. Hill purchased an existing radio station originating out of Long Beach and moved the studio to Crenshaw Boulevard in Los Angeles. He obtained the station letters KJLH, and it aired news and music six days a week. On Sunday, the station hosted church services from congregations around the city.[918] The station was purchased by African American musician Stevie Wonder in 1979 and still exists today.[919]

Changes in the broader radio industry had a lasting impact on African American radio in the 1970s. Radio shows began to focus less on the news and public affairs and more on music, moving away from programming that had been an important staple in Black radio until this point.[920] It was not until this decade that African Americans made true gains into radio ownership and management. KPOO was founded in San Francisco in 1971. It ran programming aimed at the Black community and was the first Bay Area radio station to play rap, reggae, and salsa music.[921] It also aired programming on a wide range of contemporary news issues for a variety of audiences, including women and the Latino, Black, Asian, and LGBTQ+ communities.[922] In the 1980s and 1990s, Black-owned radio stations became increasingly common.

Sub-Theme: Arts and Culture

Since the nineteenth century, the arts have served as an important form of self-expression for African Americans in California. Arts and culture were a way to explore a unique identity and empower themselves in the face of forces which so often led to disempowerment. Through the arts, Black Californians cultivated a distinctive identity that was also influenced by overarching patterns in the arts nationwide. Art in all its forms became imbued with themes significant to the Black community. The arts were influenced by national trends such as the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement, the racial climate, and current events. The racism and discrimination faced by African Americans also played a major role in the arts, creating a distinct and separate arts scene through which Black Californians could explore themes important to their lived experience.

An artistic and literary movement that began in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City in the 1920s and 1930s, the Harlem Renaissance had a marked impact on African American culture across the United States. It has been described as a "spiritual coming of age" in which African Americans transformed "social disillusionment to race pride."[923] It included multiple forms of the arts, including writing, theater, visual arts, and music. It was an expression of African American identity and culture unlike anything seen before. Writer Langston Hughes called it an "expression of our individual dark-skinned selves."[924] This new awareness and collective identity in turn encouraged Black artists to assert their civil rights.

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[916] Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio."
[917] Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio."
[918] John Lamar Hill, "Black Leadership in Los Angeles: John Lamar Hill II Interview," by Ranford B. Hopkins transcript, University of California Los Angeles Department of Special Collections, 115.
[919] "50 Years Strong," KJLH, accessed September 27, 2023, https://web.archive.org/web/20170510124056/http://kjlhradio.com/celebrating-50-years-102-3-kjlh/#.
[920] Washington, "A Short History of Black Radio."
[921] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 232.
[922] KPOO, "About Us," accessed October 6, 2023, https://kpoo.com/about.
[923] National Museum of African American History and Culture, "A New African American Identity: The Harlem Renaissance," accessed June 20, 2023, https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/new-african-american-identity-harlem-renaissance.
[924] "A New African American Identity: The Harlem Renaissance," accessed June 20, 2023, https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/new-african-american-identity-harlem-renaissance.

Like the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Arts Movement originated in New York City in the 1960s but had influences that resonated across the country, including in California. Described by Black theater scholar Larry Neal as the "aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power concept," the leaders of the Black Arts Movement called for the creation of a "Black Aesthetic" centralizing Black lives and culture in works of art, literature, music, and theater.[925] A related principle was that of a "cultural nationalism," which proposed the development and celebration of a unique, Black cultural tradition.[926] The movement faded in the 1970s as its leaders shifted away from Black nationalism.

The common thread in Black arts and culture is the creation of a unique identity. In California, African Americans channeled their experience into a uniquely California genre, and cities with significant African American populations like Los Angeles became major players in the West Coast arts scene.

Visual Arts

The history of African American visual art in California is as rich and complex as the art and artists that defined it, with a distinct and evolving artistic identity at its core. Renowned California artist and art historian Samella Lewis described African American artists as "energetic participants in a cultural revolution" where the artist's role is that of an interpreter, "a voice that makes intelligible the deepest, most meaningful aspirations of the people."[927] The work and legacies of Black Californian artists have created a complex and intellectually rigorous visual language that reflects a larger, collective African American experience within the history of the state and nation. In turn, by reflecting the experiences and diversity of the Black community, art not only shapes perceptions of Black Americans throughout time, but also perceptions of California and its cultural landscape as whole.

Even before California's first Black professional artists of the late nineteenth century, art and artistic expression were vital aspects of African American life and community. These practices dated back to the African artistic traditions carried west by free and enslaved people of African descent. Existing artistic traditions and artists were often excluded from the historic record and museum world, while early Black artisans were not afforded widespread recognition in a White dominant culture. Additionally, by the nineteenth century, the ability to pursue art as a career was limited to only a handful of Black Americans who had could access to education, apprenticeships, disposable income, or the unique ability to endure unpaid work. Thus, many early Black artists stood alone as "anomalous figures," both as artists within their own community, and as artists of color within the greater art world.[928]

Black Artists of the Late Nineteenth Century

As the Gold Rush of the mid-nineteenth century ushered people into the newly established state, many free Black Americans migrated west to seek new opportunity, opening the gates for the state's few early Black professional artists, particularly in the Bay Area. One of the most well-established early Black artists of the time was Tyler Grafton Brown, considered the state's first Black commercial artist. The son of freed people, Brown arrived in San Francisco as part of this early wave of Black Americans in the late 1850s, beginning his career as a draftsman and lithographer at Kuchel and Dressel.[929] By 1867, Brown left to start his own firm, G.T. Brown and Company

[925] Larry Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," *Drama Review* (Summary 1968), part 1 of 3; Toombs, "African American Uprising," 284.
[926] Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," part 1 of 3.
[927] Samella Lewis, *African American Art and Artists* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 4.
[928] Mary Thomas, "Within/Against: Circuits and Networks of African American Art in California," *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History,* ed. Eddie Chambers, Abingdon: Routledge, 2019.
[929] Frances Kaplan, "Grafton Tyler Brown and the Art if Lithography," *California Historical Society,* March 8, 2021, accessed April 2023, https://californiahistoricalsociety.org/blog/grafton-tyler-brown-and-the-art-of-lithography/#_ftn2.

near the city's Chinatown neighborhood.[930] As an established lithographer, cartographer, and painter, Brown designed widely circulated stock certificates and lithographs that depicted California and other western scenes; many of his images gave Americans their first impressions of the region and encouraging greater westward migration.[931] By 1878, he had completed his most well-known project, *The Illustrated History of San Mateo County*, which comprised over seventy topographical renderings of city views within the region. Brown sold his firm in 1879 and continued to make a name for himself as a successful landscape painter of the Pacific Northwest.[932] Nelson Primus, a contemporary of Brown, also came to San Francisco from Boston at the turn of the twentieth century. Primus soon began modeling and painting at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (now the San Francisco Art Institute), while later working as a carriage painter, photo colorist, and waiter. In his spare time, he produced portraits, cityscapes, and landscapes, often depicting scenes from the immigrant Chinese community of his neighborhood.[933] Oakland-born Pauline Powell was another important early African American artist in California. A self-taught still life and landscape painter brought up in a middle-class family, she likely began her artistic pursuits as one of the few leisure activities deemed suitable for women. In 1890, eighteen year old Powell displayed a collection of her still life paintings at the Mechanics Institute Fair in San Francisco, becoming the first African American to publicly exhibit their work in the entire state of California.[934]

Developing a Black American Artistic Identity in the Twentieth Century

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, Black artists grappled with self-expression in an overwhelmingly Eurocentric art tradition. The Harlem Renaissance—a period of intense creative output for African Americans in literature, music, and art during the 1920s—inspired Black Americans in urban centers throughout the country to participate in their own collective artistic emergence. The Harmon Foundation—established in 1922 by real estate developer William Harmon—was also a key early steward of African American art, promoting and compensating artists of the era through traveling exhibitions and awards. Many such exhibitions were held in major cities, including the 1929 exhibit, *American Negro Artists*, displayed on the ground floor of the Smithsonian U.S. National Museum building in Washington D.C. The Federal Council of Churches and the Harmon Foundation sponsored the event, which introduced 51 works of art by 27 Black painters and sculptors who had previously won juried competitions hosted by the Harmon Foundation.[935] The exhibit arrived in California a year later, where it opened to the public at the Oakland Art Gallery located in the city's Municipal Auditorium.[936] Despite the seminal display of African American art, some attendees expressed disappointment that a distinct "Negro school of art was not represented, but instead only a universal art."[937] Delilah L. Beasley, the first African American woman to be regularly published in a major metropolitan newspaper, pointedly responded to the criticism in her *Oakland Tribune* column:

> …when the American public will begin to treat the American Negro citizens everywhere as human beings, and will cease to lynch either his body or spirit and cease to treat or speak of the Negro as a joke,

[930] "G.T. Brown & Co.," *The San Francisco Examiner*, October 4, 1873; Joe Luis Moore, "In Our Own Image: Black Artists in California, 1880-1970: Sample Portfolio of the Works of Grafton Tyler Brown, Sargent Claude Johnson, Emmanuel Joseph, Samella Lewis, Ruth Waddy, Emory Douglas," *California History* 75, no. 3 (Fall 1996), 265.
[931] Moore, "In Our Own Image," 265.
[932] Joan Marter, *The Grove Encyclopedia of American Art, Volume 1* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 344.
[933] Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[934] Patricia Trenton, *Independent Spirits: Women Painters of the American West, 1890-1945* (Berkeley: Autry Museum of Western Heritage in association with the University of California Press, 1995), 12.
[935] "African American Groundbreakers at the Smithsonian: Challenges and Achievements," Smithsonian Institution Archives, accessed April 2023, https://siarchives.si.edu/history/featured-topics/African-Americans/american-negro-artists.
[936] Delilah L. Beasley, "Activities Among Negroes," *Oakland Tribune*, November 23, 1930.
[937] Beasley, "Activities Among Negroes," November 23, 1930.

> then the unfettered soul of the Negro will unloose itself and give to the world a masterpiece of art and music.[938]

The issue of Black identity in art, which arose as Black artists in California and the country at large were fighting to gain entry into the traditional art and museum world, hinged on a question of self-representation and the creation of a distinct visual vocabulary. One of the first artists to make a direct statement on the matter was Berkeley artist Sargent Johnson, who by the mid-1930s was a nationally acclaimed African American sculptor and one of the artists featured in the *American Negro Artists* exhibit. Johnson came to San Francisco from the East Coast in 1915 where he attended the A.W. Best School of Art and the California School of Fine Arts, while studying directly under well-known Italian American sculptor Beniamino Bufano. He first gained recognition in 1925 in a San Francisco exhibit, which featured his design of a ceramic bust called *Elizabeth Gee.*[939] The Harmon Foundation awarded Johnson for his works on numerous occasions and sponsored his participation in a three-man exhibit held in New York City in 1935, solidifying his rank among other prominent artists of the Harlem Renaissance. That same year, Johnson made a strong declaration in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, stating:

> I am producing strictly a Negro Art…It is the pure American Negro I am concerned with, aiming to show the natural beauty and dignity in that characteristic lip and that characteristic hair, bearing and manner; and I wish to show that beauty not so much to the White man as to the Negro himself. Unless I can interest my race, I am sunk.[940]

Johnson's stance aligned with the New Negro Movement of the Harlem Renaissance, which used art as a means of demanding equality and asserting Black pride by conjuring the image of Black Americans. Many of Johnson's sculptures and masks incorporated artistic forms derived from western Africa's Baule culture, while Johnson's craftsmanship ignored traditional Western techniques. Johnson's concern was the representation of the "pure American Negro" for the gratification and empowerment of the Black American community of the time.[941]

One of Johnson's contemporaries, both in craft and artistic expression, was Los Angeles sculptor Beulah Woodward. Having trained in sculpture at the University of Southern California and Otis Art Institute (where she would later teach), Woodward also explored the creation of masks and sculptures that evoked African imagery. She believed that "the primary purpose of making art for African Americans was to 'promote a better understanding of Africa with its rich historical background' and to instill pride in Black heritage."[942] In 1935, Woodward became the first African American artist in California to have a solo exhibit. Held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Woodward's work displayed a series of Afro-centric masks, which were received by a mixed response, with some members of the local art community overlooking the work as "bizarre" and unserious.[943] Her response was to form the Los Angeles Negro Art Association in 1937 to promote and legitimize African American art to the greater Los Angeles art community. That year, members of the Los Angeles Negro Art Association were invited by the prestigious Stendahl Art Gallery to display their works in an exhibit. However, it was held on the back patio, rather than the gallery's main space.[944] The event was indicative of the Black artists' continuous struggle to garner recognition and respect within their profession.

New Deal-Era Governmental Assistance and Early Advocates

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[938] Beasley, "Activities Among Negroes," November 23, 1930.
[939] Lewis, *African American Art and Artists*, 77.
[940] "San Francisco Artists," *San Francisco Chronicle,* October 6, 1935.
[941] Lewis, *African American Art and Artists*, 79.
[942] Amy Helene Kirschke, ed., *Women Artists of the Harlem Renaissance* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 129.
[943] Sarah Schrank, "The Art of the City: Modernism, Censorship, and the Emergence of Los Angeles's Postwar Art Scene," *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (September 2004), 667.
[944] Schrank, "The Art of the City," 667.

In the 1930s and 1940s, many African Americans came to California as part of the Great Migration to find opportunity and escape racial discrimination and oppression in the American South. Some Black artists that arrived in Northern California relied on New Deal-era government assistance programs like the Federal Arts Project of the late 1930s, which helped circulate and expose the public to more art in institutional spaces. Sargent Johnson was a key figure, holding a number of positions, from staff artist to unit supervisor and serving as a West Coast director of the program. Through this affiliation, Johnson became "the first artist to create and publicly display in California massive sculptures depicting African Americans and other ethnic groups."[945] Three of his most prominent works were a large redwood screen carved in 1937 for the organ at the California School for the Blind in Berkeley, as well as glazed tile and carved slate murals for the Maritime Museum Aquatic Park Bathhouse in San Francisco's Aquatic Park and a 1942 bas relief frieze titled "Athletics" at George Washington High School in San Francisco. Sargent Johnson believed that the government assistance programs of this period afforded African American artists opportunities they would not otherwise have—opportunities that were "necessary to the development and maintenance of the creative forces that characterize vital communities."[946] Another artist, Thelma Johnson Streat, arrived in San Francisco from the Pacific Northwest in 1938 to produce work for the Federal Art Program. She was considered one of the first Black women to work as a professional artist while living in California and painted murals that often depicted African American history in the United States.[947] Her work was also exhibited at the De Young Museum and the San Francisco Museum of Art, with her painting *Rabbit Man* purchased by the Museum of Modern Art in 1942.[948] While many of the murals and public works created by artists through the Federal Arts Projects can still be seen in major cities throughout California, documentation of works produced by African Americans is limited and requires further study.

By the 1940s, an important corporate sponsor of African American art in California was the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, the largest Black-owned business in the western United States at the time. In 1947, Golden State Mutual hired master architect Paul Revere Williams to design a new, modern headquarters in Los Angeles. The company also commissioned two established artists, Charles Alston and Hale Woodruff, to travel throughout the state and paint large panels for the headquarters that would detail the social, political, and economic history of Black Americans in California. By that point, Charles Alston and Hale Woodruff had established themselves as prominent Black artists during the Harlem Renaissance, with Alston becoming the first African American supervisor in the New York's Federal Arts Project. Both artists felt strongly in their research for the company's commission that the Black American struggle was not unique to their racial group, and that the racism and cultural erasure of Chinese Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Californians throughout the state's history should also be highlighted. The panels, titled "Exploration and Colonization" and "Settlement and Development" initially depicted a multi-racial narrative, but this ultimately dropped at the request of the company's executives. The finished images depicted primarily African Americans. Alston later expressed frustration, stating that corporate sponsors were too limiting of artists' interpretations.[949] Alston's views of Black art strayed from those expressed 30 years before by Sargent Johnson and Beulah Woodruff; he stated in a 1969 interview, "I don't believe there's a such a thing as 'Black art,' though there's certainly been a Black experience. I've lived it. But it's also an American experience."[950] Alston's experience with the murals represents the shifting views of Black American artists and pressures to reflect a uniquely Black experience within California.

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[945] Moore, "In Our Own Image," 265-267.
[946] Samella Lewis, *Art: African American (*Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: 1978), 80-81.
[947] Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[948] Ginny Allen, "Thelma Johnson Streat (1912-1959)," *Oregon Encyclopedia*, April 29, 2022, accessed April 2023, https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/streat_thelma_johnson/#.ZDhufnbMJdi.
[949] Laura Dominguez, "How Two African American Artists Explored the Roots of Racism on the West Coast," *KCET*, accessed April 2023, https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/golden-state-mutual-roots-of-racism-on-the-west-coast.
[950] K. Tawny Paul and Rebecca Bush, eds., *Art and Public History: Approaches, Opportunities, and Challenges* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017), 26.

Postwar Identity and Community

By the postwar period, Black artists across the state began creating larger networks and infrastructure to support their art, especially as a means for livelihood. More opportunities for training existed, particularly for Black men who could use their G.I. bill to fund their education.[951] In Southern California, African American artists did not have access to the professional opportunities afforded by those who worked under the Federal Arts Project in the Bay Area, and many artists had to fight for legitimacy within established institutions. In 1950, after creating the Los Angeles Negro Arts Association 13 years prior, Beulah Woodward invited eleven artists to start an artist-run gallery called Eleven Associated Artists Gallery in Los Angeles. In addition to Woodward, the co-op's founding members included Curtis Tann, William Pajaud, Alice Taylor Gafford, and the one Asian member, Tyrus Wong.[952] While the gallery only ran for a few years, it illustrated that a culture for nurturing Black art and artists in California was beginning to take hold.

Golden State Mutual also continued to commission works by Black artists and, in 1957, hired William Pajaud as its art director. By that time, Pajaud was already an established artist in Los Angeles who had attended the Chouinard Art Institute (later CalArts) after moving to the city in 1948. While initially hired to create the company's print materials, Pajaud urged Gold State Mutual to start collecting work by established and emerging African American artists, "launching an ongoing dedication to nourishing and supporting the careers of many Los Angeles black artists that came to signify the progressive thinking behind the company."[953] The nationally recognized collection would go on to include more than 250 works by important Black artists, such as Richmond Barthé, Romare Bearden, John Biggers, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Samella Lewis, Betye Saar, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Charles White, Hale Woodruff, and William Pajaud himself.

By the 1960s, more galleries and artist collectives began to materialize throughout California, creating a larger network of spaces that could foster and empower the Black artists. Film actress Joan Wheeler opened the Ankrum Gallery in Los Angeles in 1960 to showcase contemporary art, becoming one of the first spaces in the state to regularly exhibit the works of contemporary Black artists. By the mid-1960s, communities in and around Los Angeles were also home to important early collectives founded by contemporary Black artists. Brothers Alonzo and Dale Davis were two practicing artists in Los Angeles who joined together to open the Brockman Gallery in Los Angeles during the late 1960s. Southern California artist collectives like Art West Associated, started by Los Angeles artist Ruth Waddy in 1962, also inspired Northern California outposts, such as Art West Associated North (AWAN). AWAN was founded by Bay Area artist Evangeline "EJ" Montgomery, a good friend and frequent collaborator of Ruth Waddy.

In 1969, the contemporary African American artistic community was formally codified when Samella Lewis and Ruth Waddy published the first volume of *Black Artists on Art,* a pivotal and comprehensive catalog of contemporary Black artists and their work from around the country. In addition to their work as practicing artists, Lewis and Waddy were also adept scholars of their field, with Lewis becoming the first African American woman to receive a doctorate in art history in 1951.[954] In the *Black Artists on Art*, Lewis and Waddy challenged White-dominant schools of thought surrounding art and aesthetics by presenting a diverse group of artists and their statements, while rejecting art as institution rather than a function of expression. As Waddy states in the introduction:

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[951] Lewis, *African American Art and Artists*, 143; Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[952] "The Unknown Collective of Eleven Associated," Culture Shock Art, accessed April 2023, https://cshockart.com/2017/02/08/artist-a-day-challenge-8-the-unknown-collective-of-eleven-associated/.
[953] "William Pajaud," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/william-pajaud.
[954] "Samella Lewis," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/samella-lewis.

> "Art is not an intellectual exercise, approached through structured learning, emotions, styles, and practiced in museums, galleries, and private 'collections.' Art is spiritual, the primary function of which is for the benefit, growth and improvement of the human animal."[955]

The book was published by Contemporary Crafts, founded in Los Angeles by Lewis and actor Bernie Casey as the first Black-owned art book publishing house. Through Contemporary Crafts, Lewis and Waddy published *Black Artists on Art: Volume 2* in 1971. Lewis and Casey also co-owned the Multi-Cul Gallery, referred to by Lewis as the "poor people's" gallery in response to the lack of African American art representation in museums. At Multi-Cul, African American art was exhibited while reproductions could also be printed and sold at prices the community could afford.[956] Other events that showcased and celebrated Black art outside the traditional museum setting included the 1966 *Negro in American Art* exhibit held at the University of California Los Angeles' Dickson Art Gallery, as well as the 1966 Watts Summer Festival and the 1968 Laguna Beach Art Festival. The latter featured an exhibit titled, "Art from the Black Community," which was considered Orange County's first exposure to contemporary Black culture and art.[957]

Art and Activism

During the postwar period, Black artists of California began responding to ongoing political struggles and racial violence through their art, creating a new ideological approach that was reflective of the evolving Civil Rights Movement across the country. Artists began to stray from the rigid boundaries of either representational or abstract art, using an "outspoken expressiveness" that gave "equal weight to African and Anglo-American cultural references."[958] Black art of the era became increasingly political and enmeshed with new artistic movements, particularly the Black Assemblage Art Movement in Watts and the Black Arts Movement of the Bay Area.

The 1965 Watts Uprising was a pivotal moment for Black Americans as South Los Angeles residents violently confronted widespread police brutality, lack of city services, and poor housing options that affected Black communities across the country. Following the Uprising, a number of arts collectives opened in the area. These included Studio Watts Workshop, founded by James Wood and Guy Miller, and the Compton Community Arts Academy also a multi-faceted arts organization, which ran under the leadership of Los Angeles-based artist, activist, and educator John Outterbridge. The Watts Towers Art Center, founded by artists Noah Purifoy and Judson Powell, was also one of the first organizations of its kind in California to offer arts education to both artists and members of the community.[959] Other communities in San Bernardino and Riverside sheltered early Black artists, while Altadena was home to a small collective of painters, including Charles White and Yvonne Meo. The aftermath of the Uprising left wreckage, rubble, and stray objects that local Black artists used as material and inspiration to create sculptural and mixed-media pieces. While an artistic movement had already taken root in Southern California prior to these events, the resulting pieces were unique artifacts of the political era. They forced viewers to acknowledge the objects' symbols of violence and demise, which in turn helped achieve a level of social consciousness. Los Angeles-based artist Noah Purifoy became a leader of the Assemblage Movement, using his own experience with "Dada assemblage practices, African sculptural traditions, and black folk art" to create "beauty from ugliness" that contextualized the pain and strength of his community.[960]

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[955] Samella Lewis and Ruth Waddy, *Black Artists on Art* (Los Angeles: Contemporary Crafts, 1969), ix.
[956] Mae Tate, "Scan Profile: Samella Lewis; Keeping Social Comment Alive, Vigorous in Art," *Progress Bulletin* (Pomona), January 15, 1972.
[957] "George Clack," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980,* Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/george-clack.
[958] Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[959] "Noah Purifoy," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980,* Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/noah-purifoy.
[960] "Noah Purifoy," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/noah-purifoy.

In 1966, artists from the movement collaborated to produce *66 Signs of Neon*, first presented at the Watts Renaissance of the Arts Festival a year after the Watts Uprising. Eventually becoming a nationally and internationally recognized exhibit displayed across the nation, the show featured 66 individual pieces of art built from the Watts wreckage.[961] Another key figure in the growing movement was Betye Saar, already an accomplished Los Angeles-based professional and commercial artist. Her work during this period—using personal and familial objects that evoked a mythical and self-reflexive attitude—was often autobiographical and political. Much like many artists of her time, Saar was heavily influenced by the Watts Uprising and the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. This was evident in Saar's *Black Girl's Window* (1969), in which she employed iconography to create a complex layering of objects and materials that explored race and heritage on a personal and conceptual level.[962]

Many artists of the era, including those who participated in the Assemblage Movement, produced politically motivated pieces as part of a growing and evolving Black Arts Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. In California, particularly Oakland, where the Black Panther Party (BPP) was established in 1966, ideas surrounding civil rights and the promotion of Black pride and solidarity within a White dominant society, were explored even more through a new Black visual aesthetic. Within the Black Panther Party, artist Emory Douglas served as the Minister of Culture, producing prints and illustrations for publication in party affiliated newspapers, posters, and other print media.[963] Joan Tarika Lewis, the first woman to join the BPP, was another artist and activist who regularly published illustrations in *The Black Panther* newspaper under the name Matilaba.[964] As the BPP's activism continued to take hold, many Black Americans in California supported a shift from a "conciliatory call for justice" to a more "forceful call to political action and radical self-determination," with a wider acceptance of Pan-Africanism and the words of leaders like Malcolm X and James Baldwin.[965] In response, more California artists began to weave African designs and motifs into politically charged pieces that often centered on Black pride and the rejection of main stream society.[966]

From 1968 to 1970, Los Angeles artist Suzanne Jackson ran Gallery 32, where a diverse range of works of art were showcased. Many of the artists affiliated with the gallery were active supporters of the Black Arts Movement, including David Hammons, Dan Concholar, Betye Saar, John Outterbridge, Senga Nengudi, Emory Douglas, and Timothy Washington.[967] Other important venues supportive of the Black Arts Movement included the Mafundi Institute in Los Angeles, as well as Mary Ann Pollar's Rainbow Sign in Berkeley. Established and emerging artists alike exhibited their pieces at the Rainbow Sign, such as acclaimed graphic artist and sculptor Elizabeth Catlett, as well as Terry McMillan, Ntozake Shange, and Betye Saar. Saar, in particular, gained national recognition for her 1972 piece, The Liberation of Aunt Jemima, which she created in response to the Rainbow Sign's call for art. The assemblage work of art focused on the subject of the "mammy" figure by confronting a "stereotypical and derogatory depiction of a Black domestic worker."[968] The piece was striking in its imagery and message, reverberating across the nation and shifting a historically oppressive image into a symbol of

[961] "Noah Purifoy," Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980.
[962] "Betye Saar," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/betye-saar.
[963] Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[964] Thomas, *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*.
[965] Dorothy Lazard, "The Black Arts Movement in Oakland and Berkeley," Oakland Public Library, March 2, 2018, accessed April 2023, https://oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/post/the-black-arts-movement-in-oakland-and-berkeley/.
[966] Lazard, "The Black Arts Movement in Oakland and Berkeley."
[967] "Elizabeth Leigh-Taylor," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980,* Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/elizabeth-leigh-taylor.
[968] "Empowerment Through Art," Women and the American Story, Nyhistory.org, accessed April 2023, https://wams.nyhistory.org/growth-and-turmoil/feminism-and-the-backlash/empowerment-through-art/.

empowerment. Civil rights activist Angela Davis stated afterwards that Saar's seminal work of art was a critical point in the development of the Black Women's Movement.[969]

African American Cultural Institutions in California

The role of African American art as a vital and serious study of the Black American experience in California and the nation was formally recognized in 1976 when Congresswoman Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, the first African American female representative of the West Coast, gathered a collection of artists, leaders, and community organizations to discuss the establishment of a permanent African American museum in California. Following the passing of Assembly Bill 420, the California African American Museum (CAAM) became the first African American museum of art, history, and culture to be fully supported by a state in 1977.[970] Operations began at a temporary location in 1981 under the directorship of arts advocate Aurelia Brooks, and a bronze bust of civil rights activist Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune by sculptor Richmond Barthé was acquired as the first piece of the museum's permanent collection. In 1984, just as Los Angeles hosted the Summer Olympic Games, CAAM moved to its permanent location in Exposition Park near downtown Los Angeles and debuted its inaugural exhibit, *The Black Olympians 1904-1984.* Since its founding, the museum has amassed a collection of over 5,000 objects related to the African American experience, African diaspora, and life in the American West.[971]

Another early museum committed to Black art and culture was the Museum of African American Art, founded by artist and art historian Samella Lewis in Santa Monica in 1976 and eventually moving to a permanent space in the historic May Company department store building in Baldwin Hills in 1980. Lewis served as the museum's senior curator until 1986.[972] Other California institutions dedicated to displaying the work of African Americans include the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art (established in 1992), the African American Historical and Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley (established in 1993), and the Sojourner Truth African Heritage Museum in Sacramento (established in 1996).

Theater and the Performing Arts

Like other forms of art, theater and the performing arts express the uniquely African American experience in the United States as well as the strides made by the community in the last two centuries. The African American community has transformed theater and the performing arts from an art form based in racist and stereotypical depictions by White writers and dramatists into an empowering medium for expressing issues important to Black Americans.[973]

African American Performing Arts in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century

Early depictions of African Americans in theater were based in racist depictions and stereotypes typified by performances known as minstrel show. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, depictions of African Americans were limited to roles of glorified "minstrels" in comedies and melodramas. Other presentations of theater for, by, or about African Americans were few and far between. The majority of the time, White performers played these roles in black cork makeup known as "blackface" for White audiences.

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[969] "Empowerment Through Art," Women and the American Story.
[970] "Birth of the California African American Museum in Los Angeles," *California Historian* via Wayback Machine, accessed April 2023, https://web.archive.org/web/20131016163504/http://www.californiahistorian.com/articles/calif-african-american-museum.html.
[971] "Mission and History," California African American Museum, accessed April 2023, https://caamuseum.org/about/mission-and-history-of-caam.
[972] "Samella Lewis," *Digital Archive: Now Dig This!: Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, Hammer Museum, accessed April 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/artists/samella-lewis.
[973] This document does not cover African American contributions to cinema and the entertainment industry. For more on this topic, see GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 164-186.

An important milestone in the history of African American theater came in 1821 with the opening of the African Grove Theatre in New York City; it was the first known all-Black acting company. James Hewlett's African Company and Ira Aldridge, hailed as the first renowned African American actor, performed there.[974] Though the theater shut down in 1830 due to racial intolerance by White residents in the area, it proved to be pivotal as an early theater venue. Another theater would not open for African American performances for another 50 years. This did not stop the production of African American written and performed plays, however; they were simply performed in other places.[975]

By the 1860s, African Americans began to depict themselves in minstrel shows in an attempt to regain some form of agency over themselves through the performing arts. Minstrel shows, however, were typically performed for a mostly White audience, as the depictions of African Americans were demeaning and racist. While some African Americans became well-known theater actors, they were few and far between.

As in the rest of the country, theatrical depictions of African Americans in California often featured racial stereotypes and caricatures and were performed in segregated venues. Black performers performed in minstrel shows, circuses, and vaudeville acts, though mainstream theatrical performances for and about African Americans remained based in racism and caricature. Despite this, a small number of African Americans made early strides in the performing arts. Philip A. Bell was the publisher of the *Colored* American; he became a theatre critic after moving to California from New York City in 1862.[976] In addition, several theater groups were established after the Civil War in San Francisco. The first was centered around actors Cecilia V. Williams and George W. Bell. They appeared together in several productions in the 1860s and 1870s, including romances and dramas written by English authors. The Hyers Sisters, who were from Sacramento and trained in San Francisco, became highly successful performers and traveled around the country performing. They were the first African American women known to have succeeded as national touring opera artists.[977] In 1875, the Hyers sisters founded the Hyers Sisters Combination, a theater company in San Francisco, to produce their own musicals. They became part of a national trend among Black performers endeavoring to portray the African American experience with dignity and respect in opposition to the demeaning stereotypes that existed in the minstrel circuit of the time. Their first production, *Out of Bondage*, opened in 1876 and was one of the earliest works performed by African Americans to portray the experience of enslaved people with sensitivity and respect.[978]

By the end of the nineteenth century, Black performers sought to counter the negative stereotypes perpetuated by the minstrel performance tradition. In the 1890s, *The Creole Show*, produced by Sam T. Jacks in Boston, was among the first Black productions to break from the minstrel pattern by allowing Black women to perform; this was followed by John W. Isham's *The Octoroons* and *Oriental America* soon followed. In New York City, the first training school for Black performers opened in 1895.[979] Black Californians Bert Williams and George Walker, both from San Francisco, debuted in New York City's vaudeville circuit in 1896.[980]

In the early 1900s, African Americans founded theater companies featuring all-Black casts. The Pekin Players in Chicago formed in 1906 and included actors formerly involved in vaudeville and musicals; they gained the support of management at the Pekin Theater and performed more serious dramas. In 1911, actor and entrepreneur S.H. Dudley purchased several theaters in Washington, D.C. and Virginia to create his own chain of theaters.

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[974] I. Peter Ukpokodu, "African American Males in Dance, Music, Theater, and Film," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 569 (May 2000), 78.
[975] Ukpokodu, "African American Males in Dance, Music, Theater, and Film," 79.
[976] Samuel Hay, *African American Theatre: An Historical and Critical Analysis,* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 182.
[977] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 106.
[978] Page & Turnbull and Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 107.
[979] Anthony D. Hill and Douglas Q. Barnett, *The A to Z of African American Theater* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009), xxiv.
[980] Henry Sampson, *Blacks in Black and White: A Source Book on Black Films* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1995), 23.

They became part of the African American vaudeville circuit, which provided the first steady employment for African American entertainers.[981]

Like other aspects of arts and culture, the influence of the Harlem Renaissance was felt in California and helped the arts flourish. Many Black performers from the East Coast made their way to California, where they performed in nightclubs, cabarets, and theaters. Some of the most famous performers of the era included Bessie Smith, Duke Ellington, and Cab Calloway.

At the same time, the growth of the African American community in California's cities spurred the development of the arts. In Los Angeles, the 1920s saw the flourishing of a number of theaters in the city's African American neighborhoods. These included the Angelus Theater, which opened in 1916 on Central Avenue; it was "a moving picture and vaudeville house" which had been under White ownership but was purchased by a group of Black investors.[982] Other theaters along Central Avenue corridor included the Lincoln, Globe, Tivoli, Angelus, and Hub. The Lincoln Theater, which was constructed in 1926, was the largest of these.[983]

By the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration's Federal Theatres project in Los Angeles and San Francisco provided employment for African American actors, directors, and playwrights in California. The Federal Theatre project was launched in 1935 and established as part of the New Deal's Works Progress Administration (WPA) to employ theatrical workers. It ultimately was responsible for around 1,000 productions around the country. It sponsored a number of African American projects, including the work of Clarence Muse, a Black director at the Los Angeles Federal Theatre.[984] In Los Angeles, the Federal Theatre project developed a "Negro unit" early on; its first play, Black Empire, debuted in March 1936, followed by *Noah* and *John Henry*. The productions received positive reviews in area newspapers.[985] Other productions created by African Americans during the 1930s included *Run, Little Chillun, Stevedore, Big White Fog, Macbeth* and *The Swing Mikado*.[986]

After World War II, African American theater began to express the same ideas as the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement. Groups formed to push for the removal of stereotypes in theater. A number of theater groups were formed in Los Angeles and the Bay Area and arose out of the Civil Rights Movements in the 1950s and 1960s. Theatrical works became more militant in the 1960s, reflecting the same trends seen in the Black Power Movement. The Watts Uprising of 1965 also proved to be a pivotal moment for Black artists, including those involved in theater. Several groups were formed after the events in Watts, and theater became one means through which Black Californians expressed themselves and the issues they faced. Those groups which had been formed before 1965 were also influenced by the revolt and became more involved in Black theater, including more contemporary Black work in their repertories. Important theater groups in Southern California during this period included Ebony Showcase Theatre, Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles (PASLA), Mafundi Institute, Watts Writers Workshop, and Inner City Cultural Center. In Northern California, theater groups included the North Richmond Theatre Workshop, Aldridge Players/West and Dialogue Black/White in San Francisco, and The Group in Berkeley-Oakland. Each of these groups had a specific vision about the arts and the larger African American community.

Ebony Showcase Theatre and PASLA represented different approaches to the performing arts. While one featured well-known plays and musicals with all-Black casts, the other highlighted new material that explored the African American experience. Ebony Showcase Theatre was founded in 1950 by Nick and Edna Stewart in Los Angeles

[981] Anthony D. Hill, *Historical Dictionary of African American Theater*, 2nd edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), xxvi, 1.
[982] Teresa Grimes, "Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles," E5.
[983] Grimes, "Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles," F53.
[984] Ronald Ross, "The Role of Blacks in the Federal Theatre, 1935-1939," *The Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 1 (January 1975): 47.
[985] Robert Holcomb, "The Federal Theatre in Los Angeles," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (June 1962): 137.
[986] Ross, "The Role of Blacks in the Federal Theatre," 49.

and "became a beacon for black artists and audiences of the period."[987] Located in an existing neighborhood movie theater in the West Adams neighborhood, Ebony Showcase Theatre aimed "to give the Black professional performer and aspiring artist an alternative to the stereotyped roles generally available to Afro-Americans in the established theatre."[988] It used an all-Black cast in Broadway plays and other work written by White artists to emphasize the fact that Black performers were capable of playing a variety of roles on stage and "by implication, of assuming any position in society."[989] The Performing Arts Society of Los Angeles (PASLA) was founded by Vantile Whitfield in 1966. It focused on productions of contemporary Black plays. It also held community workshops where participants could learn about theater production, filmmaking, and music and had a community players group, writers group, and children's theatre.[990] The Watts Writers Workshop, which began as a program for discovering writers and is discussed further in the literature section, later produced original plays as well.

The Mafundi Institute, a multi-faceted arts organization, was founded in 1967 by Maulana Karenga, Tommy Jacquette Halifu, and Dr. J. Alfred Cannon. Karenga was active in the Black Power Movement and is known as the creator of Kwanzaa. Initially located in the Watts Happening Coffee House, which also hosted the Watts Repertory Theater and Watts Writers Workshop, the Mafundi Institute moved to its own space in 1970. It provided a variety of arts programs designed to help area residents and provided a space in which Black artists could explore their creativity apart from European-American influences and ideas. Their classes included drama, painting, music, dance, and filmmaking.[991] The building included a multi-purpose space for dance and performing arts classes, classrooms, studios, and a space with seating that was called the "Coffee House" in homage to the Mafundi Institute's original home.[992]

Theater groups like the PASLA and the Ebony Showcase aimed "to create positive, alternative images for Blacks in the inner city, especially after the trauma of the Watts Revolt."[993] Both "believed that their work allowed young people to perceive their possibilities, to see themselves in non-traditional roles, and to envision a different future."[994] The work they chose to perform was a conscious expression of each group's goals and ideals. Some groups, including PASLA and the North Richmond Theatre Workshop, consciously chose work by Black playwrights who dealt with the history and experience of African Americans.[995] Others, such as the Inner City Cultural Center, "pioneered what would later be called 'multiculturalism,' seeing art as a tool for social inclusion and bringing black writers and performers into dialogue with Asian American and Mexican American actors, playwrights, and works."[996] What they all had in common, however, was that they aimed to channel the anger and frustration felt by the African American community into the arts.[997] Often the work featured was that of local writers, and they made conscious efforts to attract an African American audience. As Margaret Wilkerson notes,

> One of the major dilemmas of many earlier Negro playwrights and theatres was their preoccupation with the white audience, which required them to explain their terminology, protest their condition, prove their

[987] Grimes, "Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles," F53.
[988] Margaret B. Wilkerson, "Black Theatre in California," *The Drama Review: TDR* 16 (Dec. 1972): 4, 25.
[989] Wilkerson, "Black Theatre in California," 4, 29.
[990] John Blaine and Decia Baker, eds. "Community Arts Los Angeles," Los Angeles Community Arts Alliance, n.d., 32.
[991] Teresa Grimes and Rita Cofield, "Watts Happening Cultural Center National Register of Historic Places Registration Form," Draft, Section 8, page 14-17.
[992] Grimes and Cofield, Section 8, page 16.
[993] Margaret B. Wilkerson, "Redefining Black Theatre," *The Black Scholar* 10 (July/August 1979): 10, 35.
[994] Wilkerson, "Redefining Black Theatre," 35.
[995] Wilkerson, "Black Theatre in California," 4, 29.
[996] Daniel Widener, "The Art of Creative Survival," Hammer Museum Los Angeles, accessed July 11, 2023, https://hammer.ucla.edu/now-dig-this/essays/the-art-of-creative-survival.
[997] Wilkerson, "Redefining Black Theatre," 40.

> humanity and generally pander to the tastes of the white majority. Before his own audience, however, the black artist can focus primarily on problems within his own community.[998]

African American theater groups during this period often established their locations in predominately African American neighborhoods; the Aldridge Players, for example, established itself in the Western Addition in San Francisco. In addition, African Americans typically held leadership roles within these groups, giving them decision making power that was not previously accessible.[999] In these ways, this period represented a turning point in the African American performing arts, as it was for other forms of arts and culture. That evolving role continued into the subsequent decades.

Music

The music of Black composers and performing artists living in California integrates musical styles and concepts from different parts of the United States, including the highly rhythmic, melodic sounds identified primarily with the South and the functional harmonies associated with European-influenced American musical traditions. Within these influences, however, African Americans in California have created distinct sounds and performance styles often described as smooth and mellow, with less emphasis on rhythm.[1000] Facilitating these developments, most Black musicians in California have lived in dense, heterogenous urban settings that have encouraged or at least tolerated diverse musical traditions; Los Angeles, in particular, has been a center for the development of African American music, and the San Francisco Bay Area and San Diego have also been significant.[1001] Thus, the Black musicians and music that originated or evolved in California are a product of the conversation between the national Black music scene and the demands, desires, and constraints of the particular urban and cultural communities in which they evolved.[1002]

The development of African American music in California has been impacted by a number of forces, many of them related to the regular movement of traveling artists and the frequent relocation (including forced displacement) of Black Americans during the twentieth century. Many Black musicians visited or moved permanently to California beginning in the early twentieth century, bringing varied regional traditions and influences to California artists and audiences. Musicians also regularly traveled between urban centers within the state, facilitating the development of a distinct yet cohesive West Coast sound. Yet another influence came in the form of recording and broadcasting; in California, Black Americans had early opportunities to control and participate in media institutions such as the radio, record, and television industries, which were normally dominated by White people. These opportunities made California an attractive place for Black musicians and also had a significant impact on the range and quantity of music developed in the state.[1003]

African Americans and Music in Early Twentieth Century California

Prior to the early twentieth century, much of the music composed and performed by Black Americans living in California drew from European-American music traditions.[1004] This trend began to shift as California's African

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[998] Wilkerson, "Black Theatre in California," 26-27.
[999] Wilkerson, "Black Theatre in California," 27.
[1000] Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows, "Introduction," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, eds. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 9.
[1001] DjeDje and Meadows, "Introduction," 1.
[1002] Michael B. Bakan, "Way out West on Central: Jazz in the African-American Community of Los Angeles before 1930," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 67.
[1003] DjeDje and Meadows, "Introduction," 2; Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 67.
[1004] Kimasi L. Browne, "Brenda Holloway: Los Angeles's Contribution to Motown," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 327.

American population grew, drawing visiting artists from elsewhere in the United States and, to a lesser extent, abroad. Some Black musicians completed brief tours through the state's major urban centers, while others either temporarily or permanently based their careers in California. The result of this influx was a melding of regional traditions from across the United States and the early development of new, uniquely Californian sounds. During this period, jazz and gospel were the most significant developing genres among Black artists; over the course of the early twentieth century, both genres came to represent a major component in the social life of urban Black Californians, and both played important roles in Black communities' efforts to establish a sense of identity during a turbulent period.[1005]

Some of the first Black musicians to visit California may have been singers of religious music, including hymns, spirituals, jubilees, and anthems—the precursors to the gospel genre that came into its own during the early twentieth century.[1006] Bette Yarbrough Cox, a music educator and founder of the BEEM (Black Experiences as Expressed through Music) Foundation for the Advancement of Music in Los Angeles, posits that the first African American musicians to perform on stage in Los Angeles were members of the Beck family, a group of singing evangelists who traveled throughout the United States during the 1890s; they performed in a hall on 5th Street near Hill Street (later to be known as the Philharmonic Auditorium), to an all-White audience because people of color were not permitted to attend.[1007] In the twentieth century, a growing number of Black religious singers and gospel artists found receptive audiences in California's urban centers, initially in church settings but later in secular ones. Los Angeles, in particular, attracted visiting evangelists and musicians from around the country. Many Pentecostal and Baptist churches formed their own choirs during this period, one of the first being the People's Independent Church of Christ.[1008] Despite these local developments, however, California's gospel music scene was generally dominated by visiting artists through the early 1940s and the onset of World War II.[1009]

California's early jazz scene was similarly shaped by artists who came from other parts of the country, especially New Orleans, Texas, and later Chicago. By the first decade of the 1900s, San Francisco had established itself as the primary center for "hot" music on the West Coast, and most African American musical activity was concentrated in a district at the northeast corner of the city known as the Barbary Coast. Nightclubs and dance halls including the So Different (also known as Purcell's), the Ivy, and the Dixie provided ample work opportunities for local artists and drew touring musicians and entertainers from throughout the country.[1010] Many of these visitors had a pronounced impact on the development of the regional sound, introducing musical styles and elements such as the syncopated, driving four-beat rhythmic style of New Orleans jazz to local groups' existing repertoires of European-American quadrilles, waltzes, polkas, and popular songs. This fusion of influences resulted in the development of new jazz dance styles including the Texas Tommy, Turkey Trot, Grizzly Bear, and Bunny Hug.[1011]

Jazz music and jazz bands became increasingly vital parts of the Barbary Coast entertainment scene until 1921, when city officials forced the closure of the district as part of a Prohibition-era effort to curtail perceived

[1005] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 29-30; Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition: A Confluence of Musical Styles and Cultures," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 129.
[1006] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 128.
[1007] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 126.
[1008] Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "Los Angeles, Gospel In," in *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 233.
[1009] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 130-136.
[1010] Willie R. Collins, "The Train Stopped Where the Music Began: The Fertile Black and Tan Venues of West Oakland's Seventh Street and Beyond," in *Putting the "There" There: Historical Archaeologies of West Oakland*, ed. Mary Praetzellis and Adrian Praetzellis, 2004, 290.
[1011] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 27-28, 33.

"vice."[1012] Even before the Barbary Coast was closed, however, the heart of jazz activity on the West Coast and in California had begun to shift to Los Angeles and, to a lesser extent, Oakland. Both cities' Black communities were experiencing rapid economic and population growth as compared to the Black community in San Francisco, which fueled the development of popular Black nightlife districts. In Oakland, the local music and dance scene was concentrated around 7th Street in West Oakland between the late 1910s and the 1940s. Fifteen or more venues operated from this area at any one time, presenting a variety of jazz styles to Black and mixed audiences; Jenkins' Corner, later known as Slim Jenkins', was one of the most renowned, and Esther's Breakfast Room (later called Esther's Orbit Room), which opened slightly later in 1959 but was no less important to the musical community along the 7th Street corridor.[1013] Jazz music was also performed by Black artists in a few locations outside of the 7th Street corridor, including in downtown Oakland at the Oakland Auditorium and the Persian Gardens.[1014]

In Los Angeles, the Central Avenue corridor had emerged as "a musical hotbed" by the beginning of the 1920s.[1015] The Spikes brothers, John and Reb, opened a successful music store at 12th Street and Central Avenue that soon developed a reputation as the unofficial headquarters for the Black music community in Los Angeles. In addition to sheet music, instrument, and record sales, the store acted as a booking agency for several local Black bands and eventually supported a Black musicians' union.[1016] Elsewhere on Central Avenue, music venues including the Dreamland, Murray's Café, the Cadillac Café, the Quality Café (later the Humming Bird Café), Solomon's Penny Dance Hall, the One-Eleven Dance Hall, and the Kentucky Club Café attracted well-known touring musicians as well as up-and-coming artists who played alongside local groups.[1017] Curtis Mosby, a jazz artist himself, is remembered as a particularly successful Black entertainment mogul of this era, opening or taking over numerous venues including the Apex Nite Club in 1928 and the New Apex Club in 1935.[1018] Other popular venues, particularly those that catered primarily or exclusively to White audiences, were located outside of Central Los Angeles in Hollywood or Culver City. Most infamously, Frank Sebastian's New Cotton Club in Culver City was known for hosting exclusively all-Black bands and orchestras, including the Louis Armstrong Band in 1930 and 1931, yet permitted only White patrons.[1019]

Some artists who visited Los Angeles during this period stayed for extended periods of time or even settled permanently. Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton and Edward "Kid" Ory, both of whom were already nationally known jazz performers by the time they came to Southern California, based their careers in Los Angeles in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Although some scholars have treated Morton's and Ory's time in California "as a hiatus" between careers in New Orleans and Chicago, both men headlined popular tours during this period.[1020] Other artists, such as jazz vibraphone pioneer and bandleader Lionel Hampton, began their careers in Los Angeles before rising to international fame.[1021] One of the most notable groups born from the early years of the city's jazz scene was the Creole Band (also the Original Creole Band), which formed in 1914 and was "discovered" at a boxing match by the manager of the Pantages theatrical company. The group soon began touring the vaudeville circuit with theatrical impresario Alec Pantages, and it played a major role in disseminating New Orleans-style

[1012] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 28.
[1013] Natalie Orenstein, "This Oakland co-op wants to revive the legendary Esther's Orbit Room and the Seventh Street corridor," The Oaklandsider, June 9, 2021, accessed February, 2024, https://oaklandside.org/2021/06/09/this-oakland-co-op-wants-to-revive-the-legendary-esthers-orbit-room-and-the-seventh-street-corridor/.
[1014] Collins, "The Train Stopped Where the Music Began," 290-293.
[1015] Ted Gioia, *West Coast Jazz: Modern Jazz in California, 1945-1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 8.
[1016] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 54-56; Clora Bryant, et al., eds., *Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 11.
[1017] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 27, 33, 35, 42, 52, 62; Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 327.
[1018] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 65-66.
[1019] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 61.
[1020] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 25, 41, 67.
[1021] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 24.

jazz throughout the nation during World War I.[1022] Other local groups that rose to regional, if not national, prominence in early twentieth century Los Angeles include the Black and Tan Jazz Orchestra, the Quality Four (later the Quality Serenaders), the Sunnyland Jazz Band, and the various musical projects of Sonny Clay.[1023]

In addition to those who rose to prominence as gospel and jazz performers, a number of Black musicians and composers living in early twentieth-century California rose to prominence within the burgeoning Los Angeles film industry. A.C.H. Bilbrew, a composer and choral director who studied at the University of Southern California, was also one of several Black musical artists to arrange music for Hollywood films; she was both the musical arranger and choir director for the film *Hearts in Dixie* (1929).[1024] Though problematic in its celebration of Black stereotypes and misrepresentation of living conditions in the antebellum South, the film was notable in being the first talking picture with an all-Black cast.[1025] One of the film's leading roles was acted by Clarence Muse, who also wrote or co-wrote a number of songs used in other contemporary Hollywood films.[1026] William Grant Still, Jr., who came to Los Angeles in 1934 after receiving his first Guggenheim Fellowship, also composed and arranged music for the film industry. However, he was better known for his numerous symphonies, ballets, choral works, and operas. In 1936, he conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra at the Hollywood Bowl, becoming the first Black American to conduct a major orchestra in a performance of one of his own works.[1027]

Creating a "California Sound": The 1940s through the 1960s

The outbreak of World War II brought a significant in-migration of Black Americans to California's urban centers. This massive population influx, especially in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, stimulated a burst of venue openings and rapidly expanded the cities' talent pools during the war.[1028] At the same time, the increasing size and diversity of Black audiences in California urban centers fueled a demand for traveling artists and for music with more prominent African influences, as opposed to the European-American influences that had been prominent in the music that Black artists created and performed in California up to that point. Visiting artists continued to bring their distinct and regionally influenced sounds to California cities, performing for ever-larger audiences, and some Black churches invited musicians from outside of the state to meet the growing demand.[1029] Local artists' sound continued to evolve and adapt to new influences during this period, while also retaining some vestiges of European American musical traditions; ethnomusicology scholar Kimasi L. Browne describes the result of this interplay as "a clean Los Angeles sound," evident in both West Coast jazz and in some spiritual and gospel music.[1030]

Los Angeles remained a prominent center for the development and performance of Black artists' music during this period. Charles Mingus and Buddy Collette, both raised in the Watts area of Los Angeles, began playing professionally as teenagers and played gigs with established artists throughout the state.[1031] Jazz remained popular

[1022] Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History,* 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1983), 343; Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 24, 31-32, 41-42.
[1023] Bakan, "Way out West on Central," 46-51.
[1024] Larry Richards, African American Films through 1959: A Comprehensive Illustrated Filmography (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2005), 194.
[1025] Rob Fink, "Actors and Actresses," in *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present, from the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Finkelman (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009), 9.
[1026] Nathan Platte, *Making Music in Selznick's Hollywood* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 59-60.
[1027] Catherine Parsons Smith, *William Grant Still* (Champaigne, IL: University of Illinois, 2008), 46, 55; Theodore W. Eversole, "Conductors and Bandleaders," in *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present, from the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Finkelman (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009), 475.
[1028] Ralph Eastman, "'Pitchin' up a Boogie,': African-American Musicians, Nightlife, and Music Venues in Los Angeles, 1930-1945," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 90.
[1029] Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 327.
[1030] Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 327.
[1031] Bryant, et al., ed., *Central Avenue Sounds*, 96, 104, 122, 136-137.

among Black audiences and found increasing appreciation among White audiences, as well, due in part to the growing number of recordings by Black jazz bands. Nat King Cole, who came west to Los Angeles from Chicago in the early part of World War II, found enormous popularity among audiences of all races as the leader of the King Cole Trio; the group recorded for Decca and several local independent recording companies in Los Angeles before signing with the fledgling Capitol Records in 1943, and subsequent record sales helped to make the trio a national phenomenon.[1032] Among Black audiences specifically, gospel music also grew in popularity. An increasing number of churches began to form their own gospel choirs to promote the genre, with the result that some established gospel artists and groups either took up residence in Los Angeles for long periods of time or settled there permanently, and other local artists and groups found success in their own right.[1033] San Diego and the San Francisco Bay Area likewise sustained a burgeoning gospel scene in the 1940s, mostly in the form of quartets and small groups affiliated with churches; however, the genre never achieved the same level of popularity in other California cities as it did in Los Angeles.[1034]

In the mid- and late-1940s, in the wake of the economic boom of World War II, audiences and young musicians alike displayed an openness to new music styles, and to the hybridization of styles, which allowed for uninhibited creative expression and the evolution of the California sound.[1035] Whereas music and styles created during the 1930s and 1940s were largely influenced by traveling musicians, by the late 1940s and early 1950s Black recording artists in California began to set the trends, followed by the nation.[1036] Los Angeles, with its comparatively large Black population and access to myriad performance and recording opportunities, remained important as a central hub for Black musical artists during this period. Angelenos Charles Mingus, Eric Dolphy, Dexter Gordon, Billy Higgins, and Buddy Collette frequently collaborated on live performances as well as studio albums.[1037] To a lesser extent, other California urban centers also fostered musical communities and collaborations. In all cases the interchange between Southern and Northern California was extensive, facilitated both by artists' movement throughout the state and a proliferation of recording studios, several of which were owned by Black producers, that recorded Black artists in the postwar era.[1038]

The popularity of gospel music in California surged after World War II, and the state established itself as a leader in the genre. While the San Francisco Bay Area and San Diego were part of this trend, Los Angeles remained the epicenter.[1039] Visiting artists continued to play a major role, with several notable groups choosing to relocate to Los Angeles permanently in the 1950s and 1960s, but choirs, quartets, and small groups that originated in Southern California began to take an increasingly prominent role in shaping the Los Angeles gospel sound; indeed, the trend of large gospel choirs such as the St. Paul Baptist Church's choir, The Echoes of Eden, began in Los Angeles.[1040] A.C.H. Bilbrew further popularized the genre through her radio program the *Gold Hour*, which featured a weekly gospel song night beginning around 1940.[1041] By the 1950s, gospel music had grown so popular that artists did not have to rely solely on religious institutions for support: as the music industry began to recognize the commercial potential of gospel, more and more California gospel artists began successful recording careers, and performances began to occur in secular as well as religious settings. Herald Attractions' Gospelcade, for example, was held at the Embassy Auditorium in Los Angeles in 1953.[1042] Angeleno gospel artists gained

[1032] Eastman, "'Pitchin' up a Boogie,'" 84-85.
[1033] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 136.
[1034] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 147-148; 153-154.
[1035] Eastman, "'Pitchin' up a Boogie,'" 96.
[1036] Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 328.
[1037] Bryant, et al., ed., *Central Avenue Sounds*, 45, 123.
[1038] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 158.
[1039] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 151.
[1040] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 136-37, 158.
[1041] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 132.
[1042] Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "Los Angeles, Gospel In," in *Encyclopedia of American Gospel Music*, ed. W.K. McNeil (New York: Routledge, 2005), 234; DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 137, 140, 143.

national distinction through recordings, concerts, and conventions in the 1950s and 1960s, and the city became known for a distinctive performance style marked by "a tinge of 'classical,'" with complex arrangements and less extensive improvisation.[1043] The genre remained important to the city's secular and religious music communities alike through the end of the century.[1044]

In addition to supporting a flourishing gospel scene, postwar Los Angeles was also an early center for a new fusion genre called rhythm and blues (also "R&B").[1045] Some of the most significant recordings in the history of rhythm and blues were made in California between 1942 and 1972, contributing to the development of a distinctive regional style known as "California rhythm and blues" or "West Coast blues."[1046] The diverse array of people and cultures living in the state's urban centers dramatically affected the evolution of this style, which combines elements of bebop, southwestern jazz, Kansas City jazz, gospel, and jump with Oklahoma and Texas boogie woogie and blues.[1047] Scholars have described the resultant California sound as "more classy and laid-back," "more citified," and a "more mellow, sophisticated flavor" than mainstream rhythm and blues.[1048] Some attribute these characteristics to the state's comfortable climate and to its "happy isolation" from other major centers of the genre, including Chicago and New York.[1049] Others cite the influx of artists and audiences from other regions of the United States during World War II and the postwar period, and still others note the influence of the state's recording industry. Figures like Bob Geddins, an Oakland blues composer and producer who recorded hundreds of singles from 1944 until the mid-1960s, consciously shaped the sounds coming out of the state during the postwar era; the "Oakland blues" that Geddins helped create are considered an important subset of "West Coast blues."[1050]

Across genres, recording studios were an important vehicle both for disseminating the music of Black artists living in California in the postwar period and for attracting new talent and audiences to the state. The prominence facilitated by recordings opened new performing opportunities for Black artists, both within California and across the country, and expanded their audiences into the millions. As the location of Hollywood and a hub for various television and recording industries, Los Angeles cemented its position as a national leader in Black music creation and development. Whereas many genres and styles that thrived during the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s were brought in by traveling musicians, by the late 1940s and early 1950s, Los Angeles recording artists began to set national trends. Into the 1960s and beyond, the city and by extension the state of California had joined the ranks of New Orleans, New York, and Chicago as one of the country's foremost locations for Black artists and their music.[1051]

A Proliferation of Genres: The 1960s through the Present

By the 1960s, the California music scene—and Los Angeles in particular—had become a hotbed for the development and proliferation of new genres and styles of Black music. These continued to reflect the influences of California's urban environments and the recording industry, as well as the national social and political turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s. Among other genres, Black California artists, recording studios, and

[1043] DjeDje, "The California Black Gospel Music Tradition," 140, 158.
[1044] Daniel E. Walker, "The Roots and Growth of Gospel Music in Los Angeles: A Timeline," *PBS SoCal*, last modified July 9, 2019, accessed May 8, 2023, https://www.pbssocal.org/shows/artbound/the-roots-and-growth-of-gospel-music-in-los-angeles-a-timeline.
[1045] Willie R. Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings, 1942-1972: A Diversity of Styles," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 215.
[1046] Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings," 213.
[1047] Eastman, "'Pitchin' up a Boogie,'" 96; Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings," 215, 235.
[1048] Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings," 215-216.
[1049] Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings," 213, 215-16.
[1050] Lee Hildebrand, "Oakland Blues, Part 1: Essay," in *California Soul: Music of the African Diaspora*, ed. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje and Eddie S. Meadows (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 104, 107-112; Collins, "California Rhythm and Blues Recordings," 213.
[1051] Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 328.

performance venues made contributions to the history and development of Motown, which is a composite of 1950s rhythm and blues, soul, gospel, and European-American popular music named for the Motown Record Corporation in Detroit, Michigan; and later rap, a form of popular music which fuses Caribbean musical techniques with rhythm and blues, soul, jazz, and funk. Rap originated within the hip hop movement, which encompasses several cultural elements beyond music (such as fashion, dance, and art, especially graffiti culture). Groups like The Watts Prophets and The Last Poets combined elements of jazz with spoken-word performance and laid the foundations for West Coast rap. California-produced rap developed distinctive characteristics including a "more laid back" sound, and California artists including Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, and Tupac Shakur (whose mother, Afeni Shakur, was a member of the Black Panther Party in Harlem) are known for their significant contributions to West Coast rap as a subgenre and the hip hop movement as a whole.[1052] For lesser known and aspiring artists, some community organizations developed to support artistic development: in mid-1990s Los Angeles, hip hop open-mic workshops at the Good Life Café eventually evolved into Project Blowed, now Los Angeles's longest-running hip hop open mic.[1053] In the present day, musical influences and samplings in contemporary rhythm and blues, rap, hip hop, and pop music trace back to sounds developed by Black artists across the twentieth century. California has played, and continues to play, a significant role in the ongoing development of trends and innovations in Black musical genres.[1054]

Literature

Whether born in the state or having migrated to it, African American authors in California have created a powerful body of literature that interprets the individual and communal aspects of the Black experience. While these works are often informed by California's landscape, history, and culture, they are also part of a larger body of African American literature and directly participate in its complex historical and cultural context. As described by Africana Studies professor Charles Toombs of San Diego State University, "African American writers in California have done what all African American writers do in their works: capture authentic Black humanity from past and contemporary times in such a way as to authenticate the African American experience and to dispel stereotypes and distortions about it."[1055] Black literature produced in California, or by California authors, therefore reflects the inherent intersectionality of the Black experience in America and the Black experience in California or the West.

Repeated themes in the literature of Black writers in California include ideas around authenticity and identity, the struggle for empowerment to fight racism and discrimination, and the importance of the Black community and Black cultural traditions in resisting oppression. These themes reflect and participate in the national context for Black literature, as they foreshadowed fundamental topics including race and class oppression and social and cultural justice. To the same end, many works also serve a documentarian role, recording both individual events and patterns of racism and oppression. Another recurrent theme, as identified by Toombs, is a "longing for some other place and time," countered by an emphasis on connections to memory, history, and heritage.[1056] The tension between connecting with the past and longing for an alternative future creates space for authors and readers to

[1052] Ben Westhoff, *Original Gangstas: Tupac Shakur, Dr. Dre, Eazy-E, Ice Cube, and the Birth of West Coast Rap* (New York, NY: Hachette Book Group, Inc., 2016), passim; Jasmine Guy, Afeni Shakur: Evolution of a Revolutionary (New York, KY: Amaru Entertainment, Inc., 2004), 72.
[1053] Jooyoung Lee, "'Blowing Up' at Project Blowed" Rap Dreams and Young Black Men," in *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, ed. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramon (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 119-120; Marcyliena Morgan, *The Real Hiphop: Battling for Knowledge, Power, and Respect in the LA Underground* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 73.
[1054] Browne, "Brenda Holloway," 324; "Exploring the History of Black Music," *Music Forward Foundation*, last modified June 22, 2021, accessed May 8, 2023, https://musicforwardfoundation.org/news/exploring-the-history-of-black-music-month/.
[1055] Charles Toombs, "African American Uprising," *A History of California Literature*, ed. Blake Allmendinger (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 293.
[1056] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 283.

confront questions of present identity, both individual and collective.[1057] These themes are prominent and recurrent in the literature produced by Black authors in California, from the nineteenth century to the present.

Black Literature and the California Frontier

Black literature dating to California's early statehood is sparse, and there are few literary sources documenting the Black experience in this period's history. An important exception is James B. Beckwourth (1798-1867), a Black fur trader and explorer in the nineteenth century American West. Though not a published author himself, Beckwourth related his life's story to White author Thomas D. Bonner over the winter of 1854-1855. Bonner's subsequent biography, *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth* (1856), blends fact and fiction to portray a hero whose near-legendary exploits shatter the racial stereotype of the White American frontiersman. Scholar of English and African American Studies Aparajita Nanda emphasizes Beckwourth's agency in crafting his literary depiction and describes his biography as "a self-inventive narrative" that "defied the limiting stereotypes" imposed by White supremacist culture.[1058]

Inspired by pioneering figures like Beckwourth, early Black authors including Alvin Coffey (1822-1902) and Mifflin Wistar Gibbs (1823-1915) sought to reclaim the Black frontier and control the narrative of the Black experience in California.[1059] Autobiography was a powerful tool for their exploration of identity and for the documentation of the systemic and individual oppression that they experienced in the state. Coffey, who was born into enslavement in Kentucky, had been taken from his family in 1849 and brought to California by his enslaver. His brief memoir, published in *Autobiographies and Reminiscences of California Pioneers* (1901) as part of an institutional record for the Society of California Pioneers, is one of the only accounts by a Black author of this period of California history. Although Coffey's autobiography does not conjure a larger-than-life folklore in the tradition of Beckwourth's biography, it asserts his individualism, capability, and courage throughout the difficult overland journey to California and subsequent gold prospecting. It also records his multi-year efforts to collect enough gold to purchase the emancipation of himself and his family from their enslavers, as well as the deceit of an enslaver who usurped Coffey's share of gold after more than a year of prospecting.[1060] Coffey's narrative portrays mid-nineteenth century California as a land of opportunity, where freedom and wealth were attainable, while simultaneously illustrating the state's entrenched racism and tolerance for the enslavement and mistreatment of Black Americans.[1061]

Mifflin Wistar Gibbs, who arrived in the San Francisco Bay Area by late 1850, describes his own experiences in California in his memoir, *Shadow and Light: An Autobiography with Reminiscences of the Last and Present Century* (1902). Gibbs lived in California for less than a decade, leaving the state for Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1858, but his impact was substantial; in addition to several entrepreneurial endeavors, he co-founded the San Francisco Athenaeum and Literary Association, which was possibly the first Black circulating library in the West, and the *Mirror of the Times*, California's first Black newspaper.[1062] Like Coffey, Gibbs employs autobiography as a means to explore the themes of identity and authenticity in the face of rampant racial stereotyping and as a record of years of systemic and individual oppression. Gibbs's memoir also records his

[1057] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 283.
[1058] Aparajita Nanda, "The Black Frontier," in *A History of California Literature*, ed. Blake Allmendinger (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 106.
[1059] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 106.
[1060] Alvin Aaron Coffey, "Autobiography and Reminiscence of Alvin Aaron Coffey," in *Autobiographies and Reminiscences of California Pioneers* 1 (1901): 45-52.
[1061] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 108.
[1062] Snorgrass, "The Black Press in the San Francisco Bay Area," 306; Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Nancy Joyce Peters, *Literary San Francisco: A Pictorial History from Its Beginnings to the Present Day* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1980), 33; Albert S. Broussard, *Civil Rights, Racial Protest, and Anti-Slavery Activism in San Francisco, 1850-1865* (self- published, 1999), 25.

efforts to challenge racial discrimination while living in California, including his critical leadership in several efforts petitioning the California State Legislature to revoke racist legislation.[1063]

Writing in California around the same period as Coffey and Gibbs were a number of Black women authors who employed poetry, prose, and playwriting to communicate their experiences and, often, to encourage the Black community to strive for racial uplift. Priscilla Stewart, Eloise Bibb Thompson (1878-1928), and Eva Carter-Buckner (1881-1946) all composed poetry exhorting the Black reader to have courage and determination in the face of oppression. Thompson, a devout Catholic, invokes Christian ideals including trust in a loving God, while Stewart's and Carter-Buckner's poetry inspires the reader to spiritual and moral heroism; in the last stanza of Carter-Buckner's poem "What Constitutes a Negro?" (n.d.), she calls her audience to "Join us in life's great combat," and "To make good where e'er we trod / One hand with the flag a-waving / And the other stretched to God." In contrast to these women's works is the bitterly cynical poetry of James Monroe Whitfield (1822-1871), whose works "Self-Reliance" (1849), "Delusive Hope" (1853), "Yes, Strike Again That Sounding String" (1850), and "The Misanthropist" (1852) reject religion as "a false and empty name" and rail against the brutal discrimination of Black Americans.[1064]

The Harlem Renaissance in California

Beginning in the 1920s, Black literature in California was shaped by the transcontinental influence of the Harlem Renaissance. The Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego, which were prominent within the New Negro Movement of the 1920s and 1930s, all had communities of Black artists that participated in the movement. The Central Avenue neighborhood of Los Angeles, in particular, has been described as the city's "Little Harlem" or the "West Coast Harlem." Several nationally recognized authors of the Harlem Renaissance, including Wallace Thurman (1902-1934) and Arna Bontemps (1902-1973), developed their early careers in California, while others visited or took up temporary residence in the state during the period. All participated in shaping the state's Black literature scene in the first part of the twentieth century.

Wallace Thurman, who moved from Utah to Los Angeles in 1922, and Arna Bontemps, who moved from Louisiana to Los Angeles as a child, both began their careers in Southern California during the Harlem Renaissance. Inspired by the energy of the movement, Thurman contributed to the Los Angeles Black newspaper *The Public Defender* and established a short-lived magazine called *The Outlet*. Though he ultimately decided to leave California for Harlem to experience the core of the movement, Thurman's experiences in Los Angeles informed his later writing. His first novel, *The Blacker the Berry* (1929), follows a young, dark-skinned Black woman named Emma Lou Morgan from her predominantly White hometown in Idaho to Thurman's own alma mater, the University of Southern California. In both Idaho and Los Angeles, Emma Lou experiences prejudice from her light-skinned Black peers as well as White. Like Thurman, she resolves to move to New York City, "where life was more cosmopolitan" and, she believes, free from racism and colorism; however, even in Harlem, Emma Lou struggles to find a community where she is respected and accepted.[1065] *The Blacker the Berry* is believed to be semi-autobiographical, chronicling Thurman's own experiences with racism and colorism and exploring questions of identity and community in these contexts.[1066]

Bontemps, who had met Thurman during his time in Los Angeles, also moved from California to New York City in the mid-1920s. He taught at the Harlem Academy, composed poetry, and began his first novel in the company of other Harlem Renaissance artists. In 1931, as the Great Depression advanced, Bontemps moved his family to Alabama and remained there until 1934, when racial prejudice impelled him to return to Los Angeles. The city of

[1063] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 112.
[1064] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 112-113.
[1065] Wallace Thurman, *The Blacker the Berry* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 41.
[1066] Daniel M. Scott, "Harlem Shadows: Re-Evaluating Wallace Thurman's 'The Blacker the Berry,'" *MELUS* 29, no. 3/4 (Autumn-Winter 2004): 323-339; Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 115.

Los Angeles is featured in three of his short stories—"Why I Returned" (1965), "The Cure" (1973), and "Three Pennies for Luck" (1973)—and in the novel, *God Sends Sunday* (1931). In "Why I Returned," about his relocation to Alabama, Bontemps recounts how as a child, his father sent him to an all-White boarding school in the San Fernando Valley and urged him to assimilate to White society; meanwhile his great-uncle, who remained in the South, was consciously and proudly immersed in Black culture, oral histories, and legends. Bontemps came to associate the two men's attitudes with their respective geographical regions: for Bontemps personally, and in his writings, the West and California represent a separation from his heritage, while the South represents the richness of Black culture and pride in the Black community. Through his experience "returning" to the South as an adult, Bontemps found new contexts in which to explore his identity as a Black man and his role as a member of the Black community.[1067]

While living in Harlem, Bontemps developed a friendship with poet and activist Langston Hughes (1902-1967), one of the most notable figures of the Harlem Renaissance. Though Hughes made his career in New York City, he spent a significant amount of time traveling and lived for short periods in California. From 1933 to 1934 or 1935, he stayed in the cottage of Noel Sullivan, a wealthy White patron, in Carmel-by-the-Sea. Although Hughes was productive during these years, publishing *The Ways of White Folks* and completing the manuscript for a never-published memoir, he ultimately left Carmel-by-the-Sea following threats by White residents over his ties to a local leftist intellectual organization.[1068] He documented these events in a short, powerful essay, "The Vigilantes Knock at My Door" (1934), that was apparently never published.[1069] Hughes returned to California in 1939 to collaborate on various projects with Black actor Clarence Muse, but again he was quickly disillusioned by the racism of the West. While Hughes was living and working in Hollywood, Hattie McDaniel became the first Black actor to win an Academy Award for her portrayal of Mammy in the film *Gone with the Wind* in 1939; while many Black Americans celebrated McDaniel's personal accomplishment, there was also widespread resentment that the award had been bestowed for the portrayal of a deeply stereotypical role. In response to McDaniel's win, Hughes wrote a scathing one-act play called *Hollywood Mammy* (1940, unpublished) describing the career of a Black actor who is able to achieve success only through denying her heritage, compromising her aspirations, and accepting only the most stereotyped, racist roles. The script explores the meaning of authenticity for a Black protagonist struggling to achieve in a field shaped by White supremacy.[1070]

The Harlem Renaissance drew to a close as the impacts of the Great Depression worsened, though its ideas continued to shape the Black literary scene and other areas of cultural expression in America for many years. Through World War II and the postwar era, themes of oppression, class conflict, and White policing of and backlash to Black social, economic, and professional advancement continue to appear in Black literature produced in California. Chester Himes (1909-1984), who moved to Los Angeles in 1940 with ambitions of story writing for Hollywood, viscerally portrays these themes in his protest novels *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (1945) and *Lonely Crusade* (1947).[1071] The protagonists of both works battle racial intolerance in the alienating urban environment of wartime Los Angeles. As described by Nanda, Himes depicts California as an "illusive 'frontier' reality," seducing the Black protagonists with the promise of employment, "only to crush [their] dreams of equal job

[1067] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 116.
[1068] Paul Wilner, "Celebrated poet Langston Hughes spent quality time in Carmel, with the help of a wealthy local patron," *Monterey County Weekly*, last modified July 5, 2018, accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.montereycountyweekly.com/news/cover_collections/celebrated-poet-langston-hughes-spent-quality-time-in-carmel-with-the-help-of-a-wealthy/article_4a8d95f2-7f0e-11e8-bb97-0326d8c216a5.html.
[1069] Faith Berry, *Langston Hughes: Before and Beyond Harlem* (New York: Citadel Press, 1992), 220.
[1070] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 115-116.
[1071] Mike Sonksen, "Mapping Chester Himes: Southern California and Social Realism," *KCET*, last modified February 20, 2025, accessed April 10, 2023, at https://www.kcet.org/history-society/mapping-chester-himes-southern-california-and-social-realism; Michael Tolkin, "The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Writer," *Los Angeles Times*, March 18, 2001.

opportunity and upward social mobility."[1072] These depictions mirror his experiences in the state, where his ambitions of a Hollywood career were marred by repeated rejections. In his autobiography, Himes shared: "Up to the age of thirty-one I had been hurt emotionally, spiritually and physically as much as thirty-one years can bear […] and still I was entire, complete, functional […] But under the mental corrosion of race prejudice in Los Angeles I became bitter and saturated with hate."[1073]

The Black Arts Movement and Authors of the Mid-Twentieth Century

Himes's frustrated portrayal of California in the early postwar period represents both a continuity and an evolution of Black literary themes, from the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s to the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.[1074] The literary works produced by participants in the Black Arts Movement were often profound and innovative. However, some works born of the movement alienated mainstream audiences with their raw depictions of violence and rejection of integrationist principles; some were regarded as racist, homophobic, and sexist; and some put forth a hyper-masculinity in response to the historic degradation of Black men, often at the expense of Black women's voice.[1075] To examine the movement solely through the lens of its most controversial products and participants, however, misrepresents its diverse and significant influence. Ishmael Reed (1938-), a California author who is considered neither an advocate nor an apologist for the Black Arts Movement, noted in a 1995 interview: "I think what Black Arts did was inspire a whole lot of Black people to write. […] You could do your own thing, get into your own background, your own history, your own tradition and your own culture. I think the challenge is for cultural sovereignty and Black Arts struck a blow for that."[1076]

As Reed's reflection suggests, Black authors across California were influenced by the Black Arts Movement—even if they did not identify as members—and channeled the energy of the period into vibrant novels, poetry, and essays. Some of these works critiqued the hegemony of the movement, while others embraced and evolved the ideal of the Black Aesthetic. Some did both. With Al Young (1939-2021) and others, Reed co-founded the multicultural magazine *Yardbird Reader* in 1972. Significantly, and in opposition to some tenets of the Black Arts Movement, the magazine published works by Asian American, Latinx, and Euro-American writers as well as Black writers. In line with the Black Arts Movement, however, was the magazine's denouncement of the idea that a European or mainstream aesthetic could represent the multi-faceted American experience.[1077] Outside of the *Yardbird Reader*, Reed and Young also respond to the Black Arts Movement by portraying unique elements of Black culture and heritage in works such as Young's *Snakes* (1970) and Reed's *Flight to Canada* (1976).[1078]

The social and political landscape that shaped the Black Arts Movement also informed the creation of the Watts Writers Workshop, one of the most visible community cultural institutions to develop in Los Angeles after the 1965 Watts Uprising. The workshop was initiated by Jewish screenwriter Budd Schulberg (1914-2009) and was composed primarily of young Black residents of Watts and the surrounding neighborhoods. Early members included California poets Quincy Troupe (1939-), Eric Priestly (1943-2021), Herbert Simmons (1930-2008), and Wanda Coleman (1946-2013). The workshop's original location was at the Watts Happening Coffee House. After

[1072] Nanda, "The Black Frontier," 118.
[1073] Chester Himes, *The Quality of Hurt* (New York: Paragon House, 1971), 64. Himes ultimately left California, relocating first to the East Coast and then to Europe.
[1074] Baily A. Capelle, "Contextualizing Chester Himes's Trajectory of Violence Within the Harlem Detective Cycle," *ETA Archive* (2015), 18.
[1075] Thomas Aiello, "Black Arts Movement," in *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present, from the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Finkelman (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2009), 188.
[1076] Kalamu ya Salaam, "The Black Arts Movement," in *The Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, ed. William L. Andrews, Frances Smith Foster, and Trudier Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 70.
[1077] William J. Harris, "The Yardbird Reader and the Multi-Ethnic Spirit," *MELUS* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1981): 72.
[1078] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 285-286.

the Coffee House was closed down, they moved to a larger space; tragically, and in a sign of the tension and brutality of White systems operating in this era, the latter was burned down by an FBI plant in the early 1970s.[1079]

The members of the Watts Writers Workshop continued to produce powerful pieces of literature after the destruction of their meeting place and the eventual dissolution of their formal group. Quincy Troupe, who edited *Watts Poets: A Book of New Poetry and Essays* in 1968, went on to win the American Book Award twice—once for *Snake-Back Solos: Selected Poems 1969–1977* (1979) and once for his *Autobiography of Miles Davis* (1990). Wanda Coleman, who would later attest to the influences of both the Black Arts Movement and the Watts Writers Workshop on her work, became one of the workshop's most prolific authors.[1080] Remembered as the "LA Blueswoman" and considered by many to be the "unofficial" poet laureate of Los Angeles, her poems, short stories, and essays foreground the urban landscape of Los Angeles as they explore the lives of Black Americans who are bombarded by racism, sexism, and classism, and who lack equal opportunity. The speakers in her poems are often Black women struggling against the forces and impacts of systemic racism, and her work in pieces such as *Imagoes* (1983) directly indicts the White system as well as Black people who fail to support the Black community.[1081]

Though the Black Arts Movement began to fade in the mid-1970s, its calls for creation of a Black Aesthetic had a pervasive, lasting impact on Black authors—and readers—in California. These ideas were influential in the creation and expansion of African American Studies programs at American colleges and universities, which recognize the significant and distinctive contributions of Black culture, history, and art.[1082] Numerous Black authors have contributed to (and continue to contribute to) these programs, as students and as faculty. The celebration of Black art at the forefront of the Black Arts Movement also encouraged the creation of new venues for Black literature in California; for example, the Rainbow Sign in Berkeley hosted nationally influential Black artists including Maya Angelou (1928-2014) and James Baldwin (1924-1987) in the 1970s.[1083]

Following the conclusion of the Black Arts Movement, Black writers in California continued to produce rich and innovative work. Notable figures to emerge on California's literary scene beginning in the 1970s included Shirley Anne Williams (1944-1999), Octavia E. Butler (1947-2006), Joyce Carol Thomas (1938-2016), and Alice Walker (1944-). Some, such as Williams, have explored events or trends of the recent past and present as well as the trauma of enslavement both historically and in the present. Williams, who was born in Bakersfield, focused her poetry on the hardships endured by Black women within the social, cultural, and economic landscape of twentieth-century California. Her most important and critically acclaimed volume of poetry, *The Peacock Poems* (1975), was nominated for the National Book Award.[1084] Octavia E. Butler, known for her science fiction works, viscerally explores the trauma of enslavement in *Kindred* (1979), in which the protagonist, Dana Franklin, is transported repeatedly and without warning from her life in 1976 Los Angeles to antebellum Maryland, where she "must (re)live certain aspects of the lives of her ancestors in order to insure her present existence."[1085]

The works of Butler and Williams, alongside other Black women authors including Joyce Carol Thomas and Alice Walker, are also notable for their focus on the specific experiences of Black women and communities of

[1079] Dean J. Franco, *The Border and the Line: Race, Literature, and Los Angeles* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2019), eBook.
[1080] Priscilla Ann Brown and Wanda Coleman, "What Saves Us: An Interview with Wanda Coleman," *Callaloo* 26, no. 3 (Summer 2003), 651.
[1081] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 290-291.
[1082] Fabio Rojas, "Social Movement Tactics, Organizational Change and the Spread of African-American Studies," *Social Forces* 84, no. 4 (June 2006), 2150-2151.
[1083] Sasha Khokha and Marisa Lagos, "Remembering The Rainbow Sign: The Short But Powerful Reign of Berkeley's 1970s Black Cultural Center," *KQED*, last modified August 5, 2022, accessed April 10, 2023, https://www.kqed.org/news/11901099/remembering-the-rainbow-sign-the-short-but-powerful-reign-of-berkeleys-1970s-black-cultural-center.
[1084] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 287-288, 292-293.
[1085] Gregory Jerome Hampton, "Kindred: History, Revision, and (Re)memory of Bodies," *Obsidian III* 6, no. 2/7, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2005-Springs/Summer 2006): 105.

Black women. Thomas composed poetry as well as young adult and children's literature that makes visible the power and the suffering of Black women and girls growing up in America, both past and present, and Walker, who moved to northern California in 1978, wrote about Black women surviving abuse and bigotry in the early twentieth-century South in her seminal work *The Color Purple* (1982).[1086] Walker won a Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for the work, becoming the first Black woman to win this award.

Through poetry, novels, young adult and children's literature, personal essays, and more, Black authors in California continued to dispel stereotypes, document the fight for justice, and explore themes of authenticity, individual and collective identities, and discrimination and equity. Many of these are informed by earlier trends and milestones in African American literature, both in California and across the United States. Black authors in California have also received growing recognition for their significant contributions to the body of American literature; this recognition takes many forms, including honorary appointments, regional and national awards, and academic positions. The accomplishments of these authors, and many others, illustrate the excellence and impact of Black authors writing in and about the state of California.

Sub-Theme: Sports and Leisure

This section below covers the varied means of leisure and recreation sought by African Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Recreation and sports have been an important part of African American social life and leisure in California since the nineteenth century. The increase in the state's Black population during the Great Migration and the expansion of African American communities led to the establishment of places of leisure. Despite rampant discrimination and segregation, African Americans carved out spaces of leisure for themselves around the state. These varied from beaches and private resorts to private pools at YMCAs due to segregation of public pools. It also discusses the development of African American sports teams, including professional baseball and football.

Black Resorts and Leisure Destinations

Between the late nineteenth century and the advent of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, leisure destinations like beaches, pools, country clubs, and resorts were strictly segregated on the basis of race – an extension of the Jim Crow-era attitudes of that period. Often prevented from enjoying the leisure destinations that were enjoyed by the state's majority-White population, Black Californians created their own places of leisure, many of which were successful despite the resistance these places often sparked.

Prior to the late nineteenth century, organized leisure in the United States was a luxury that was attainable only to the well-to-do. However, by about the 1890s everyday Americans were increasingly able to partake in leisure activities, culminating in the democratization of the leisure industry. There were many reasons for this. One "was that industrial employers began to decrease working hours and institute a Saturday half-holiday," which gave workers more free time.[1087] Rising wages associated with an industrializing economy resulted in a wider swath of the American population having disposable income, and social reformers increasingly touted outdoor recreation as an antidote to urban life.[1088] By about 1900, partaking in leisure activities, watching spectator sports, and taking vacations had become commonplace.

A considerable number of Black Americans came to California around the turn of the twentieth century, and were eager to escape the racial bigotry and violence of the American South and seek better access to economic prosperity and wealth. Upon arriving, Blacks faced social and economic hurdles but were able to find employment opportunities, which helped advance them toward the middle class. Just like their White peers, Black Californians increasingly had the wherewithal to take vacations and enjoy leisure pursuits. Having the chance to

[1086] Toombs, "African American Uprising," 289.
[1087] Library of Congress, "America at Leisure."
[1088] Library of Congress, "City Life in the Late 19th Century."

enjoy free time, at one's own pleasure, had added importance to the Black community, as it signified self-determination and was a tangible step in overcoming the legacy of slavery.[1089]

But Blacks often faced hurdles when trying to enjoy leisure time. Discriminatory business practices and racist attitudes effectively banned Blacks from fully participating in popular leisure activities and attending recreational venues, solely on the basis of race. Alison Rose Jefferson observed that places of leisure became sites "to separate, segregate, control, and regulate people, places, and opportunities."[1090] Blacks, for instance, were not able to fully enjoy the facilities at the Sutro Baths, a popular indoor swimming venue in San Francisco. The Sutro Baths opened in 1896. In 1897, John Harris, a Black man, patronized the Sutro Baths and was permitted to buy a ticket and enter the premises. However, Harris was denied the opportunity to rent a bathing suit and enter the pools – an incident that led Harris to sue proprietor Adolph Sutro under the auspices of the Dibble Civil Rights Act. Sutro responded by saying that:

> Negroes…so long as they are sober and well behaved are welcome to enter the baths as spectators, but are not permitted to go in the water. It is not a matter of personal feeling with us but of business necessity. It would ruin our baths here because the white people would refuse to use them if the negroes were allowed equal privileges in that way.[1091]

Harris prevailed in his lawsuit and was awarded $100 in damages.[1092] However, public interest in the case waned, and exclusionary practices like those enforced at the Sutro Baths persisted and continued to exclude Black Californians from fully enjoying the leisure pursuits that were enjoyed by the state's majority-White population. Chief among the places that were unofficially segregated on the basis of race were the state's beaches. Though technically outlawed, it was understood in the early twentieth century that "with few exceptions, Southern California's publicly-owned beaches were off-limits" to Blacks.[1093] African Americans were also made to feel unwelcome at resorts, dance halls, swimming pools, and country clubs.[1094]

Faced with pervasive harassment and violence in the Jim Crow era, Black Californians claimed their own leisure spaces. Beaches were among the most popular pleasure sites in California and were thus among the earliest recreational spaces established by, and for, the Black community. One of the first Black resorts in California was founded in Manhattan Beach by Willa and Charles Bruce, Black entrepreneurs from Los Angeles. In 1912, the Bruces opened an enterprise called "Bruce's Lodge" (later commonly known as "Bruce's Beach"), which catered specifically to Black beachgoers. It originally comprised "a small portable cottage with a stand that sold soda pop and lunches," as well as bathing suit rentals, showers, and dressing rooms.[1095] The resort, which was accessible from Los Angeles by electric streetcars, quickly became a popular gathering place, and was one of few places along the California coast where members of the Black community could congregate without fear of harassment.[1096]

The Bruces and their clientele encountered fervent resistance from nearby White landowners, who resented the resort and embarked upon a campaign of intimidation to drive its patrons away. Not long after Bruce's Beach opened in 1912, "no trespassing" signs were installed on a narrow strip of land in front of the Bruces' land to dissuade Black beachgoers from patronizing the resort. Police officers were also stationed nearby, warning patrons not to cross the land – a thinly veiled attempt at deterring Blacks from using the beach. However, earnest

[1089] Alison Rose Jefferson, *Living the California Dream: African American Leisure Sites during the Jim Crow Era* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2020), 27-28.
[1090] Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*, 21.
[1091] "Negroes Claim Civil Rights," *The San Francisco Call*, Aug. 2, 1897.
[1092] Liz Ohanesian, "The Forgotten Fight for Civil Rights at San Francisco's Sutro Baths," *KCET*, Jul. 12, 2017.
[1093] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 271.
[1094] "Colored People's Resort Meets With Opposition," *Los Angeles Times*, Jun. 27, 1912.
[1095] Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*, 14.
[1096] Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*, 33.

beachgoers were undeterred, and intimidation notwithstanding, the Bruces persevered and grew their small beachfront operation into a lucrative enterprise. By the early 1920s the burgeoning resort – which by this time was called Bruce's Beach – had grown to include a bathhouse, dance hall, café, and other amenities that attracted considerable crowds.

Circa 1910, Black beachgoers carved out space at a second oceanfront site in Santa Monica, about ten miles north of Bruce's Beach. Most remember as being located at the western end of Bay to Bicknell streets, this site was situated adjacent to a small but thriving Black community in Santa Monica's Ocean Park and other neighborhoods. Additionally, there was an African American neighborhood in the then-independent town of Venice that was considered to be part of the Santa Monica Black community in the early decades of the twentieth century. Blacks, then, "were relatively free to enjoy the shoreline south three quarters of a mile to Ocean Park Boulevard."[1097] Here, they were able to swim, convene, and recreate with less discrimination and harassment than they encountered elsewhere. The site eventually became known as Bay Street Beach; it was also called "The Inkwell," a pejorative term used by White people that referenced the darker skin color of its patrons.[1098]

Initially, Black leisure sites such as Bruce's Beach and Bay Street Beach were largely allowed to exist, even while Whites continue to sometimes harass Black beachgoers. However, by about 1920 California's population – including its Black population – had witnessed significant growth, and oceanfront property became increasingly attractive to real estate developers. This, in turn, culminated in Blacks being pushed out of the few stretches of beach that they were able to enjoy. This played out in dramatic fashion at Bruce's Beach. In 1924, at the behest of White property owners and stakeholders, the Manhattan Beach City Council voted to condemn the Bruces' and other Black property owners' land using eminent domain. Officially, the reason for condemning the land was so that the City could develop a park, but "it is well documented that the real reason behind the eminent domain process was racially motivated" and was aimed at shuttering the popular beach resort.[1099] The Bruces left Manhattan Beach in 1927, and the improvements comprising their property were razed. No park was built on the site for decades to come.[1100]

Other beach leisure spaces catering to Blacks were sabotaged before they were even developed. In the early 1920s, Black businessman Titus Alexander petitioned the City of El Segundo to lease a portion of city-owned beach near what is today the City of El Segundo on which to build a bathhouse. The 120 acres of beach that he sought to lease were located adjacent to an oil refinery and a wastewater treatment plant. Nonetheless, "real estate operators and others objected to the presence of negroes," and a lawsuit was filed in 1924 to prevent the city from executing the lease.[1101] The plaintiffs prevailed, and Alexander's lease was denied.[1102]

A more insidious incident took place in Huntington Beach. In 1925, E. Burton Ceruti, co-founder of the Los Angeles chapter of the NAACP, and other investors announced plans to develop a new beach resort on the shore of Huntington Beach, which would be open to all. Reporting on the proposed Pacific Beach Club, the *California Eagle* quoted its sales manager as follows:

> The builders and founders of Pacific Beach Club are giving for the benefit of the [Black] race as a whole an opportunity to see for themselves the things that are to be accomplished in the near future in the way of giving them healthful, pleasant and enjoyable recreation. This opening will be a monument to many race

[1097] Alison Rose Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place: The Recreation and Remembrance of African Americans in the California Dream," Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, Dec. 2015, 211; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1098] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 224; Venice became part of the City of Los Angeles in 1926.
[1099] Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, "Bruce's Beach."
[1100] Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, "Bruce's Beach."
[1101] "Hear Suit Against Negro Bathing Beach," *Los Angeles Record,* Jan. 26, 1924.
[1102] "Anti-Negro Beach Petition on Ballot," *Los Angeles Record*, Feb. 6, 1925; Meg James, "What's Been Hiding Behind this City's Nostalgic Charm?" *Los Angeles Times*, Jul. 6, 2021.

> leaders who have worked for many years to obtain for their people a piece of the Pacific with its surf and sands where they may go and enjoy a day on the beach.[1103]

The Pacific Beach Club was conceived as an elaborate affair. It was to comprise a clubhouse, dance hall, and bathhouse designed in an elaborate Egyptian Revival style, as well as a 450-seat auditorium, a restaurant, concessionaires, a children's playground, and 250 tent cottages that would serve as on-site lodging.[1104] However, just weeks before opening, the under-construction facilities were burned to the ground under suspicious circumstances that almost certainly reflected an act of arson.[1105] Local residents subsequently created an organization to "oppose any further efforts of negroes to establish a colony on the oceanfront," thereby squelching any attempts to rebuild.[1106]

In addition to beaches, public pools were frequent sites of discrimination and exclusion. By the 1920s, public swimming pools had become increasingly common places of leisure in cities throughout California. They also became contested spaces on the basis of race, with Black patrons regularly being refused entry except for on certain days. That pools became so hotly contested was, in part, due to the intrinsically interactive nature of swimming – everyone shared the same water, and the confined nature of swimming pools meant that there were more opportunities for people of different races to come into physical contact. White swimmers often held the racist assumption that Blacks were more likely to be infected by communicable diseases, so to them, pools were a major threat to their perceived health. The revealing nature of bathing suits also fed into a racist trope in which Black men were presumed to have sexually aggressive tendencies and thus posed a threat to White women.[1107]

Many communities in California had segregated their swimming pool facilities by the 1920s. Often, Black people and other patrons of color were only permitted to access a pool on certain days of the week. This practice was implemented at the Brookside Plunge in Pasadena, a city-operated swimming pool where Blacks were denied entry but for one day a week – the day before the pool was drained, cleaned, and refilled.[1108] Similar policies were implemented by public recreation departments in cities across the state including San Francisco, San Diego, and Oakland.

In Los Angeles, pools were technically open to everyone, "but managers of individual pools took it upon themselves to restrict Black access to certain days of the week."[1109] The city's Playground Commission adopted a policy of segregation in 1925 that it called the "International Day formula," in which Blacks were only permitted to patronize certain pools on certain days of the week: Exposition Park on Mondays, Arroyo Pool on Wednesdays, and North Broadway Pool on Fridays. Vignes Pool was open to Blacks every day.[1110] This policy was the subject of a lawsuit filed by Rebecca "Betty" Hill, a civic activist and co-founder of the local branch of the NAACP. Hill prevailed, and the city was ordered to integrate its pools. The city removed racial restrictions from its public pools in 1931.[1111]

[1103] "Pacific Beach Club Announces Grand Opening and Groundbreaking March 22, 1925," *California Eagle*, Mar. 20, 1925.
[1104] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 451-452; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1105] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 456; "Pacific Beach in Ashes," *California Eagle*, Jan. 22, 1926; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1106] Erik Skindrud, "Huntington Beach and the Black Beach Club Erased from History," California Historical Society, online, Feb. 4, 2021, accessed Jun. 2023.
[1107] Jeff Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 122.
[1108] Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 70.
[1109] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 79.
[1110] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 79.
[1111] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 79.

Other times, cities constructed entirely separate pool facilities for White and Black patrons. This played out in Riverside in the aftermath of a lawsuit. In 1920, Alice Johnson, a Black high school student, and her friend were denied entry to the Fairmount Plunge pool in Riverside on a day that was designated as "whites only." Her father, the Reverend Frank Johnson, was incensed, and with the NAACP filed a lawsuit against the city. The City of Riverside built a new swimming pool at Lincoln Park, which was located in the heavily Black and Latino Eastside neighborhood. The new pool "provided one of the few swimming facilities open to citizens of color in Riverside," and hosted swim meets and swim lessons for local children.[1112] However, it reinforced the discriminatory attitudes and "separate but equal" doctrine that pervaded American society in the Jim Crow era. (Segregation in public accommodations such as pools is discussed further in the Making a Democracy theme).

Private institutions such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) sought to help fill this void by supporting the building and operating of recreational facilities for the Black community. One example is the 28th Street YMCA in South Los Angeles, which was constructed in 1926 and offered a swimming pool, a gymnasium, and other amenities to Blacks who were otherwise excluded from enjoying such facilities.[1113] Black YMCAs are discussed further in the Social Clubs and Organizations sub-theme below.

Public venues like beaches were not the only spaces where Black Californians sought to enjoy their free time. Private ventures including country clubs were also patronized by members of the Black community. A prominent – if short-lived – example was the Parkridge Country Club in Corona, which was originally opened in 1925 by White proprietors. The 700-acre venue comprised an array of recreational amenities including "tennis courts, swimming pool and other accoutrements," as well as an 18-hole golf course that was considered to be one of the best-appointed in Southern California.[1114] However, the club soon faced financial problems and was sold to a syndicate of Black investors in 1927.[1115] After a protracted court battle, the sale was allowed to proceed, and the Parkridge Country Club was reopened under its new syndicate of Black owners in 1928. Though the club primarily catered to the Black community, club leaders made it clear that "membership was open to persons of all races, that racial tolerance to prevail at the club and that hostilities, which had flared into threatening proportions, were to be forgotten."[1116] However, the transference of Parkridge from White to Black ownership was not without controversy. The club's White members vehemently protested the sale and had its president arrested, purporting that the sale had been initiated without their knowledge and that they had been defrauded – an allegation that was ultimately thrown by out the court.[1117] The club's Black owners and members were also subject to unwarranted harassment and intimidation. The Parkridge Country Club closed in 1929 – not even a year after its reopening – due to financial difficulties. It was eventually demolished between 1964-1965.[1118]

What was perhaps a more successful example of a privately-owned Black recreational venue was the community of Val Verde, located approximately ten miles northwest of Santa Clarita. There are competing origin stories about the community, but the story best supported by evidence is that it was first established in the 1910s when a wealthy White woman from Pasadena, Mrs. Laura C. Janes, opened up her family's ranch just past Santa Clarita to Black pleasure seekers who were prohibited from using beaches, parks, and recreation areas.[1119] By the 1920s the area had emerged as a popular weekend picnicking spot for Black Angelenos, and in 1924 Sidney P. Dones, a prominent Black businessman from Los Angeles, and several associates purchased 1,000 acres of area land for

[1112] Rincon Consultants Inc., "City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement," prepared for the City of Riverside, Community and Economic Development Department, Sept. 2018, 125.
[1113] Teresa Grimes, "28th Street YMCA," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Jun. 1, 2008.
[1114] "California Whites Fight Negro Encroachment," *California Eagle*, Sept. 30, 1927.
[1115] "L.A. Negroes Buy Club Site," *California Eagle*, Aug. 26, 1927.
[1116] "Negro Beauty Contest to be Staged at Corona," *Chino Champion*, May 29, 1928.
[1117] Meier, "Crowning Miss Parkridge: Black Leisure in Southern California," Picturing Black History, accessed June 2023, https://picturingblackhistory.org/crowning-miss-parkridge-black-leisure-in-southern-california/.
[1118] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 404; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1119] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 424; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.

use as a Black vacation resort. Initially known as Eureka Villa, the community consisted of large parcels that were geared toward equestrian and recreational uses and were "free from the prejudices and restrictions" of urban life.[1120]

The community, in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, was rechristened as Val Verde in 1928.[1121] It was anchored by a 53-acre park and community clubhouse that were frequented by Southern California's Black community, who would travel from Los Angeles and other urban areas to partake in weekend getaways and holiday celebrations. Visitors would either stay with friends who owned property, or would rent cabins or camp in tents. Alison Rose Jefferson notes: "They socialized, took hikes to view the natural scenery, barbecues, picnicked, played games of various sorts, participated in athletic competitions, hunted game, rode horses and burros and held varied cultural events," and in doing so enjoyed some respite from urban life.[1122] In 1939, the County of Los Angeles supported by federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) funding broke ground on a bathhouse and Olympic-sized swimming pool at Val Verde, which opened in 1940 and further cemented the community's identity as a recreational hotspot. By the 1940s, Val Verde was often referred to as the "Black Palm Springs."[1123]

There were several other Black-owned leisure spaces that flourished, most of which were located far outside established metropolitan areas and occupied spaces that were not as contested as beaches and swimming pools. In Riverside County, Black-owned resorts were established at Lake Elsinore in the 1920s. Black-operated guest ranches opened in the far periphery including Murray's Dude Ranch near Victorville, which was opened in 1926 by Nolie and Lela Murray, and the Muse-a-While Ranch near Perris, which was opened in 1947 by Black actor Clarence Muse.[1124] These facilities offered accommodations, riding stables, and other recreational amenities. Murray's Dude Ranch in particular was well-known, attracting scores of prominent (Black and White) actors and others who sought some respite from everyday life. It also served as the backdrop for several western movies starring all-Black casts.[1125]

The segregation of leisure sites persisted well into the post-World War II era. In 1957, Silas White, a Santa Monica realtor, purchased a former Elks Club building at 1811 Ocean Avenue in Santa Monica and announced plans to convert it to a leisure venue called the Ebony Beach Club. The beach club would include amenities including a bar, jazz stage, and various other recreational amenities and would provide an inclusive alternative to the other local beach clubs where Blacks were typically not allowed. But in a scenario that played out similarly to what happened at Bruce's Beach decades prior, the property was condemned by the City of Santa Monica under the auspices of blight and was slated to become part of an expansive urban redevelopment project. The City prevailed, and the building was demolished before its opening as a beach resort could commence.[1126] The property is now occupied by a luxury hotel.[1127]

The twentieth century Civil Rights Movement ushered in the end to racially segregated public leisure spaces. As recreational venues like beaches, pools, and resorts became integrated, there was no longer the same need for the

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[1120] The Living New Deal, "Val Verde Resort Community Pool – Val Verde, CA," accessed June 2023, https://livingnewdeal.org/sites/val-verde-resort-community-pool-santa-clarita-ca/.
[1121] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 458; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1122] Jefferson, "Leisure's Race, Power and Place," 460; for more information on the topic also see Jefferson, *Living the California Dream*.
[1123] Jocelyn Y. Stewart, "Forgotten Oasis of Freedom," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 1994.
[1124] Cecilia Rasmussen, "In Prejudiced Era, Ranch Welcomed Dudes of All Colors," *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 22, 1904; "Muse Invites Public to New Ranch for Birthday Frolic," *California Eagle,* Oct. 9, 1947.
[1125] National Park Service, "A History of Black Americans in California: Murray's Dude Ranch, Apple Valley, San Bernardino County," accessed Jun. 2023, https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/5views/5views2h76.htm.
[1126] "Condemnation Starts on Ebony Beach Club," *The Roberts News*, Aug. 28, 1958; "Elks Club Decision to be Appealed," *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 6, 1959.
[1127] Alison R. Jefferson, "Reconstruction and Reclamation: The Erased African American Experience in Santa Monica's History," Belmar History + Art, Santa Monica, CA, 2020, 128-132.

Black-created spaces that were developed during the Jim Crow era. African Americans could patronize any place they liked and White people did not support the establishments developed by Black Americans.

Black Sports Teams

African Americans in the United States were long prohibited from participating in organized professional and community team sports by virtue of the "color line," which enforced the strict segregation of sports teams on the basis of race. The concept of a color line in the realm of sports began in the late nineteenth century, during which time professional baseball emerged as a popular pastime and baseball leagues were formed. After years of informal agreements, league owners in 1887 "agreed to make no new contracts with African American players," and by the turn-of-the-twentieth century the policy was strictly enforced, including in California.[1128]

Hindered by these rigid racial barriers, Blacks organized their own institutions so that they, too, could partake in popular athletic pursuits. Black baseball leagues had emerged in a number of California cities by the turn-of-the-twentieth century. In 1899, a Black team called the Coast Giants began playing in San Diego; by the very early twentieth century, another team called the Colored Giants was organized in Santa Cruz, and further south the Los Angeles Giants regularly competed against rival teams. By the 1920s, a formidable team known as the Black Colored Giants were based in Oakland; and much farther north, the Marysville Colored Giants were touted by the San Jose Mercury News as "the finest Negro club ever organized in the northern part of the state."[1129] A number of similar teams were formed in other cities.

Baseball was arguably the most popular organized sport at the time, and so it was most commonly associated with racially discriminatory attitudes and policies that prevailed in the Jim Crow era. However, segregation and the "color line" pervaded other sports activities as well.

Segregation in sports persisted for the first half of the twentieth century. During this time, California's Black population continued to grow – especially so during World War II, when wartime jobs drew significant numbers of new workers to shipyards and military institutions on the West Coast. This, in turn, generated further interest in organized sports among California's growing Black community. In 1946, the West Coast Negro Baseball Association was organized in Oakland by Eddie Harris and David Portlock, both firemen from Berkeley. The association planned a 110-game season that would use existing stadiums while White baseball teams were away at games. The league consisted of six Black teams, four of which were based in California: these included the San Francisco Sea Lions, Oakland Larks, San Diego Tigers, and Los Angeles White Sox. (The other two teams were based in Portland and Seattle).[1130]

The league hosted its first official game in May 1946 in Fresno. However, it proved to be a short-lived endeavor, as the league disbanded after only two months in July 1946. Reasons cited for the disbandment included "poor attendance, a lack of financing, and difficulty in accessing ballparks."[1131]

However, the disbandment of the West Coast Negro Baseball Association coincided with a growing movement to integrate sports teams. An important early example is found on the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) football team; between 1939 and 1941, the team had five African American players, including Kenny Washington, Woodrow Strode, and Jackie Robinson. Though it was not the first major college team to have Black

[1128] Ralph Pearce, "Looking Back: California's Negro League," San Jose Public Library, Feb. 14, 2015, accessed June 2023, https://www.sjpl.org/blogs/post/looking-back-californias-negro-league/.
[1129] Garth Kimball, "Oakland's Negro League," BaseballOakland, accessed June 2023, https://www.baseball-oakland.com/oaklands-negro-league.
[1130] Oakland Public Library, "Guide to the West Coast Negro Baseball Association Collection," accessed June 2023, https://oaklandlibrary.org/archival_post/west-coast-negro-baseball-association-collection/.
[1131] Society for American Baseball Research, "Abe Saperstein," accessed June 2023, https://sabr.org/bioproj/person/abe-saperstein/.

players, UCLA was the first to include African American players in starting positions.[1132] In 1945, Washington and Strode broke down racial barriers in professional football when they began playing for the Los Angeles Rams – bringing about an end to a strict policy of racial segregation in professional football that had been in effect for the past 13 years.[1133] Two years later, in 1947, Robinson famously broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball when he stepped onto the field for the Brooklyn Dodgers. The League had expressly prohibited Blacks and other players of color from participating in the league since the late nineteenth century.[1134] The trailblazing achievements of athletes like Washington, Strode, and Robinson played a significant role in normalizing the integration of professional sports.

Sub-theme: Social Clubs and Organizations

As in other areas of community-building and social life, African Americans created a broad, wide-ranging network of social clubs and voluntary associations in California. This was necessitated in part by exclusionary practices that barred them from existing White clubs. Along with churches, mutual aid organizations such as fraternal or benevolent associations were among the first institutions that Black Californians created. Churches and these associations often had a symbiotic relationship, historians Lincoln and Mamiya write; "sometimes mutual aid societies led to the formation of Black churches, and at other times these societies were organized under the rubric of the churches."[1135] In the face of increasing racism in the late nineteenth century, African Americans created organizations designed to help themselves, including fraternal associations, women's clubs, and social clubs. These groups often provided financial assistance and social services, which African Americans often did not have access to otherwise because of racism and exclusionary policies. Initially, many did not have dedicated buildings but met in churches, residences, or other spaces. This changed as African American communities grew. These organizations became integral to not only the social lives of Black Californians but also to political and civic engagement. They participated in issues such as suffrage and the Civil Rights Movement, and they acted as a crucial training ground for political and civic participation elsewhere.

Fraternal Organizations

Black fraternal organizations played a central role in the lives of African Americans in the nation, more generally, and California, more specifically. While churches are often discussed as the leading institution within the Black community and the genesis for other organizations, Black fraternal organizations were also incredibly important to African American social life and the community.[1136] They served multiple functions. They served as a social outlet, "helped to shape African American identity through rituals of brotherhood," and provided an avenue for civic engagement.[1137] They also acted as charitable organizations, using membership dues to provide funeral assistance and medical benefits for their members in a time before government aid, supporting education and community service, and opening their halls for use by other groups.[1138]

[1132] Lane Demas, "Sport History, Race, and the College Gridiron: A Southern California Turning Point," *Southern California Quarterly* 89, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 171-172.
[1133] Cynthia Lee, "Forgotten Story of Four Who Broke Color Barrier in Pro Football to Screen at Royce," Press Release, UCLA, Aug. 21, 2014.
[1134] Joseph Dorinson and Joram Warmund, *Jackie Robinson: Race, Sports, and the American Dream* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), ix.
[1135] Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 242.
[1136] Joe W. Trotter, "African American Fraternal Associations in American History: An Introduction," *Social Science History* 28, No. 3 (Fall 2004): 357.
[1137] Trotter, "African American Fraternal Associations," 356.
[1138] Theda Skocpol and Jennifer Lynn Oser, "Organization despite Adversity: The Origins and Development of African American Fraternal Associations," *Social Science History* 28, No. 3 (Fall 2004): 370.

Since exclusionary practices barred African Americans from joining most existing White fraternal organizations until the 1970s, African Americans formed their own orders.[1139] The first fraternal organization with Black affiliations was the Prince Hall Masons, organized in Boston in 1775 as part of a British military lodge and given a permanent charter soon thereafter.[1140] The first Grand United Order of Odd Fellows lodge was organized in 1843 in New York. During the next two centuries, African Americans formed both distinctive and parallel Black fraternal associations. Parallel groups corresponded to existing White fraternal organizations, while distinctive organizations were those created uniquely by the Black community.[1141] By the end of the nineteenth century, African Americans had formed parallel orders to the Elks, Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, and Shriners. They also formed distinctive orders that originated in the Black community and had no parallel to any White group.[1142] While distinctive orders did not typically attain size or widespread membership of parallel orders, they remained important to the Black community. A member of the United Brothers of Friendship and Sisters of the Mysterious Ten explained: "We have accepted the badge of distinction, and therefore are not elbowing our way into any White organization; we claim to be purely Negroes and of Negro origin."[1143] Similarly, a lodge of the International Order of Twelve of Knights and Daughters of Tabor in Mississippi noted that one of the reasons for joining was that "it is your own and not second-hand."[1144]

In California, the earliest fraternal organizations were founded in San Francisco and Sacramento. The Hannibal Lodge No. 1, of the Prince Hall Masons, was founded in 1852 in San Francisco.[1145] The Philomethean Lodge No. 2, a Black chapter of the Free and Accepted Masons, was founded in Sacramento in 1853. In 1855, the Philomethean Lodge joined with lodges in San Francisco and Oakland to form a Grand Lodge of Black Masons for California. The Philomethean Lodge and other organizations held meetings in St. Andrews AME Church in the nineteenth century, moving into their own dedicated buildings in the twentieth century.[1146] In Los Angeles, Black chapters of the Odd Fellows were established in 1885 and the Freemasons in 1887.[1147] In some rural areas, lodges were constructed near churches and could be closely affiliated.[1148] Lodges sprang up in cities and towns throughout the state as the African American community grew. Sometimes fraternal lodges did not initially have purpose-built buildings of their own but met in other places, such as churches and community centers. In larger cities, this changed as membership grew, while in smaller towns or rural areas, fraternal organizations may have continued to meet in multi-purpose spaces. Other times, fraternal lodges' buildings opened their doors for other organizations.

Most fraternal organizations had female auxiliaries that were open to family members. Others, especially distinctive organizations, welcomed both men and women. The latter were often recognizable by their title, which could include "Knights and Ladies," "Knights and Daughters," "Sons and Daughters," or "Brotherhood and Sisterhood." African American women were highly active in fraternal associations, in part due to the economic realities of Black women, who had both significant earning power and contributed economically to their families. Fraternal groups also provided insurance benefits and economic assistance, attracting female members just as often as they did male members.[1149] The high involvement of African American women in fraternal organizations

[1139] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 383.
[1140] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 383.
[1141] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 382.
[1142] Trotter, "African American Fraternal Associations," 356.
[1143] W.H. Gibson, "History of the United Brothers of Friendship and Sisters of the Mysterious Ten," 1897, iv qtd. in Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 401-402.
[1144] "Twelve Reasons Why You Should Enlist with the Knights and Daughters of Tabor" advertisement qtd. in Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 402.
[1145] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 40.
[1146] Page & Turnbull with Fisher, "Sacramento African American Experience History Project," 116-117.
[1147] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 136.
[1148] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 417.
[1149] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 412, 415-417.

was also due to their frequent involvement in the Black church, and "social connections often transfer from one organizational sphere into others, especially when group ideologies are similar, which certainly was the case for the large number of African American fraternal federations that featured biblical Christian themes in their rituals."[1150]

As with other social organizations, fraternal lodges proved to be an essential venue for African Americans to harness political and leadership skills they used elsewhere in their lives. They provided a mechanism to organize in a public setting for a variety of causes, including civil rights, an opportunity that outside of a church setting was not otherwise available to politically disenfranchised African Americans.[1151]

Women's Clubs

African American women's voluntary associations, such as mutual aid and benevolent societies, date as early as the 1790s in the United States. Often formed as an outgrowth of churches, these groups emerged following the end of enslavement.[1152] It was not until the 1890s and the beginning of the larger Progressive Movement, however, that the work of the numerous local groups began to coalesce into the Black women's club movement. Rooted in the need for social services in the Black community, local grassroots organizations often focused on charitable work and supported schools and orphanages. They also served as sources of social interaction and became a way for Black women to engage in political and civil affairs.

Initially, these groups were disconnected from each other, but events in the late nineteenth century led to the creation of a national organization. In 1895, a national convention of Black women met in response to a racist letter sent by a Southern journalist to a British reformer. The convention led to the formation of two national federations of local clubs, the Colored Women's League and the National Federation of African American Women. These groups merged a year later into the National Association of Colored Women (NACW). The NACW was the first national Black organization in the United States and predated the NAACP.[1153] It focused on providing African American women with a way to improve society and advocate for reform in health, childcare, education, civil rights, and social welfare. It also sought to use social reform to fight racism and discrimination.[1154]

African American women created organizations throughout California to address the needs of their communities in the absence of outside assistance. Women's clubs also provided them with an early political outlet; initially, Black civil rights organizations tended to be only be open to men. Many early women's clubs were sponsored by Black churches.[1155] Through these clubs, Black women participated in "the Progressive Era spirit of reform and uplift" that swept the country before World War I.[1156] The Black women's clubs in California became one of the most active networks of Black female organizations in the country.

One of the first women's clubs to form was the Fanny Jackson Coppin Club, established in Oakland in 1899 by women of the Beth Eden Baptist Church. Initially offering African American travelers a place to stay when segregated hotels would not provide them accommodation, it became known as the "mother club" of the Black

[1150] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 417.
[1151] Skocpol and Oser, "Organization despite Adversity," 420.
[1152] Anne Firor Scott, "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations," *The Journal of Southern History* 56, no. 1 (Feb. 1990), 6-7.
[1153] "National Association of Colored Women," https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/biographies/korean-history-biographies/national-association-colored-women, accessed April 20, 2023. It is now known as the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACWC).
[1154] Online Archive of California, "Guide to the Colored Women's Clubs Associations Collection," accessed April 20, 2023, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8tt4rrq/entire_text/.
[1155] Page & Turnbull and Healing Justice SB, "Santa Barbara African American and Black Historic Context Statement," 83.
[1156] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "'Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own': African American Women in Twentieth-Century California," *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, ed. Lawrence B. De Graff, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2001), 215.

women's club movement in California. The Fanny Jackson Coppin Club eventually provided other community services, including tutoring for students and producing literary and musical programs featuring African American performers.[1157] Another early women's club was the Garden City Women's Club in San Jose, founded in 1906.[1158]

In 1906, African American women in the state organized the California State Association of Colored Women's Clubs (CSACWC). The organization moved beyond socially-focused work and became increasingly involved in political issues after women gained the right to vote in California in 1911. Indeed, women's clubs throughout the state were involved in the push for women's suffrage, and the CWC served as an example for the NACW as it advocated for suffrage across the country.[1159]

The women's club movement continued in full force in the 1910s and 1920s. During World War I, some women formed Negro Women's Councils that worked with local councils of defense, and the Phyllis Wheatly Club of the East Bay in Berkeley began when local teenage girls began knitting for soldiers overseas. In Los Angeles, women formed the Sojourner Truth Industrial Club, which ran a "working girls' home" as well as the Women's Day Nursery Association, Progressive Women's Club, and Helping Hand Society. Women's clubs frequently provided group housing for single working women due to segregation practices at other institutions, including exclusion from local YWCA's. The Mother's Club in Oakland provided financial assistance to mothers in need, and women active in Oakland's Black clubs formed the local YWCA to provide social services when faced with discrimination and racism in the city's White branches. In smaller communities throughout the state, African American women also formed clubs or banded together to fundraise and promote causes important to them.[1160] These clubs provided Black women with a platform for advocacy and civil rights activism that was unavailable in many other forms, and they laid the foundation for other advocacy organizations like the NAACP and United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) as well as later civil rights campaigns.[1161]

Several factors resulted in the decreased importance of women's clubs as the century progressed, though the clubs did not disappear completely. The creation of organizations such as the NAACP, Urban League, and UNIA, which were open to women, made women's clubs less necessary as a means of political and civic participation.[1162] They remained important, however, because they "offered women a source of power, and an arena for service, that was unmatched by mixed-gender organizations" like the NAACP.[1163] The increasingly political nature of reform efforts and the federal government's involvement in providing social services during the Great Depression also resulted in the decline in women's clubs as a primary means of civic engagement.[1164] The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), founded in 1935 as a coalition of national women's organizations, became increasingly prominent as the focus of the club movement shifted to politics. The NCNW focused on structural change and politics rather than the creed of self-help promoted by the earlier NACW.

After World War II, social clubs for Black women were increasingly affiliated with sororities or religious organizations, though women's clubs existed and remained important.[1165] By the mid-1960s, there were 110 clubs in the state that belonged to the association. Some included the Madame C.J. Walker Club in San Francisco, the Rhododendron Club in Oakland, the Imperial Art and Literary Club in Berkeley, the Negro Women's Civic

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[1157] Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "Fannie Jackson Coppin Club," BlackPast, https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/fannie-jackson-coppin-club/, accessed April 20, 2023.
[1158] Jan Batiste Adkins, *African Americans of San Jose and Santa Clara County* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019), 113.
[1159] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 141.
[1160] Moore, "Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own," 216-217.
[1161] Moore, "Your Life is Really Not Just Your Own," 219.
[1162] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 138.
[1163] Flamming, *Bound for Freedom*, 141.
[1164] "Black Women's Club Movement," accessed April 20, 2023, https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/black-womens-club-movement.
[1165] GPA Consulting and Jefferson, "African American History of Los Angeles," 138.

Improvement Club in Sacramento, the Phyllis Wheatly Club in Los Angeles, the Frances Harper Club in Fresno, and the Pearl Lowery Winters Club in Bakersfield.[1166] There were also numerous clubs around the state that were not members of the NACW or CSACWC.

Other Social Organizations

The state's African American population also formed clubs that served more of a social purpose. In these settings, members could gather for dancing, card playing, and other social activities. Early clubs were founded in San Francisco and Sacramento as the African American communities became established but were soon located throughout the state. Early clubs included the Athenaeum, founded in 1853 in San Francisco, which was the city's first social club for African Americans.[1167] These social clubs soon proliferated throughout the state in communities large and small. They varied widely, including literary societies, organizations like Los Angeles' Just for Fun Club, and charity groups. Many held meetings in members' homes, churches, community centers, and fraternal associations' lodges. Some organizations also hosted events, like the Cosmos Club's annual ball. The club, founded in 1919, was the most prominent of the city's Black social clubs.[1168]

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA, founded in 1852) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA, founded in 1858) served both a social and practical purpose within African American communities throughout California. Both organizations were focused on self-improvement of young people and offered classes and events. African Americans were drawn to the YMCA's mission to develop "the whole man – body, mind, and spirit" at a time when Black men were denied full equality, but they were excluded from membership from the outset. In response, African Americans created their own branches throughout the country, the first of which was formed in Washington, D.C. in 1853. By the early twentieth century, African Americans had created "a virtually autonomous African American YMCA."[1169] Early branches in California included Los Angeles (1906), Santa Barbara (1925), and Oakland (1926). The Los Angeles YMCA, which moved to 28th Street off Central Avenue in 1926, was a prominent social organization, hosting community gatherings and youth activities (it is discussed further above in the Sports and Leisure sub-theme).[1170] It was not until after World War II that that the YMCA reexamined its racial policy in response to African American protest.[1171]

Like the YMCA, the YWCA enforced policies of segregation prior to World War II. Though it officially called for integration in 1946, this did not result in equal treatment within the organization. Black and White women sometimes worked together as leaders within the YWCA, but African Americans still often had separate branches, often with inferior facilities. Despite this unequal treatment within the organization as a whole, Black women throughout the state were active in creating and leading YWCAs. African American branches of the YWCA were founded in Los Angeles (1919) and Oakland (1920). In San Diego, women banded together to create an informal branch in 1932 called the Clay Street Girls Reserves; it was not formally recognized as a branch until 1951.[1172] African American YMCA and YWCA branches sponsored activities, held classes and events, and provided a space for young Black men and women to congregate, learn, and grow.

Like other clubs and organizations, fraternities and sororities were central to African American social life. They are one of the longest-lived organizations in the Black community. African American fraternities and sororities

[1166] This is not an exhaustive list. California State Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. brochure, 1965, Oakland Public Library Archive, accessed April 20, 2023; California State Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. Fifty-Seventh Annual State Convention, 1963, Oakland Public Library Archive, accessed April 20, 2023.
[1167] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 39.
[1168] San Francisco Planning Department, "African American Citywide Historic Context Statement," 71-72.
[1169] Nina Mjagkij, "Light In The Darkness: African Americans and the YMCA, 1852-1946," *African American Studies* 30 (2003): 1.
[1170] Grimes, "Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles," E29.
[1171] Nina Mjagkij, "Light in the Darkness: African Americans and the YMCA, 1852-1946," 6.
[1172] Charla Wilson, "Why the Y?: The Origin of San Diego YWMC's Clay Avenue Branch for African Americans," *The Journal of San Diego History* 62, no. 3-4 (Summer-Fall 2016).

were founded in the early twentieth century following decades of discrimination and being barred from joining existing organizations. Fraternities were founded beginning in the late eighteenth century in the American colonies and were modeled in many ways on Masonic organizations.[1173] By the 1820s and 1830s, the fraternity movement was firmly established, and several fraternities existed with chapters at Yale and Princeton, among others. Sororities emerged with the rise of coeducation on campuses of the Midwest and South and the establishment of women's colleges in the 1850s and 1860s. However, early fraternities and sororities excluded Black students from membership. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, students of color and Jewish students began forming their own organizations. Established fraternities responded by adopting exclusionary clauses, limiting membership to White male Protestants. By 1928, more than half of the country's fraternities had membership rules based on race or religion.[1174]

The first national Black Greek Letter Organization (BLGO) was Alpha Phi Alpha; it was established at Cornell University in 1906. These Black fraternities and sororities provided a crucial social outlet for African American students who often faced racism and discrimination in other, White-led social organizations on college campuses. Five BLGOs were established at Howard University in Washington, D.C. between 1908 and 1920. The nine early BLGOs make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council, also known as the "Divine Nine."[1175]

By the 1920s, BGLOs had almost 150 chapters across the country. In California, the first BLGO chapter was Alpha Phi Alpha, founded at the University of Southern California in 1921. This was followed by the founding of a chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha at the University of California, Berkeley in 1922. The Kappa Alpha Psi and Omega Psi Phi fraternities established chapters at UCLA and USC, respectively, in 1923. The first Black sorority in California, Delta Sigma Theta, was established in 1921 at UC Berkeley. These chapters and those that followed provided an important social outlet for African American students at established White colleges in the state.[1176]

African American social organizations including fraternal associations, women's clubs, YMCAs and YWCAs were crucial to Black communities throughout California. They provided a social outlet, avenue for community organizing, and safety net for Black Californians. These organizations remained prominent in Black Californians' lives throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Though some organizations, such as women's clubs, decreased in overall importance in response to the forces that shaped African Americans' lives during and after the Civil Rights Movement, they remained an important aspect of social and civic life into and after the period examined in this document. Despite strides made during and after the twentieth-century Civil Rights Movement, African Americans and other communities of color continued to face discrimination in private social clubs. In California, the Unruh Civil Rights Act, adopted in 1959, outlawed discrimination based on age, ancestry, race, and other characteristics. The law applied to all businesses. However, it was not until the 1980s that outside pressure and a Supreme Court ruling forced further integration of social clubs and organizations.[1177]

[1173] Craig L. Torbenson, "The Origin and Evolution of College Fraternities and Sororities," in *African American Fraternities and Sororities: The Legacy and the Vision*, eds. Tamara L. Brown, Gregory S. Parks, and Clarenda M. Phillips (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012).
[1174] Torbenson.
[1175] The Divine Nine fraternities consist of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (1906), Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. (1914), and Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. (1963); the sororities include Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (1908), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (1913), Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (1920), and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. (1922).
[1176] Marquis Taylor, "Exploring The History of the West Coast Expansion of Black Fraternities and Sororities," Watch the Yard, accessed July 20, 2023, https://www.watchtheyard.com/history/exploring-the-history-of-the-west-coast-expansion-of-black-fraternities-and-sororities/.
[1177] In 1988, the Court ruled that in certain cases, municipalities could force large private clubs to admit people of color and women. It said that "clubs which serve meals and rent facilities to outsiders are more like business establishments than intimate social groups and therefore have no right to escape anti-discrimination laws." Source: Carol McGraw, "Club Doors Still Only Slightly Ajar," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1989, 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 177

Name of Property

Multiple Counties, California
County and State

African Americans in California, 1850-1974
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section F. Associated Property Types

This section assists with the identification and evaluation of properties that may be significant for their association with African American history in California. The discussion below corresponds with the historic contexts in this MPDF.

Properties are significant under one of four criteria:

- Criterion A: are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- Criterion B: are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- Criterion C: embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; that represent the work of a master; that possess high artistic value; or that represent a significant entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- Criterion D: have yielded, or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

This section primarily addresses properties eligible under Criteria A and B. Properties may be eligible under Criterion C for their architectural significance, but in general properties will not be significant only for this reason under this MPDF. Therefore, registration requirements are not included for properties potentially eligible under Criterion C. The exception to this matter is works of art, such as murals and sculptures, which may be eligible for possessing high artistic value.

Certain property types are not typically considered for listing in the National Register, including cemeteries, birthplaces or graves of historical figures, properties owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes, moved properties, reconstructed properties, commemorative properties, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years. These properties can be eligible for listing if they meet certain requirements, called the Criteria Considerations, in addition to being eligible under one or more of the four criteria and possessing integrity. The Criteria Considerations are as follows:

- Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties

  A religious property is eligible if it derives its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.

- Criteria Consideration B: Moved Properties

  A property removed from its original or historically significant location can be eligible if it is significant primarily for architectural value or it is the surviving property most importantly associated with a historic person or event.

- Criteria Consideration C: Birthplaces or Graves

  A birthplace or grave of a historical figure is eligible if the person is of outstanding importance and no other appropriate site or building exists directly associated with his or her productive life.

- Criteria Consideration D: Cemeteries

  A cemetery is eligible if it derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, age, distinctive design features, or association with historic events.

- Criteria Consideration E: Reconstructed Properties

A reconstructed property is eligible when it is accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan and when no other building or structure with the same associations has survived. All three requirements must be met.

- Criteria Consideration F: Commemorative Properties

  A property primarily commemorative in intent can be eligible if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance.

- Criteria Consideration G: Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years

  A property achieving significance within the past fifty years is eligible if it is of exceptional importance.

  Fifty years is a general estimate of the time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. Criteria Consideration G guards against the listing of properties of passing contemporary interest and ensures that the National Register is a list of truly historic places. Exceptional importance does not require that a property be of national significance but rather is a measure of a property's importance within its historic context, whether the scale of that context is local, state, or national. Properties less than fifty years of age and not of exceptional importance may become eligible when more time has passed.

Please refer to *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* and *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* for more information.

Theme: Making a Nation

Residential Properties

Description – Properties associated with the sub-theme of Settlement and Migration include single- or multi-family residences that represent patterns of African American settlement. Single- and multi-family residences in urban areas may include ancillary structures such a detached garage or shed but should generally be documented as individual properties. Multi-family residences may include multiple residential buildings located on a single property. Properties in rural areas may include ranches or farms, and may consist of a residence and ancillary building or multiple buildings on a property. Such properties may be located on parcels of land smaller than what historically existed due to subdivision of land or later surrounding development. Sites may include locations of events where a building, object, or structure may no longer remain. Residences may have been constructed by members of the Black community or may have been constructed by others and then occupied by African Americans.

Properties associated with this sub-theme may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. African Americans often settled near places of employment (for example, near the railroad terminus in West Oakland, or in Weed near the Long-Bell Lumber Company) or were limited to where they could live by a variety of public and private mechanisms of segregation. They often settled in multi-ethnic neighborhoods in urban areas, segregated areas of rural towns, or separate African American rural communities. Residences associated with this sub-theme will span a variety of architectural styles. Architectural style, as well as size, scale, and massing will vary depending on the date of construction and the type of building or structure. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Individual properties may be eligible under Criterion A if they are an early example of African American settlement or migration, especially in rural areas where development was sparser. The settlement pattern(s) represented by the property does not necessarily have to have been permanent or long-lasting to be considered significant, especially if it is the only remaining example. Mere association with settlement and migration is not enough to be eligible under this context; the property must also be significantly associated with this context. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Community Development, and/or Exploration/Settlement.

African Americans have had a presence in California since the eighteenth century. Migration into the state increased with the onset of the Gold Rush in the 1840s. It continued at a steady rate in the second half of the nineteenth century as African Americans were drawn by economic opportunities and in some cases by the prospect of living in a place with less overt racism. The majority of people moved to urban centers but some also migrated to rural areas such as the Central Valley, drawn by the prospect of work in agricultural industries. Settlement in the state tended to occur in northern California more heavily until the late nineteenth century when movement into Los Angeles (and to a lesser extent, San Diego) increased. Migration into California picked up in the 1910s with the onset of the phenomenon known as the Great Migration, in which African Americans moved in large numbers from the South to the North and West. Increased movement into the state continued with the onset of World War II as African Americans were drawn by the promise of work in the defense and related industries.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly associated with early or significant patterns of African American settlement and migration

- Mere association with the African American community is generally not sufficient for eligibility under this sub-theme unless it is a rare or last remaining example of a residence significant for its association with this sub-theme in a particular area
- May be located in an area no longer associated with the African American community due to changing neighborhood demographics; buildings in neighborhoods that may have been once predominately African American but are not any longer may still be eligible
- May reflect the changing demographics of a neighborhood as an early or only surviving example of African American settlement
- Rural properties such as farms and ranches may be located on lots smaller than they were historically due to later encroaching development
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period of significance

Historic Districts

Description – A significant concentration of buildings associated with the African American Residential and Commercial Development sub-theme may be constitute a historic district. Architectural styles and building size, scale, and massing will vary depending on date of construction and building type.

Historic districts associated with this context can be found throughout the state. Districts may vary in size, depending on the size of the African American community. They may include a range of property types, including single- and multi-family residences as well as commercial and institutional buildings. They may be located in urban or rural areas.

In urban areas, African Americans often settled in neighborhoods that were multi-ethnic and multi-racial. These may have shifted to become predominately African American as time passed, depending on the community. Some districts may be smaller than an African American neighborhood was historically since urban redevelopment and freeway construction eliminated historically Black neighborhoods in many California cities.

Some settlements in rural areas consist of townsites that were predominately or completely African American. Districts in small towns or rural areas may be located in the Central Valley, where agricultural labor drew African American workers. Rural settlements can range from intentionally-founded colonies such as Allensworth (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) and more organically formed townships, which often appeared at the edges of existing towns and were influenced by housing restrictions, migration patterns like the "family stem migration" of family and community members, and other factors like proximity to employment opportunities based on location and crop.

Significance – Historic districts may include predominately African American neighborhoods (or ones that were multi-ethnic or multi-racial but contained a substantial Black population) that reflect African American settlement, migration, and community development patterns during the nineteenth and/or twentieth century. They may reflect the changing demographics of a neighborhood during a particular period, and may include residential, commercial, and/or institutional properties.

California's African American community was relatively small for much of the nineteenth century. Drawn by the prospect of employment and relief from the racism and segregation they faced in other parts of the country, African Americans began moving to California in increasing numbers in the early twentieth century as part of a trend historians refer to as the Great Migration. Established Black communities, such as those in Sacramento and San Francisco, grew, and new ones formed in both major cities and in rural areas. African Americans often settled near places of employment (for example, near the railroad terminus in West Oakland, or Lincoln Heights in Weed). They settled in multi-ethnic neighborhoods in urban areas, segregated areas of rural towns, or separate

African American rural communities. Patterns of community development were often dictated by discriminatory housing practices such as restrictive covenants, which prevented people of color from living in many neighborhoods. This, in turn, influenced the establishment of neighborhoods which were known for their African American population, such as the Central Avenue corridor in Los Angeles and the Western Addition in San Francisco. Patterns of community development played out differently in each city, town, or rural area, but generally were shaped by factors including population growth and discriminatory housing practices. Neighborhoods in which African Americans lived were often home to other communities of color as well.

Neighborhoods associated with the African American settlement or community development in an area may be eligible as a historic district under Criterion A at the national, state, or local level of significance. They should meet the last aspect of Criterion C as distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction and may be significant under Criterion A for their association with the establishment of African American communities or neighborhoods. They may also be eligible for their association with the fight against restrictive covenants and segregation in a particular area or neighborhood, such as the Sugar Hill neighborhood in Los Angeles.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this sub-theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following registration requirements:

- Represents an intact group of residential, commercial, and/or institutional buildings that are strongly and demonstrably associated with the African American community
- Must be directly associated with African American settlement, migration, or community development
- Must be associated with the African American community for a significant period of time
- Multi-racial neighborhoods that were predominately African American can be considered eligible
- Should reflect the period of time in which the area was associated with the African American community; this may or may not be the area's original appearance
- Historic districts should retain integrity overall; individual buildings may have been altered, which is acceptable as long as the district as a whole retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association; alterations to contributing buildings may be acceptable if they occurred during the period of significance

Properties Associated with Significant Persons

Description – Properties associated with this theme include the residences and offices of African American settlers and community builders. They can be found throughout the state. They may be located in areas no longer directly associated with the African American community, as in the case of neighborhoods in which demographics have changed.

Outside of urban areas, African American homesteaders, farmers, and ranchers settled throughout the rural regions of California ranging from the Mojave Desert in the south to the Siskiyou County in the north. Some managed to acquire their own land and stay for the long term, such as Gabriel Moore, who was homesteading in Fresno County by 1857 and ran a successful ranch and farm with his wife Mary in Centerville on the Kings River. Moore was the first African American cattle rancher in the Central Valley, an early pioneer in fig ranching, and one of the first settlers to successfully divert water from the Kings River via its first rock dam and canal system.

Dates of construction will depend on the patterns of settlement, migration, and community development in a particular area. They may have been constructed by African Americans or may have been built by others and later used by or be associated with significant Black settlers or community builders. Architectural style, building size,

and massing will vary depending on date of construction. Properties from the nineteenth century will be considerably rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the person's sphere of influence. These may include properties associated with early or pioneering African American settlers or residents. The period with which these individuals are associated will depend on the timeframe of African American settlement in each community. Individuals significant under this context may be significant under other themes as well. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and/or Social History.

Important persons in the fight for equality and civil rights for African Americans may include early settlers in an area that became predominately African American or those who built early residential, commercial, or institutional buildings as part of African American settlement. Once the importance of the person is established, the property must have a meaningful association with that person (e.g., residence, office) from the time period in which the person achieved significance.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion B, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with a person who played a prominent role in African American migration or community building or settlement in a particular area
- Must be associated with a person that is demonstrably important within this theme; it is not enough that a property simply be associated with a member of a particular African American community
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association; some alterations are acceptable depending on their scope and nature
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance

Theme: Making a Democracy

Headquarters, Offices, and Law Practices Associated with African American Civil Rights

Description – Properties associated with this theme were used by African American civil rights organizations (including Black Power organizations), fair housing organizations, or women's rights/LGBTQ rights organizations. Typically, these grassroots organizations did not have the financial means to erect purpose-built buildings during their formative years, and many organizations existed only for brief periods. Many were started in private homes and later operated out of donated or rented spaces such as churches, theaters, and commercial buildings. As a result, many organizations also moved frequently. Properties may no longer be associated with the significant African American civil rights organization. Properties significant under this theme also includes law offices associated with practices that served African Americans in the fight for civil rights.

Properties associated with this theme may be located throughout the state but are more likely to be located in urban areas. Those dating from the nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Politics/Government, and/or Social History (Civil Rights). Properties that were used by African American civil rights organizations or law practices that assisted with civil rights cases in California may qualify for listing at the local or state level of significance, depending on the organization or practice's sphere of influence. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion.

African American civil rights organizations in California date back to the 1890s. Buildings associated with the local chapters of organizations or community-based organizations would be significant at the local level; those associated with statewide organizations may be significant at the local, state, or national level. Fair Housing organizations also often had storefront offices from which they organized communications campaigns, held educational meetings, and planned their activism. Black Power organizations, such as the Black Panther Party, also had local headquarters and these buildings were often the sites of police violence. Woman's rights and LGBTQ organizations were somewhat less likely to have formal headquarters. Law practices' offices may be significant at the state or local level, depending on the impact of their work; they may have been constructed by the practice, or the practice may have moved into an existing building.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under Criterion A under this theme, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with an important African American civil rights organization or law practice
- Must be associated with an event or pattern that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement or reflected national trends
- Does not need to have been purpose-built for the organization or office; however, it should have been occupied during the period when the organization or practice gained significance
- May be the original, founding, or long-term home of the organization or law practice; or the home of the organization/practice during a particularly important period in its history, such as when it planned an important event or developed an important strategy that made a meaningful difference in the organization's area of concern
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important African American organization or law practice; this may or may not be the property's original appearance

- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association.

Sites of Historic Events

Description – Properties associated with this theme include places that symbolize injustices and struggles for inclusion, as well as the sites of demonstrations, protests, and marches related to the Civil Rights Movement. These events often occurred in public spaces (such as streets, parks, or in front of public buildings), or at lunch counters of restaurants and variety stores. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historic event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space. These events may be associated with private buildings as well, and the location of the event surpasses extant buildings. In other cases, there may be a site with no buildings, as is the case at Bruce's Beach in Manhattan Beach and the Inkwell in Santa Monica. Sites may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Politics/Government, and/or Social History (Civil Rights).

An essential part of the African American Civil Rights Movement was the peaceful public protests that were advocated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. After Dr. King's assassination, with the rise of Black Power and a movement that believed that African Americans had a right to defend themselves, these protests often turned violent and became vehicles for exposing the police brutality that plagued the communities for years. Schools and universities also played prominent roles as sites for rallies, protests, and organizing activities. While the University of California campuses in northern and southern California are well known, other locations, such as Merritt College in Oakland, were essential to the cause. Commercial buildings were also sites of protests by NAACP and/or CORE members for fair employment practices.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, the property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with African American injustices and struggles for inclusion, as well as the sites of demonstrations, protests, and marches related to the Civil Rights Movement
- Must be associated with an event or pattern of events that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement or reflected national trends
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the historic event; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Schools, School Sites, and Institutions of Higher Learning

Description – Properties associated with the sub-theme of Equal Education include schools and early sites of segregated schools for African Americans, schools that were the sites of segregation and busing clashes, and institutions of higher learning focused on African American students and/or the early establishment of ethnic studies programs. Properties from the nineteenth century may include purpose-built buildings or non-purpose built ones used as schools. Those from the twentieth century are more likely to have been purpose-built institutional buildings. Sites may include locations of events where a building, object, or structure may no longer remain. These properties may no longer be associated with African American schools.

Properties associated with this sub-theme may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Sites of early segregated schools for African Americans were often not purpose-built and remaining examples are very rare.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Mere association with this theme is not enough to be significant under this context; the property must also be significantly associated with this context. Properties may also qualify under Criterion B for their association with an important person active in the Civil Rights Movement. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and/or Social History.

As the result of California's early discriminatory laws against the equal education of African Americans, segregated Black public and private schools were established in some communities as early as the 1850s and 1860s. These were in both rural and urban locations. Over time, redlining and other discriminatory housing practices resulted in school districts often drawing neighborhood boundaries for public schools, resulting in de facto segregation during the early and mid-twentieth century. As the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, the issue of equal education and school integration rose to prominence nationally. In California, this manifested in a number of court cases brought by African Americans and other people of color against local school boards, administrators, and school districts. Although the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling outlawed separate public schools for Black and White people, many school districts continued to perpetuate de facto segregation for decades. Lowell School in Riverside was the site of controversy, an arsonist fire, and busing that resulted in Edna Milan (an associate of Rosa Parks) riding buses with children to integrate the school. Regardless of student body composition, the curriculum of California public schools did not include key aspects of African American history and culture. When African American college students began understanding their own cultural heritage, Black Student Unions and activist groups were formed to lobby administrators for the establishment of ethnic studies programs. In 1968, the Third World Liberation Front established itself at SFSU and demonstrated in the cafeteria, inspiring the creation of a department of Black Studies and a wave of ethnic studies protests across the state.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with early African American public or private schools
- Must be associated with an event or pattern that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the fight for equality in education or reflected national trends
- Need not be purpose-built buildings for African American schools; may be school buildings for de facto segregated schools
- May be the original or long-term site of the education of African American students; or have served African American students during a particularly important period in history, such as the subject of an important court case at the local, state, or national level, or was the site of an important event during the movement to desegregate schools
- May be associated with early Black studies or ethnic studies programs, Black student unions, and/or buildings where sit-ins or other protest activities took place
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important events; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

To be eligible under this theme under Criterion B, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with early African American schools, segregated schools, or the early establishment of ethnic studies programs and institutions of higher learning
- Must be associated with a person that is demonstrably important within this theme
- Should be associated with the period in which the important person was most active in the fight for African American civil rights in education
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- May be associated with the activities of the important person; or be the home of the person when they planned an important event or developed an important strategy that made a meaningful difference in the person's area of concern
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Locations of Community Programs/Worship Centers

Description – Properties associated with this theme were used by African American civil rights organizations, fair housing organizations, Black Power, or women's rights/LGBTQ organizations in serving the community. Properties may be purpose-built properties for organizations' community programs or non-purpose-built spaces that were reused. In many cases, grassroots organizations did not have the financial means to erect purpose-built buildings for programming efforts and used rented or donated spaces to offer their services. As a result, churches led by activist clergy often provided locations from which community programs and services could be delivered. Programming services range from free hot breakfast sites, liberation schools, campaign headquarters, and Nation of Islam mosques.

Properties associated with this context will typically date from the twentieth century, but earlier examples may remain; the latter will be rarer.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Mere association with this theme is not enough to be significant under this context; the property must also be significantly associated with this context. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Politics/Government, and/or Social History (Civil Rights, LGBTQ History, or Women's History).

The Black Panther Party's establishment of Liberation Schools was a key component of their mission to educate African Americans about their history and culture. These schools were established in churches, storefronts, and other available spaces. Apart from their headquarters, the Party also had information centers and locations at which they served their Free Hot Breakfast Program for Children. A community-based effort akin to the Headstart breakfast program, the Party also used the program as an opportunity to build trust and support within the community. The Nation of Islam, a combination political and religious organization, established mosques in African American communities across California. Many of these mosques were associated with the Black activist Malcolm X. Because the Nation of Islam argued for Black self-sufficiency, some chapters also developed African American-owned businesses and housing projects for their community.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with community programs offered by important African American civil rights, fair housing, Black Power, or women's rights/LGBTQ rights organizations
- Must be associated with an event or pattern that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement or reflected national trends
- Does not need to have been purpose-built for the organization; however, it should have been occupied by the organization during the period when it gained significance and delivered community services
- May not be the only associated use of the building (e.g., a church or community center)
- May be the long-term or short-term home of community services; or associated with the organization's community services during a particularly important period in its history, such as when it planned an important event or developed an important strategy that made a meaningful difference in the organization's area of concern
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important African American organization; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Residences Associated with Neighborhood Integration

Description – Properties associated with this theme include single-family residences in neighborhoods which were all-White at the time and into which African Americans moved as part of neighborhood integration. This trend occurred both before and after the *Shelly v. Kraemer* case which ruled that restrictive covenants were unconstitutional. Residences may be found in preexisting neighborhoods that had been around for decades or ones which were built as part of the population and residential development boom that occurred after World War II. Architectural style, building size, and massing will vary depending on date of construction.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance for this association with neighborhood integration and the movement of African Americans into previously all-White neighborhoods. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, and/or Social History (Civil Rights).

A variety of tools were used in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to prevent African Americans and other people of color from moving into many neighborhoods throughout California. One of the most widely used were restrictive covenants, which were attached to a property deed and dictated the type of development that could occur on a particular property as well as who could live there or purchase it. Other tactics including intimidation and violence, as well as practices in the real estate industry such as steering, were also used to enforce the "color line" in all-White neighborhoods. Restrictive covenants and other discriminatory housing practices were increasingly challenged in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Shelley v. Kraemer* that it was unconstitutional for courts to enforce racially restrictive covenants.

As deed restrictions expired or were not renewed, Black Californians moved into previously White-only neighborhoods. They often faced intimidation and violence in their new homes, and in some cases, had to pursue legal action to live where they wanted to. It was not until the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act that restrictive covenants were made illegal, and even then, discrimination in housing remained an issue for African Americans in California.

Please note that neighborhoods associated with integration are discussed above as potential historic districts under the Making a Nation theme.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with neighborhood integration and/or the fight against restrictive covenants
- Must be the first or one of the first homes purchased or occupied by African Americans in an all-White neighborhood
- May be located in an area no longer associated with the African American community due to changing neighborhood demographics
- Should substantially retain its original appearance from the period in which it gained significance; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of design, location, setting, feeling, and association from the period of significance

Public Housing Projects

Description – Properties associated with this theme include multi-family residential housing projects built as early public housing, war worker housing, and postwar public housing. Their size, style, and architectural detail may vary significantly as there may or may not be an architect or architectural firm associated with the project.

Public housing complexes may be located in areas that were once multi-racial or predominately African American but may no longer be so. Complexes may have had a predominately African American population or have been integrated. They are typically located in urban areas and will be located throughout the state. They generally reflect the influence of the Mid-Century Modern or Minimal Traditional styles as well as the International Style. Buildings in earlier complexes may display more architectural detail than those constructed later. Complexes may include a community or recreation building as well as other amenities. Site plan and landscaping will vary between projects.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, and/or Community Planning and Development.

As a result of the Great Depression and federal funding legislation, cities across California (and indeed, the nation) established public housing authorities that constructed low-income housing. Some of these projects were racially segregated, while others were integrated. African American neighborhoods were often the targets of "slum" clearance efforts beginning in the 1930s. These efforts often displaced low-income African Americans and other people of color. They were often replaced by public housing projects. As World War II loomed, many existing public housing projects were repurposed for housing for workers in the defense industry, displacing residents of color and further exacerbating housing scarcity for them. Only some of the housing projects constructed were open to people of color. The degree of integration in public housing projects around the state varied. Some were racially segregated, some were integrated, and some were open to Blacks only when Whites moved out. Discriminatory practices against African Americans varied by complex, and in many cases, African Americans were integral in fighting discrimination in public housing or advocating for it in their neighborhoods. Despite these efforts, segregation in public housing policy continued and negatively impacted access to housing and quality of life for many African Americans in California.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with public housing programs from the 1930s, 1940s, or postwar period and developed by a public housing authority
- Must consist of a concentration of multi-family residential buildings (more rarely single-family residential buildings) comprising a historic district
- Must be associated with an event or pattern that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement or reflected national trends
- Should retain its original master plan elements with a minimal number of intrusions or additions
- Should substantially retain its original appearance
- Should retain integrity of design, location, setting, feeling and association

Bars, Bathhouses, and Other Social Gathering Places for the Black LGBTQ Community

Description – Properties associated with this theme include commercial and industrial buildings serving the African American LGBTQ community as social gathering places throughout the state. These buildings were typically not purpose-built and may be bars, restaurants, clubs, theaters, or converted industrial spaces. They may no longer be associated with the Black LGBTQ community, and they may reflect a different use than that which dates from the period in which they were associated with the Black LGBTQ community. Physical features such as size, massing, and architectural style will be based upon their building type, location, and date of construction. Date of construction will vary, but the association with the LGBTQ community will typically have occurred in the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and/or Social History (Civil Rights and/or LGBTQ History).

Because the gay and lesbian communities were often segregated along racial lines and discrimination was practiced in bars, clubs and bathhouses, these buildings may be significant for their association with both the LGBTQ community and the African American community. Clubs such as Jewel's Catch One, which was established to serve African American patrons in Los Angeles, offered the community a safe space in which patrons could meet other members of the community, dance, and enjoy themselves.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme, the property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with the African American LGBTQ community, including LGBTQ clubs, bars or other social gathering spaces that specifically catered to the African American community
- Must be demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement or reflected national trends
- Need not be purpose-built for social interaction
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the African American LGBTQ community

- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important African American LGBTQ organization, business, or community; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Properties Associated with Significant Persons

Description – Properties associated with this theme include the residences and offices of African American civil rights leaders and can be found throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Properties may have been constructed by the prominent African American individual or may have been constructed by someone else and then later associated with the African American person. They may no longer be associated with the significant individual. Architectural style, building size, and massing will vary depending on date of construction and building type. Properties from the nineteenth century will be rarer than those dating from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the person's sphere of influence. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and/or Social History (Civil Rights, LGBTQ History, and/or Women's History).

Important persons in the fight for equality and civil rights for African Americans may include activist clergy, lawyers, student activists, politicians, educators, housing advocates, and other individuals from various walks of life, generations, and political spheres. Some important individuals may have also been active in the civil rights struggle of other groups, such as women or the LGBTQ community. Although there are too many people to mention here individually, Angela Davis would be a prime example of an important African American Civil Rights activist. Davis is an author, educator, and organizer associated with the Black Power movement and with second-wave feminism whose reach was local, statewide, and national. On a more local level, Ernest McBride was the founder of the Long Beach chapter of the NAACP and a tireless civil rights activist in that community. Early NAACP meetings were held in his home and the building served as a consistent hub for organizing efforts in the 1950s and 1960s. Another local activist in Long Beach, Ann Trumbore, was the leader and spokesperson for the Westside Neighbors organization that fought against blockbusting practices of local realtors in the integrated Westside neighborhood. An example of an important person at the state level would be Wilson Riles, an African American educator and politician who became the first African American elected to statewide office. Once the importance of the person is established, the property must have a meaningful association with that person (e.g., residence, office) from the time period in which the person achieved significance.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion B, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with a person who played a prominent role in the Negro Suffrage Movement, the fight for fair housing, school desegregation, or the African American Civil Rights Movement
- Must be associated with a person that is demonstrably important within this theme
- Should be associated with the period in which the important person was most active in the fight for African American civil rights
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- May be associated with the activities of the important person; or the home of the person when they planned an important event or developed an important strategy that made a meaningful difference in the person's area of concern

- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Theme: Making a Living

Property Types Associated with Industry and Labor

Description – Properties associated with this theme were used by Black laborers working in the agricultural, forestry, mining, transportation, and manufacturing industries. These properties are often segregated buildings and sites, including residential buildings used to house Black laborers; early commercial buildings in which Black laborers worked; industrial buildings specifically built for use by Black laborers; and buildings from Black-owned/operated industrial enterprises. A complex of related buildings dedicated to one particular business, such as a plant or campus, may also constitute a historic district. Such properties may be located on parcels of land smaller than what historically existed due to subdivision of land or later surrounding development. Sites may include locations of events where a building, object, or structure may no longer remain. Properties may no longer be associated with African American labor.

Properties associated with the sub-theme Labor may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Physical features such as size, massing, and architectural style will vary based upon use and date of construction. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Agriculture, Industry, and/or Social History (Labor History).

Black laborers, both enslaved and free, were instrumental in the growth of several industrial sectors of California. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Black workers traveled to California to work in mining; the railroad and transportation; agriculture; domestic work; logging/milling; and defense-related industries. Work in these sectors of the economy was often difficult and physically demanding. Black workers, met by hostile White workers and communities, were often relegated to separate Black-only neighborhoods or quarters. Segregated residences, businesses, and workspaces regularly characterized the Black labor experience, in both rural and urban settings.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly associated with African American labor and industry
- Mere association with African American labor is generally not sufficient for eligibility under this sub-theme unless it is a rare or last remaining example of a property significant for its association with this sub-theme in a particular area
- May be associated with an important African American segregated labor site
- Must be demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of Black labor or reflected national trends
- May no longer be associated with African American labor and industry due to changing demographics of an area or changing use of the property
- Rural properties may be located on lots smaller than they were historically due to late surrounding development

- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important African American organization, event, or related trend; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Sites of Historic Protests and Strikes

Description – Properties associated with this theme include the sites of protests and strikes associated with labor, organized labor unions, and civic employment. These events typically occurred at workplaces such as agricultural fields, railroad yards, and factories, as well as labor union offices. Sites will be located in urban and rural areas throughout the state. Unless the larger site came to symbolize the historic event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the protest space.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Industry, and/or Social History (Labor History).

Black workers had a complex relationship with various sectors of industry, and were often prohibited from joining organized labor unions, or were forced into segregated Black auxiliary units that did not provide the same benefits as for their White counterparts. African Americans, otherwise barred from holding specialized labor jobs in unionized companies, were occasionally brought in as strikebreakers, or "scabs." One of the most important early labor actions in California was the 1934 West Coast Waterfront Strike, in which union leaders promised that, should Black workers support the longshoremen's strike, they would be allowed to join the union and work at any dock on the West Coast. After almost three months, the strike ended in victory for the longshoremen, and the union was racially integrated. Other significant actions include the 1944 court case of *Marinship v. James,* following which the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, one of the most powerful labor unions in the Bay Area's shipyards, was racially integrated. Other types of protest captured under this theme include civic employment strikes, such as the 1966 strike of Black sanitation workers in Bakersfield. Historic events significant in the context of Black labor are actions that made important contributions to improving the lives of workers. Strikes that resulted in the formation of a new union, the achievement of major gains for workers, and the advancement of the labor movement are examples of significant events in this context.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, the property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly associated with a key labor action or event that exemplifies the important role of African American labor
- May be a site associated with segregated African American labor
- Mere association with African American labor is not sufficient for eligibility; it must be proven that the association is significant as well
- Must be demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of Black labor or reflected national trends
- The use of the site may have changed and may no longer be directly associated with African American labor and industry

- The site may be smaller than the original site associated with the historic event or protest; some change in size is acceptable, but to be eligible, enough of the site should remain to convey its significance and historic association
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the historic event; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Institutional Buildings and Sites

Description – Properties associated with this theme characterize the role that African Americans held within the civic sector of California. Properties may be those built by segregated units, such as New Deal program entities, or those properties that housed segregated units, such as a Black-only firehouse. Additionally, buildings associated with notable legislation regarding Black employment in civic jobs may also be captured in this theme. Sites may include locations of events where a building, object, or structure may no longer remain. The building or site's use may have changed. Physical features such as size, massing, and architectural style will vary based upon use and date of construction. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Law, Politics/Government, and/or Social History (Labor History).

The employment and engagement of Black Californians in civic professions has had a long and complicated history. While some sectors of public employment allowed Blacks greater flexibility and steady wages, other sectors explicitly discriminated against African American applicants and/or employees. Segregation in California was common in many segments of civic work, and Black-only units were established in the fire, police, and education spheres, among others. Other sectors, such as the postal service, had a more complicated relationship with its Black employees that shifted from desegregated to segregated and back again. Notable legislation that improved Black access to civic jobs included the California Fair Employment Practices Act of 1959 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with African American desegregation or segregation or with significant legislation regarding civic employment of Black persons
- Mere association with African American labor is generally not enough for eligibility under this sub-theme; the property must be demonstrably important within this sub-theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of Black labor or reflected national trends
- May be the original or long-term site of a segregated African American unit; or have been built by a segregated African American unit during a particularly important period in history
- May no longer be associated with African American labor due to changes in use
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important events; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association.

Commercial Buildings

Description – Properties associated with the sub-theme Business and Commerce include a broad array of commercial building types such as offices, markets, banks, restaurants, funeral homes, bakeries, dance halls, record stores, and general retail shops. Some served basic needs, while others provided entertainment or professional services. The smaller size of the Black population in California mostly limited the development of Black businesses to cities with the largest African American populations, such as Los Angeles, Oakland, and San Francisco, although businesses may also be found throughout the state in small towns. Most often they are located on major corridors and within historically African American neighborhoods. They may no longer be associated with African American businesses or be in an area which is no longer predominately African American. Architectural style, as well as size, scale, and massing will vary depending on the date of construction and the type of building or structure. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. They may be eligible as an early example of an African American business in a particular area or as the long-time location of a significant Black business. Mere association with this theme is not enough to be eligible under this context; the property must also be significantly associated with the context. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and Commerce. They may also be significant for their association with patterns of African American settlement or community development.

During the twentieth century, Black businesses were consistently met with discriminatory municipal ordinances, licensing laws, and bank lending practices. These circumstances largely limited the types of Black businesses and spurred the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" (or "Buy Where You Can Work") protests of the 1930s held in cities across the country. Other specific types of "protected" or safe businesses for Black investment included beauty shops, barbershops, insurance companies, and funeral parlors. Black businesses were listed in the *Green Book,* a travel guide that provided listings of businesses across America that were safe for Black travelers to patronize. Buildings associated with long-standing neighborhood businesses would be significant only at the local level; those associated with far-reaching franchises or corporations may be significant at the local or state level.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a building must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with a Black-owned business or group associated with improving Black business
- Has been and/or continues to be an important fixture within the community in which it is located
- May have achieved symbolic meaning as a gathering place for special events or for providing specific services or goods
- May be a property listed in the *Green Book*
- Must be demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of Black labor or commerce or reflected national trends
- May no longer be associated with an African American businesses due to changes in ownership or use
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important business; this may or may not be the building's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Commercial Historic Districts

Description – A significant concentration of buildings associated with the Business and Commerce sub-theme may constitute a historic district. Historic districts associated with this sub-theme may be found in large cities as well as small towns throughout the state. They will typically be located along corridors or at intersections. In some cases, they may extend onto adjacent streets within a neighborhood. They may be small, consisting of a single block or intersection, or large, consisting of multiple contiguous blocks. A complex of related buildings dedicated to one particular business, such as a plant or campus, may also constitute a historic district. Architectural styles and building size, scale, and massing will vary depending on date of construction. A range of architectural styles, spanning multiple years, may be present and may vary if the area was developed over time.

In urban areas, African Americans often settled in neighborhoods that were multi-ethnic and multi-racial and opened businesses. Some commercial districts may be smaller than they were historically since urban redevelopment and freeway construction eliminated historically Black neighborhoods in many California cities. Districts associated with African American commerce and business in the nineteenth century will be rarer than those dating to the twentieth century.

Significance – Historic districts associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C at the local or state level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Districts may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and Commerce.

During the twentieth century, Black businesses were consistently met with discriminatory municipal ordinances, licensing laws, and bank lending practices. These circumstances largely limited the types of Black businesses and spurred the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" (or "Buy Where You Can Work") protests of the 1930s held in cities across the country. Other specific types of "protected" or safe businesses for Black investment included beauty shops, barbershops, insurance companies, and funeral parlors. Black businesses were listed in the *Green Book,* a travel guide that provided listings of businesses across America that were safe for Black travelers to patronize. A grouping of buildings associated with neighborhood businesses would be significant as a historic district at the local level; a complex of buildings associated with a franchise or corporation may be significant as a historic district at the local or state level.

Commercial districts associated with this sub-theme should meet the last aspect of Criterion C as a distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction and may be significant under Criterion A for their association with the establishment of African American business and commerce. They may also be eligible for their association with patterns of settlement or community development.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a historic district must meet the following requirements:

- Must consist of a concentration of buildings which were, and possibly continue to be, strongly associated with African American business and commerce
- May be an important commercial center within the community or a complex of buildings associated with a single important business
- Majority of individual properties within the historic district should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important business; this may or may not be the buildings' original appearance
- Historic district must retain sufficient integrity overall to convey its significance from the historic period
- Historic district should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Sites of Historic Military Events

Description – Properties associated with this theme include the sites of important events associated with African American members of the military. Sites may be associated with events such as early park stewardship or case study desegregation programs, among other notable events. These events typically occurred in military bases, parks, airfields, streets, or in front of public buildings. Unless the public building came to symbolize the historical event, the site should be considered the documented boundaries of the assembly space. The use of buildings or sites may have changed since the historic event occurred, and sites associated with a large property may have changed in size, but this is acceptable as long as enough of the site remains so that it continues to convey its historic association and the reasons for its significance. Properties with multiple buildings should retain those buildings that most convey the historic event for which it is significant.

Properties and sites associated with the African Americans in the military sub-theme may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Architectural style (if applicable), as well as size, scale, and massing will vary depending on the date of construction and the type of building or structure. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Military, and/or Social History (Labor History).

The role of the Black servicemembers within the military complex has been the subject of widespread debate among leading Black activists from the time of the country's inception to the present day. While some Black people saw the military as a means of upwards social mobility, others saw the military as an arena of discrimination and exploitation. The earliest African American soldiers in California were Black cavalry troops known as "buffalo soldiers," who under the guidance of Colonel Charles Young kept peace in the Presidio of San Francisco and the Sierra Nevada Mountains, including Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant (now King's Canyon) national parks. When met with discrimination in the military, some Blacks created their own outlets for exploration, such as the Bessie Coleman Aero Club in Los Angeles. Other significant events took place on military bases, including the case study for racial integration at Fort Ord in Seaside. These events and others, with the overriding theme that of African American seeking inclusion and equality, all reflect the Black military experience in California.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under Criterion A under this theme, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with African American members of the military, such as the site of a key moment in Black military advancement
- Must be associated with an event that is demonstrably important within this theme, including pivotal events that changed the course of Black military history or reflected national trends; mere association with the sub-theme is not sufficient for eligibility under this sub-theme
- If a larger property or site, the boundaries may have changed due to later surrounding development, which is acceptable as long as the building or space most associated with the historic event or which represents the sub-theme remains
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important event; this may or may not be the property's original appearance

- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association from the period of significance

Properties Associated with Significant Persons

Description – Properties associated with this theme include the residences and offices of African American leaders and entrepreneurs and can be found throughout the state. They may be located in areas no longer associated with the African American community, as in the case of neighborhoods in which demographics have changed. Properties may have been constructed by the prominent African American individual or may have been constructed by someone else and then later associated with the significant individual. They may no longer be associated with the significant person.

Architectural style, building size, and massing will vary depending on date of construction. Properties dating to the nineteenth century will be rarer than those dating from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with this theme may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the person's sphere of influence. Such properties are considered primarily for their associative qualities; architectural qualities of these properties are less important factors under this criterion. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Law, Politics/Government, and/or Social History (Labor History). Properties associated with individuals related to the Black business and commerce sub-theme may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and Commerce. Properties eligible for their association with individuals in the military may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and Military.

Important persons significant in African American labor history include notable leaders in the labor movement, those associated with a strike or significant event in the history of labor. Other individuals significant under this theme may include those that broke the color barrier in a particular industry, the civic sector, or the military. Other persons significant under this theme may include notable entrepreneurs that excelled within their individual industry, those associated with a significant Black business, or those associated with the military.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion B, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with a person who played a prominent role in African American labor development, the labor movement, civic employment, business and commerce, or the military
- Must be associated with a person that is demonstrably important within this theme
- Should be associated with the period in which the important person was most active in their particular field or industry
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- May be the associated with the activities of the important person; or the home of the person when they planned an important event or developed an important strategy that made a meaningful difference in the person's area of concern
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Theme: Making a Life

Religious Properties

Description – Properties associated with the sub-theme of Religion and Spirituality include individual church buildings as well as religious properties with multiple buildings such as a church, Sunday School, and/or parsonage, which may be evaluated as historic districts. Some buildings associated with religious organizations may have been constructed for other congregations or uses (such as commercial) and then used or repurposed as a church building by the African American community, as in the case of storefront churches. A property with multiple buildings such as a church building, Sunday school building, social hall, and parsonage may require documentation as a historic district. Properties associated with large congregations expanded over time, and new or larger buildings sometimes replaced earlier ones.

Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed as well as the building type. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criterion A. Buildings significant under this sub-theme may be modest in size and scale and may have limited architectural ornamentation due to limited financial resources of their congregations.

Properties may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. In urban areas, they are typically associated with predominately African American neighborhoods. It was also common for congregations to change locations, so multiple locations may be associated with a particular congregation over time. Religious properties from the mid- to late nineteenth century are expected to be rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with African American religion and spirituality may be eligible under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance. They may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Religion, and/or Social History (Civil Rights). They often served multiple purposes and may be associated with a variety of aspects of African American life, including religious, cultural, political/civic, and social life. Some church buildings served as meeting spaces for other organizations within the community and provided a venue for civil rights activism. As such, properties associated with this sub-theme may also be significant under the Making a Democracy theme for their ties to civil rights efforts and/or the Social Clubs and Organizations sub-theme within the Making a Life theme. Properties eligible under this theme must meet Criteria Consideration A, meaning they must derive their significance from historical or architectural importance, rather than just their religious affiliation.

Properties may also be associated with individual leaders and/or groups who contributed to the religious life of the Black community. Many individuals associated with religion also emerged as leaders in the Black community in other capacities. Properties may also be significant under Criterion C for their architectural importance; however, this is not covered in this document.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a church building must meet the following requirements:

- Must meet Criteria Consideration A. To do this, they must derive their primary significance from historical or architectural importance. The property's historic significance cannot be established on the merits of a particular religious doctrine, but rather must be based in its historic or cultural significance (or in the case of properties significant under Criterion C, for their architectural value, which this document does not address).
- May be the first location of a congregation in a particular city or area, or may be a later location since congregations moved as they grew or their needs changed

- The congregation must have played a major role in the political, social, or cultural history of the African American community.
- It is not necessary for the congregation to have constructed the building, but only to have occupied it as their primary place of worship during the period in which the church gained significance.
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association
- Alterations to design and materials do not necessarily preclude a property's eligibility, especially if they occurred during the period of significance

To be eligible under this sub-theme under Criterion B, a church building must meet the following requirements:

- Must meet Criteria Consideration A. To do this, they must derive their primary significance from historical or architectural importance. The property's historic significance cannot be established on the merits of a particular religious doctrine, but rather must be based in its historic or cultural significance (or in the case of properties significant under Criterion C, for their architectural value, which is not addressed in this document).
- The person must be proven to have made an important contribution to the history of religion based upon scholarly and secular sources
- Should be associated with the productive period of life or the period in which the person achieved significance
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Newspaper and Magazine Offices

Description – Properties associated with this context include newspaper and magazine offices, as well as commercial buildings where newspapers or magazines had offices (if they occupied part of the space rather than an entire building). Properties associated with the Black Media sub-theme can be found throughout the state but are most likely to be located in cities in or near neighborhoods with a sizable African American population. Properties may have been constructed for another use and then later repurposed as a press office. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed, which will vary, as well as the building type. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criteria A or B. Properties dating from the early nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Significance – Buildings associated with African American newspapers and other forms of the press may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A. They should be associated with a significant African American print publication. Some publications may have multiple locations associated with them. In that case, the founding or long-term location would be most likely to be significant under this sub-theme. However, the association with the newspaper or magazine does not necessarily have to have been long-lasting to be considered significant if it is the only remaining property associated with the significant publication. Properties may be significant in the areas of Communications and Ethnic Heritage-Black. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the organization's sphere of influence.

The press has been an important means of communication for the African American community in California since the nineteenth century. The first Black-owned newspaper in the state was the *Mirror of the Times*, produced as a result of the 1855 Colored Convention in San Francisco, and was soon followed by others. African American communities throughout the state had newspapers that varied in terms of reach and readership. Most, but not all, were based in urban areas. The Los Angeles-based *California Eagle*, founded in 1895, would become one of the country's longest lived and most influential Black newspapers. Its circulation eventually expanded nationwide.

Black-owned and led newspapers were a means of promoting Black-owned businesses as well as events. They also served as important advocates for civil rights and political issues and became a way to mobilize the African American community around important issues. For example, Black newspapers around the state initiated a "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work" campaign in the 1930s, which encouraged African Americans to protest discriminatory businesses and institutions. They also drew attention to discriminatory housing practices, including specific cases related to restrictive covenants and intimidation tactics, which was a topic largely ignored by the White press. Though Black newspapers came and went and fluctuated in terms of readership, they remained an important means of connection and communication for the Black community throughout the state.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly associated with an important African American newspaper or print publication
- Need not be purpose-built for the organization; however, it should have been occupied during the period when the publication gained significance
- May be the original, founding, or long-term home of the publication; or the home of the publication during a particularly important period in its history
- May be the only remaining property associated with a particular significant African American publication; in this case, it is acceptable if the property was not the original, founding, or long-term location of the publication
- May no longer be associated with the publication for which it is significant
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from its period of significance; this may or may not be the building's original appearance

Radio Station Studios

Description – Properties associated with this context include studios associated with Black radio stations, as well as commercial buildings where radio stations had offices or studios (if they occupied part of the space rather than an entire building). Properties associated with the Black Media sub-theme can be found throughout the state but are most likely to be located in cities in or near neighborhoods with a sizable African American population. Properties may have been constructed for another use and then later repurposed as a radio station studio. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed, which will vary, as well as the building type. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criteria A or B.

Significance – Buildings associated with African American radio stations may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A. They should be associated with a significant African American owned or operated radio station. Some stations may have multiple locations associated with them. In that case, the founding or long-term location would be most likely to be significant under this sub-theme. However, the association with the radio station does not necessarily have to have been long-lasting to be considered significant if it is the only remaining property associated with the significant station. Properties may be significant in the areas of

Communications and Ethnic Heritage-Black. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the station's sphere of influence.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly associated with an important African American radio station
- Need not be purpose-built for the organization; however, it should have been occupied during the period when the station gained significance
- May be the original, founding, or long-term home of the radio station; or the home of the station during a particularly important period in its history
- May be the only remaining property associated with a particular significant African American radio station; in this case, it is acceptable if the property was not the original, founding, or long-term location of the studio
- May no longer be associated with the radio station for which it is significant
- If the radio station with which it is associated gained significance within the last fifty years, the property must meet Criteria Consideration G
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from its period of significance; this may or may not be the building's original appearance

Art Galleries and Venues

Description – Properties associated with this sub-theme include art galleries and venues, including both purpose-built and non-purpose-built spaces. Purpose-built spaces may include art museums, while non-purpose-built spaces include commercial or institutional buildings which hosted African American art in gallery spaces or auditoriums. Spaces may have been multi-purpose and included other uses, such as dance and/or performing space, classrooms, or meeting rooms. Properties may no longer be associated with the Black art venue or gallery with which it is associated historically, and the use may have changed.

Properties are most likely to be located throughout the state, the majority of which will likely be in urban areas. They likely were located in areas with a substantial African American community or near such a community. They may have been constructed by others or for another purpose and then later used as an art gallery or venue. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criterion A. Properties from the nineteenth and early twentieth century will be rarer than those from later in the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties associated with the visual arts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A. A property may be eligible if it is the location of an art gallery or space known for showcasing the work of Black artists, a space known to have included the work of Black artists among its work, or was a space dedicated to showing African American art. Mere association with African American art is not enough to be significant under the Visual Arts sub-theme; it must be shown that the property is significantly associated with this context. Properties may be significant in the areas of Art and Ethnic Heritage-Black. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the venue or gallery's sphere of influence.

The visual arts have been a means of connecting with and expressing the African American experience since the late nineteenth century. The issue of Black identity in art, which arose as Black artists in California and the country at large were fighting to gain entry into the traditional art and museum world, focused on the question of

self-representation. At the same time, Black artists sought to create a distinct visual vocabulary that reflected their unique experiences. Though they were shut out of the mainstream, White-dominated art world, African American artists increasingly made their mark in California. In the twentieth century, the number of Black artists increased, spurred by the influence of New York's Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s. As the presence of Black art and artists in the state became increasingly visible as the twentieth century progressed, galleries and artist collectives throughout California created a larger network of spaces that could foster and empower the Black artists.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly and significantly associated with the African American visual arts
- Mere association with the African American visual arts is not sufficient for eligibility; it must be proven that the association is significant as well
- May have been the first, early, or only space used for showing African American art during a particular period or in a particular area
- May be associated with one or more African American artists over a period of time
- May have included space for other uses, such as meeting space, theater performances, etc.
- May no longer be associated with the African American art space, gallery, or artist(s)
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association
- Primary interior spaces, such as galleries, should remain intact

Performing Arts and Music Venues

Description – Properties associated with the sub-themes Theater and the Performing Arts and Music include performing arts and music venues. Purpose-built spaces may include theaters, nightclubs, and auditoriums. Non-purpose-built spaces may include community centers or commercial spaces that housed theatrical or musical performances. Properties may have been constructed by members of the Black community or may have been constructed by others and then later used as an African American performing arts space or music venue.

Properties associated with these sub-themes are most likely to be located in urban areas throughout the state but may also exist in smaller or rural communities. They are likely to be in or near predominately African American communities or areas known to have a sizable African American population. Date of construction will vary. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criterion A. Properties dating to the nineteenth and early twentieth century will be rarer than those from later in the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties may be eligible under Criterion A under this sub-theme if they are significantly associated with the history and development of African American performing arts, theater, or music. Mere association with this context is not enough to be eligible under this context; the property must be significantly associated with this context. Properties may be significant in the areas of Performing Arts and Ethnic Heritage-Black. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the venue, organization, or artists' sphere of influence.

Like other forms of art, theater and the performing arts express the uniquely African American experience in the United States and their experience in California. The African American community transformed theater and the

performing arts from an art form based in racist and stereotypical depictions by White writers and dramatists into an empowering medium for expressing issues important to Black Americans.

The influence of the Harlem Renaissance helped the performing arts flourish. Many Black performers from the East Coast made their way to California in the 1920s and 1930s, where they performed in nightclubs, cabarets, and theaters. At the same time, the growth of African American communities in cities in the twentieth century spurred the development of theater and the performing arts. Theaters were constructed in African American neighborhoods in cities such as Los Angeles. After mid-century, theatrical works began to express ideas seen in the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movement. Theater became one means through which Black Californians expressed themselves and the issues they faced following the Watts Uprising, and groups sprung up around the state, including Ebony Showcase Theatre, Watts Writers Workshop, Inner City Cultural Center, North Richmond Theatre Workshop, and Dialogue Black/White.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly and significantly associated with the African American performing arts, theater, and/or music
- Must be associated with a significant musical group, theater group, or performing artist(s)
- May no longer be associated with the organization or musical group for which it is significant
- The use may have changed, which is acceptable
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period in which it achieved significance
- Primary interior spaces, such as performance spaces, should remain intact

Recreational and Sports Facilities

Description – Buildings, structures, and sites associated with this context may include a variety of sites associated with African American sports and leisure, including swimming pools, bathhouses, beaches (or sites of former beaches), resorts, and sports facilities. Those associated with amateur or community-based athletics teams may be located in public parks or school campuses. Structures may be large in scale, as in the case of baseball stadiums, or smaller in scale. Properties may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail (if applicable) will depend on the date of construction. These factors will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criterion A. Properties dating from the nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – Facilities associated with African American recreation and sports may be eligible under Criterion A if they are associated with the history of African American sports or leisure. Mere association with settlement and migration is not enough to be significant under this context; the property must also be significantly associated with this context. Properties may be significant in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation, Social History, and/or Ethnic Heritage-Black. They may also be significant under the Making a Democracy theme for their association with the segregation/integration of public accommodations. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local, state, or national level of significance, depending on the sphere of influence.

Organized leisure became increasingly accessible to Americans of all classes at the end of the nineteenth century. However, places of leisure such as pools, beaches, and resorts were segregated on the basis of race. In the face of this discrimination and segregation, African Americans in California created their own places of leisure

throughout the state. For the Black community, leisure time and spaces had an additional layer of significance because it signified self-determination and was a tangible step in overcoming the legacy of slavery. Places such as Bruce's Beach in Manhattan Beach, Bay Street Beach in Santa Monica, Val Verde in northwest Los Angeles County, and Lake Elsinore in Riverside County became sites of leisure for Black Californians.

In addition to places of leisure, African Americans in California formed their own sports teams throughout the state due to segregation in sports. Black baseball leagues emerged in a number of California cities, including Los Angeles, San Diego, and Oakland, as a result. Properties significant under this context may be associated with amateur or professional sports teams. Those associated with Black sports teams may also have associations with White teams; for example, Black baseball teams sometimes played in existing facilities intended for White teams during the latter's away games.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, the property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be directly and significantly associated with the development of African American recreational and leisure sites
- May be associated with African American sports teams
- Must be associated with an event or pattern that is demonstrably important within this theme
- A property may have been the original, only, or long-term location of a recreation space in which African Americans were allowed
- May be a remnant of a larger site or building complex; if this is the case, it must be able to represent the larger complex sufficiently to convey its significance
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the historic event; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association from the period of significance

Fraternal Lodges, Clubhouses, and Meeting Spaces

Description – Properties associated with this context include a variety of buildings used by social organizations, clubs, and associations. They may be purpose-built club houses, lodges, meeting halls, or community centers. They may also include non-purpose-built institutional, commercial, or residential buildings used by a social organization. In some cases, churches and community centers opened their doors as a meeting space for social organizations. In smaller communities and rural areas, buildings may have served multiple purposes. They may not have been built by African Americans but later used by a Black social organization. Properties' use may have changed, and they may no longer be associated with the organization for which they are significant. They are typically located in neighborhoods or areas with a significant African American population, though demographics may have changed over time and the area may no longer have a substantial African American population.

Architectural style, building form, massing, and detailing will vary depending on date of construction. Properties may be modest in size or limited in architectural detailing. They will be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. Properties from the nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – Properties may be eligible under Criterion A for their association with the social life of the African American community. They are significant in this context if they were home to a predominately Black social organization, association, or club that made a significant contribution to African American social life. The property may be the original, long-term, or last remaining location of the significant social organization or club. It must be shown that the particular social organization was significant in the history of the African American

community in California. Properties may also be associated with African American civic and political engagement in a particular community. Properties associated with this sub-theme may be eligible under Criterion A at the local or state level of significance, depending on the organization's sphere of influence. Properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black and/or Social History (Civil Rights).

Social clubs and organizations, which formed in response to exclusionary policies in existing White organizations, became integral to not only the social lives of Black Californians but also to political and civic engagement. In addition to providing a social outlet, they often provided social services and financial assistance when needed. Members also participated in issues such as suffrage and the Civil Rights Movement, and they acted as a crucial training ground for political and civic participation elsewhere. Initially, many did not have dedicated buildings but met in churches, residences, or other spaces. This changed as African American communities grew.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion A, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be strongly associated with a social group or organization, such as a fraternal order, social club, fraternity, or sorority, that made a significant contribution to the African American community
- Mere association with an African American social organization or club is generally not sufficient for eligibility under this sub-theme unless it is a rare or last example of a property significant for its association with this sub-theme in a particular area or community
- May no longer be associated with the African American social organization for which it is significant
- May be associated with multiple social organizations over time
- May be associated with other uses, as in the case of a multi-purpose space or community center
- Should retain integrity of location, design, feeling, and association from the period of significance. Some alterations are acceptable depending on their scope and nature, but the majority of features from the period of significance should remain (this may be after the building's date of construction).
- Primary interior spaces such as large meeting rooms or social halls should integrity from the property's period of significance

Residences, Offices, or Studios of Significant Persons

Description – Properties associated with this context include the residences, places of business, offices, and studios of significant African Americans associated with the religion and spirituality, the press, the arts, sports, recreation, or social organizations. They may also include studios of significant artists; these may be located in a commercial or residential building or be located in an ancillary building to a residence.

Individuals associated with the press may include journalists, editors, and owners of newspaper and other print media sources. Those significant for their association with the arts may include musicians, visual artists, performing artists, writers, and playwrights, among others. Important persons significant in the history of African American sports and leisure may include owners and entrepreneurs within the industry, sports coaches, and athletes (amateur or professional).

Properties associated with significant individuals under this context may be located throughout the state in both urban and rural areas. They may include purpose-built or repurposed spaces, as in the case of an artist's studio. Date of construction will vary. Properties may have been constructed by African Americans or may have been built by others and later used by or be associated with significant African American individuals. Architectural style, form, massing, and detail will depend on the period in which the building was constructed. These factors

will not necessarily have any bearing on a resource's significance under Criterion B. Properties from the nineteenth century will be rarer than those from the twentieth century.

Significance – The residences, offices, or studios of prominent persons associated with this context may be eligible under Criterion B at the national, state, or local level. Depending on the sub-theme with which it is associated, properties may be significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Black, Art, Communications, Entertainment/Recreation, Literature, Performing Arts, and/or Religion.

African Americans in California have made significant and enduring contributions to the varying topics covered under this theme, including the development of Black churches, press, the arts, sports and recreation, and the development of social clubs and organizations. Due to the broad scope of this theme, a wide variety of individuals may be significant. For an individual to be considered significant, their activities must be demonstrably important within one of the sub-themes in this context. It is not enough that a property be owned or used by a person associated with this context; it must also be shown that the individual is significant within this group or context.

Registration Requirements – To be eligible under this theme under Criterion B, a property must meet the following requirements:

- Must be associated with a person who played a prominent role in religion and spirituality, sports and recreation, the arts, the African American press, or African American social organizations
- Must be associated with a person that is demonstrably important within this theme
- Must be associated with the period in which the individual gained significance or the productive period of their life
- May be the first, last, only, or most important extant property associated with the person
- Should substantially retain its appearance from the period when it was associated with the important person; this may or may not be the property's original appearance
- Should retain integrity of location, setting, feeling and association

Section G. Geographical Data

The State of California.

Section H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The *African Americans in California, 1850-1974* MPDF was developed to provide a framework for the identification and evaluation of historic resources associated with the state's African American and Black community. The historic contexts cover all geographic areas of California in which African Americans lived. The MPDF is intended to update and expand upon *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey of California*, published by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in 1988. *Five Views* was a statewide survey of properties associated with ethnic communities in the state, including African Americans, Native Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, and Mexican Americans. It includes an overview of the history of African Americans as it relates to particular topics, including the church, education, industry, farming, business, voluntary associations, and individuals. It also includes a list of associated properties (including buildings and sites). The MPDF also complements the African American Heritage Theme Study, produced by the National Park Service in 2008. The Heritage Theme Study examines sites of significance to African Americans in the United States within a number of historic contexts, including civil rights. The themes in the MPDF are based on those outlined in the *Latinos in Twentieth Century California* MPDF (2015) for the sake of continuity, which in turn were based on the Latino Theme Study, published by the National Park Service in 2013.

Existing historic context statements, produced by cities around the state, helped provide a foundation for establishing themes and associated property types relevant to African American communities around California, regardless of geographic location. Contexts utilized include those for San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Diego. In addition, secondary sources that were invaluable to the completion of the MPDF and acted as a starting point for further research included Douglas Flamming's *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America*; Delilah L. Beasley's *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*; *Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California*, edited by Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor; Rudolph M. Lapp's *Blacks in Gold Rush California*; Quintard Taylor's *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990*; and Josh Sides' *Los Angeles City Limits: African American Los Angeles From the Great Depression to the Present*, among others. See the selected bibliography for a more comprehensive list of sources.

One of the primary goals of the MPDF was to provide more information on communities outside California's major metropolitan areas (i.e. San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Oakland). The project team included this as a focus in their research efforts. Outreach and feedback from the Advisory Committee (discussed below) were key in achieving this goal, as it brought to light information outside frequently cited sources. In addition to primary and secondary source research, the project team also reached out to individuals and organizations who might have knowledge about the history of African Americans in California. These subject matter experts provided valuable guidance regarding sources, repositories, and topics to the team. OHP also created a webpage devoted to the project to inform the public about its occurrence and provide a place for input and feedback.

OHP organized an Advisory Committee to work with the project team. Committee members represented a range of interests and expertise. The committee included:

- Shonna McDaniels, Director, Sojourner Truth African Heritage Museum
- NeFesha Ruth Yisra'el, Director, The African-American Historical & Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley
- Dr. Elaine Jackson-Retondo, Preservation Partnerships and History Programs Manager; National Park Service

- Gaidi Finnie, San Diego African American Museum of Fine Arts Executive Director
- Rick Moss, Former State Historical Resources Commissioner, retired director of African American Museum & Library of Oakland
- Gail Kennard, KDG Architects, Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commissioner
- Nia McAllister, Senior Public Programs Manager, Museum of African Diaspora
- Susan D. Anderson, California African American Museum curator
- Dr. Alison Rose Jefferson, Research specialization in African American places of leisure/recreation
- Carson Anderson, Former Preservation Director, City of Sacramento

The committee provided guidance to the MPDF's authors during research and writing. Committee members offered feedback on the document's overall framework, bibliography, outline, and draft. The committee convened two meetings during the course of the project (in January 2023 and May 2023). The purpose of the first meeting was to introduce the project and the project team. The second meeting focused on review of the framework, bibliography, and outline. The Advisory Committee was divided into subcommittees, and committee members participated on a voluntary basis. Subcommittee members reviewed the historic context, associated property types section, and provided thoughts on outreach. Subcommittee meetings occurred in August and September 2023. Following the subcommittee's review of the draft historic context and associated property types sections, the project team incorporated their feedback into the document.

The associated property types identified were based on function and organized by theme and sub-theme. Existing contexts served as a starting point for determining associated property types. The project team also reviewed lists of designated and potentially significant properties outlined in existing context statements and *Five Views* to aid in the creation of the associated property types portion of the MPDF. A list of potentially significant properties, which is not intended to be comprehensive but was compiled based on research and existing context statements, was shared with the advisory committee. Registration requirements were based upon knowledge gleaned from this pool of designated and potentially significant properties.

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