Mobilised Emotions: Public Transportation in the Jim Crow Era, 1896-1964

Rosemary Pearce

Dissertation submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in American Studies

July 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

INTIMATE STRANGERS: UNCOVERING THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE OF SEGREGATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.....1

CHAPTER 1

"BOUND FOR GLORY:" THE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE OF JIM CROW IN SEGREGATED TRANSPORTATION CASES..... 26

CHAPTER 2

THE SLAVE, THE DIPLOMAT AND THE UNION MAN: PULLMAN PORTERS AND EMOTIONAL LABOUR ON THE RAILROAD..... 67

CHAPTER 3

FREEDOM FROM FEAR: AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE ARMED SERVICES AND THE WAR AGAINST SEGREGATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION..... 104

CHAPTER 4

"THE MOVEMENT ON WHEELS:" EMOTIONS IN NONVIOLENT CHALLENGES TO SEGREGATED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION..... 138

CONCLUSION

"THERE IS A FAMILIAR STIGMA AND SHAME:" THE EMOTIONAL LEGACIES OF JIM CROW PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION 189

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

LOC	Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
CHM	The Chicago History Museum, Chicago, Illinois
SCRBC	Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Libraries, New York
CCOH	Columbia Centre for Oral History, Columbia University New York

ABSTRACT

This project works to unveil emotional experiences on segregated public transportation from 1896 to 1964. In so doing, it opens up how feelings evoked by racial conflict on public transportation helped to fuel the black rights movement that demanded the end of the segregated system. Through examining plaintiffs of civil rights test cases, Pullman porters, members of the armed forces in the Second World War, and grassroots activists of the 1950s and 1960s, the thesis reassesses the familiar topics of segregated transportation and black resistance to it through the lens of emotions. It shows not only that the feelings of African Americans were systematically dismissed, ignored, and suppressed, but also that the expression of certain emotions was mandatory for black passengers. Deviating from these emotional norms often resulted in verbal or physical abuse, hindering the protest of discriminatory treatment perpetrated by white police, bus drivers, conductors, and passengers. Finally, the thesis uncovers how black activists responded to this everyday form of racial control by converting emotional self-regulation into a weapon with which to attack segregation. The emotional context of segregated public transportation in this period has hitherto been neglected, but following the emotional turn in history, this project works to illuminate the full extent of the racial control white Americans exerted over the expression of African American emotion. Recognising this distinct form of oppression has implications for the study of the Jim Crow era more widely, and in particular the long civil rights movement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis could not have been written without the help of certain individuals and institutions, who have provided me with invaluable intellectual, financial, and practical support. I am thankful to my excellent supervisors at the University of Nottingham, Professor Sharon Monteith and Professor Peter Ling, for advice and guidance throughout the PhD. They have been a wonderful supervisory team, fundamental in shaping my thinking on this project and supporting my academic development over the last four years. Sharon also gave me the opportunity serve as one of the co-directors of the Centre for Research in Race and Rights during my PhD, an experience that has allowed me to engage with the public on the ideas within this thesis, by working with, for example, the charity Journey to Justice, secondary school teachers at a Rosa Parks Study Day, and with civil rights veterans and film makers at a British Academy Landmark Conference.

I am also indebted to the other academic staff, currently or formerly, of the Department of American and Canadian Studies, including Professor Zoe Trodd, Dr. Matthew Pethers, Professor Celeste-Marie Bernier , Dr. Maria Ryan, Dr. Stephanie Lewthwaite, and Dr. Bevan Sewell, for their comments on my work at various stages, which were an important part of refining my ideas, as well as the ways I present them. The departmental Work in Progress sessions were enormously helpful in broadening the scope of my knowledge, and challenging how I thought about my own work. I would also like to mention the staff, in particular Dr. Dorothea Fischer-Hornung, and fellow attendees at the 2016 Heidelberg Spring Academy for their supportive and insightful comments. The Spring Academy was unlike any conference I have known. It made me excited and grateful to have had the opportunity to write my thesis, and to engage with the worlds opened up by academic study.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded my PhD, as well as a research trip to New York City, and I am similarly grateful to the School of Cultures, Languages, and Area Studies at the University of Nottingham for awarding me further funding for archival research. The US-UK Fulbright Commission funded my research trip to Chicago, and I was also awarded funding for travel by the Historians of the Twentieth Century United States (HOTCUS). I would like to thank Jo Ellen McKillop Dickie and Matt Rutherford of the Newberry Library for their help, as well as the staff at the Chicago History Museum, who made me feel very

welcome. The European Association of American Studies (EAAS) awarded me a travel grant for my research trip to New Orleans, where I spent time at the Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, assisted in particular by Christopher Harter, who was kind and helpful both during my trip and after I had returned home. Staff members at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture were extremely helpful during my visit. I am also grateful to the archivist David Olson for helping me to identify interviews at the Columbia Center for Oral History. Many thanks to Laura Anderson of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Alabama, who went out of her way to help me access sources there.

My fellow students in the Department of American and Canadian Studies have been constantly considerate and supportive during my PhD. It has been wonderful to meet and befriend so many good, clever people like Timo Schrader, Hannah Murray, Alex Bryne, Lorenzo Costaguta, Michelle Green, Alice Lilly, Tom Bishop, Hannah Rose Murray, Olivia Wright, and Hannah Jeffrey, who have given invaluable support.

My parents have always accepted and supported my endeavours, and without their backing I would never have been in a position to begin my PhD. Finally, thank you to my husband John, who has listened to me, sustained me in various essential ways, and given wise counsel throughout.

Introduction
Intimate strangers: uncovering the emotional landscape of segregated public transportation

How to live in a segregated society without accepting that society is a constant battle, a battle that is won only by steadfast and continuous refusal to admit as inevitable or right that which is ugly and mean, stupid and cruel. Trivia? Only to one who has never known the bitter taste of humiliation, the galling pain of day in, day out denigration.
– Dr. Benjamin E. Mays.[1]

They had the Jim Crow law and blacks sat in the back. And they didn't resent it, seemingly.
– A white professional man interviewed in 1978 about the streetcar in Atlanta.[2]

Dr. Mays, a former President of Atlanta's prestigious black Morehouse College, avoided travel by streetcar whenever he could, but he might have sat directly behind the white professional quoted above at one time or another.[3] The men's view of the city through the streetcar windows would have been almost identical but, as is clear from these brief accounts, their experiences of public transportation differed vastly. These interpretations each recall the emotional reaction of African Americans to segregation, but through the polarising lens of race: Mays emphasised the struggle to maintain his dignity and self-worth while undertaking everyday tasks in a segregated society, whereas the unnamed white interviewee insisted that black Atlantans – seemingly – did not view segregation as a slight. He qualified his statement, recognising by 1978 that some African Americans must have resented the segregation laws, as became apparent during the 1950s and 1960s when high profile boycotts, sit-ins and marches erupted across the South. In failing to recognise the intense emotional strain experienced by black fellow passengers like Mays, the white interviewee highlights the particular complexity of public transportation's emotional

[1] Benjamin E. Mays, *Born to Rebel: An Autobiography*. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 113.
[2] Cliff Kuhn, Harlon Joye, and Bernard West, *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948*. (Atlanta, GA: Atlanta History Center; University of Georgia Press, 2005), 77.
[3] Ibid., 82.

landscape. Black and white passengers on a crowded bus, train, or streetcar, though segregated, were intimate strangers. Forced by the common goal of travel to interact with one another more closely than in other public spaces, white passengers could, wilfully or otherwise, misinterpret the emotional expression of African Americans as one of contentment, when in reality what they often saw was "the mask that grins and lies," designed to shield its wearer from potential humiliation or violence in a dangerous interracial space.[4] For African Americans, the Jim Crow era was one in which their freedom to express emotional reactions in public was severely limited, and nowhere was this more apparent than within the arena of public transportation.

The physical closeness did, on occasion, bring genuine interracial knowledge. Jamilia Jones, a black woman from Mongomery, Alabama, remembers that, as a curious six-year-old, she intentionally sat behind a white woman on a local bus so that she could secretly touch the woman's red hair. Jones believed that this stealthy first-hand experience of whiteness would explain why she had to stand for white passengers when there were not enough seats. Ultimately, the texture of the woman's red hair revealed only that there was no significant difference between them.[5] The segregated bus, streetcar and train were places of interracial tutelage, conflict, and occasionally reconciliation. Historians of the Jim Crow era have meticulously documented the rise and fall of the patchwork of white supremacist laws and customs across the nation that constituted American segregation.[6] Yet the emotional experience of living under that piecemeal system has been less well understood, least of all the stress on African Americans travelling between areas with different customs, or the frustration of experiencing racial rejection and hatred on a daily basis to and from work. This thesis works to uncover how emotions functioned on segregated public transportation from 1896 to 1964. In so doing, it opens up how feelings evoked specifically by segregated public transportation helped to fuel the black rights movement that demanded the end of the segregated system.

---

[4] Originally from a Paul Laurence Dunbar poem, "the mask that grins and lies" is used by Jo Ann Gibson Robinson to explain the behaviour of black Montgomerians before the famous boycott – feigning contentment while suffering discrimination and abuse on buses for the sake of the city's peace. Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and David J. Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*. (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 8.

[5] Joseph Mosnier interview with Jamilia Jones, *Civil Rights History Project (U.S.)*. American Folklife Center, LOC, (April 27 2011). https://www.loc.gov/item/afc2010039_crhp0009/ 5.

[6] Perhaps most famously, C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. (1955; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 7.

Public transportation was frequently at the forefront of the civil rights struggle to end social and legal segregation. The Supreme Court decision that legitimised southern segregation laws, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), emerged from a test case set up by a civil rights group that aimed to knock down the new Louisiana Separate Car Act. Much later the 1955-6 Montgomery Bus Boycott brought mistreatment of black citizens on local buses, and the leadership of Martin Luther King Jr., to the attention of the nation. One of the best-known civil rights protests in the United States, the 1961 Freedom Rides, aimed to force desegregation of interstate transportation in the South after the Supreme Court had reversed the *Plessy* decision. That activists often targeted public transportation most intensely was not a coincidence, but a result of particular conditions on buses, streetcars and the railroad.

Activists working for civil rights organisations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) needed to travel, and therefore endured frequent inconveniences and humiliations.[7] Finding accommodations to stay for the night was difficult because white-owned hotels rarely agreed to book rooms for black travellers, and black-owned hotels could be rare, depending on the part of the country visited.[8] African Americans found alternative solutions to these problems: they arranged to stay with family or friends in advance, for example, or consulted *The Negro Traveller's Green Book*, an annually-printed guide to hotels, restaurants, fuel stations, and bars serving black customers.[9] For those who could not afford a car, or travelled before cars were mass-marketed in the US, however, there was limited relief from the indignities of public transportation. NAACP leader Ruby Hurley recalled the challenges of completing her work around the country while sticking to her principles: "The only way I could get to a lot of places to fight for civil rights was by bus, and the bus stops, the places to eat, were all segregated, and I was not going to eat in a segregated place."[10] Those already fighting

---

[7] Patricia Sullivan notes that most of the professional staff at the NAACP in 1941 spent the majority of their time outside of the national office, travelling. Patricia Sullivan, "Movement Building During the World War II Era: The NAACP's Legal Insurgency in the South," in *Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Kevin Michael Kruse and Stephen G. N. Tuck (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 70.

[8] John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *America's Main Street Hotels: Transiency and Community in the Early Auto Age.* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2009), 110-11.

[9] The New York Public Library has made digitised issues of the Green Book available online. Victor H. Green, "The Negro Traveler's Green Book," 1936-1967, *Digital Collections*. Guide Book. New York Public Library: The Green Book. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/the-green-book?&keywords=&sort=keyDate_st+asc#/?tab=about.

[10] Howell Raines, *My Soul Is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered.* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), 134.

for desegregation had particular incentive to focus their efforts on the desegregation of public transportation first, to help remove barriers to tackling other forms of racial discrimination. The NAACP also received a steady stream of complaints from members about their treatment aboard segregated buses, trains and streetcars.[11] There were few black-owned bus or train lines, and those that operated were often stunted by discriminatory bureaucratic practices.[12] Worcy Crawford ran a local bus service for black passengers in Birmingham, Alabama for over twenty years. He managed this only because he pretended it was a church bus and took donations instead of fares – the county administration refused to grant him a licence.[13]

The railroad car was a site of obvious inequality for African Americans because the material differences between the cars that white and black passengers were expected to occupy were stark. Usually located closest to the engine, the Jim Crow car was noisier, hotter, smokier, and also dirtier, not least because African Americans were often forbidden or prevented from using the dining cars, and therefore had to bring all the food they might need for a long journey with them and eat it where they sat. A letter of complaint written by an African American woman named Miss Aminta McGrew to the Santa Fe Railway Company in 1942 includes a vivid description of the conditions in which black passengers were expected to travel: "a den, black with dirt, filthy with spit cups and cigar and cigarette stubs and ashes. The butcher's garbage and bottles were also there. The windows in this den were filthy and seats black with dirt, smoke and cinders."[14] The "butcher," in this context, was a white man who sold fruit and candies throughout the train. He often stored his wares on seats in the Jim Crow coach, which further attracted flies and rats, in addition to inhabiting space intended for black passengers.[15]

---

[11] See, for example, "NAACP Discrimination Complaint Files: Transportation," January 1, 1945 - December 31, 1946. Part 15, Series A. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

[12] Safe Bus Inc. was perhaps the most successful example of a bus company owned by an African American, operating in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for forty years. "Dixie Bus Company at a Crossroads," *Ebony*. December 1965, 71-74. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=GWcC4Mi8MFEC&lpg=PA71&dq. Two owners of an interstate bus line were jailed in Maryland for operating without insurance, although the owners claimed that reinsurance negotiations had "collapsed before the firm could meet Maryland insurance requirements." "Md. Police Halt 'Uninsured' Negro Bus Line," *Jet*. April 23 1953, 8. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=TrsDAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA8&ots=FZ_Fj-iiup&dq.

[13] Horace Huntley interview with Worcy Crawford, *Oral History Project Collection*. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, (April 9 2007).

[14] "Miss Aminta Mcgrew to Mr. H. O. Wagner, Superintendent Santa Fe Railway Company," August 10 1942, *Papers: August 1-16, 1942*. Box 67. Folder 1. Letter. CHM: Arthur W. Mitchell Papers.

[15] T. Montgomery Gregory, "The 'Jim Crow' Car: An NAACP Investigation, Part II," *The Crisis*. January 1916, 137-38. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=U1oEAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA138&dq.

For many ordinary black citizens, the Reverend C. T. Vivian recalled, there was "no greater indignity" than enduring segregated public accommodations, especially the buses that black workers relied on for their daily commute.[16] The material inequalities of the bus or streetcar were far less apparent because white and black passengers occupied the same enclosed space, with African Americans expected to sit at the back and white Americans at the front. Instead, racial inequality was built into customs, such as the requirement in some areas that black passengers board in front to pay, and then disembark and board again through the back door. A principal feature of the African American experience of buses and streetcars, regardless of specific customs, was being made to stand so that white passengers could sit. Signs designating white space within the vehicle prevented black passengers from sitting down even when seats were available, and it was unacceptable to sit in front of white passengers, regardless of how far back in the bus they sat. African American activist Vera Pigee never forgot the day in the mid 1940s when she had to stand on a bus for 100 miles with her 4-week old baby, behind empty seats.[17]

Indignity and humiliation for African American passengers was the result of a social system based on racial fear and repulsion. Reflecting on the white backlash to the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the second issue of *Liberation*, Martin Luther King Jr. noted: "Many white men in the South see themselves as a fearful minority in an ocean of black men. They honestly believe with one side of their minds that Negroes are depraved and disease-ridden."[18] As the automobile age emerged at the start of the twentieth century, the percentage of black riders versus white on city buses increased dramatically, as many more white Americans had the means to own a car.[19] White passengers and authorities such as drivers and conductors, therefore, often formed a racial minority on buses and streetcars, a rare experience for most, and prompting aggressive defence of the customs and laws of Jim Crow that reinforced white supremacy. As King's statement suggests, African Americans also suffered the stigma of white Americans believing them to be dirty and diseased, as well as suspecting them to be vulnerable to moral deficiencies such as sexual promiscuity which, as

---

[16] Prudence Arndt interview with Rev. C. T. Vivian, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (January 23 1986). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/ns064754h.
[17] Françoise N. Hamlin, *Crossroads at Clarksdale: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Mississippi Delta after World War II*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 12.
[18] Martin Luther King Jr., "Our Struggle," *Liberation*. April 1956, 6.
[19] Kathleen Franz, *Tinkering: Consumers Reinvent the Early Automobile*. (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 2.

Melissa Stein notes, some medical writers in the period associated with poor sanitation.[20] One anonymous commuter wrote to *The Sun* in 1917 expressing exasperation at the overcrowding on board the Sparrows Point line in Maryland, complaining about being "packed and jammed into a car with a bunch of dirty, foul-smelling negroes."[21] Many white passengers in southern states viewed segregation laws as their only defence against a supposedly medically and morally diseased group that appeared to be occupying increasing amounts of space on public transportation. This attitude was by no means restricted to the South. After hearing complaints from white Americans about the appearance and behaviour of rural black southerners who travelled north as part of the Great Migration, middle class black Americans already established in northern cities worried that race relations on the streetcars were deteriorating, and might result in the reintroduction of segregation practices. In Detroit and Chicago, African American civic organisations instituted projects to persuade rural newcomers to dress in a cleaner and more respectable manner, and adopt a quieter tone on public transportation.[22]

The analysis in this thesis focuses mainly on African American perspectives on segregated public transportation, rather than those of white passengers. Nevertheless, white feelings about proximity to, and interactions with, African Americans are vital to understanding the situation in which black passengers found themselves. John Howard Griffin, a white journalist who in 1959 disguised himself as a black man and travelled around the South, was shocked to discover the open looks of hatred and disgust directed at black passengers going about their business:

> Once again a 'hate stare' drew my attention like a magnet. It came from a middle-aged, heavyset, well-dressed white man. He sat a few yards away, fixing his eyes on me. Nothing can describe the withering horror of this. You feel lost, sick at heart before such unmasked hatred, not so much because it threatens you as because it shows humans in such an inhuman light.[23]

Griffin may not have felt particularly threatened by the looks he attracted while 'passing' as a black man, but African Americans often felt nervous travelling, a

---

[20] Melissa Stein, "'Nature is the Author of Such Restrictions': Science, Ethnological Medicine, and Jim Crow," in *The Folly of Jim Crow: Rethinking the Segregated South*, ed. Stephanie Cole, Natalie J. Ring, and Peter Wallenstein (College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2012), 130.
[21] A. Commuter. "Letter to the Editor," *Sun (Baltimore, MD)*, June 24 1917, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/534915627.
[22] Peter J. Ling, *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform and Social Change*. (Manchester University Press, 1990), 86-87.
[23] John Howard Griffin, *Black Like Me: The Definitive Griffin Estate Edition, Corrected from Original Manuscripts*. (San Antonio, TX: Wings Press, 2004), 49.

feeling that was justified by frequent incidents of white Americans committing violence against black passengers for minor or non-existent infractions. Former Executive Secretary of the Urban League Lester Granger maintained, though he never mentioned Griffin by name, that he may have tasted the emotional experience of racial discrimination but it was "impossible for any white man to black his face and go around for two months and say, 'I know what Negroes experience.'" Griffin failed to discover the full emotional impact of living in a white supremacist society because he was free to return to the safety of whiteness. As Granger noted, consciousness that the stigma arose from race, over which the individual had no control and would never cease, was an emotional strain that Griffin could never know.[24]

Every space where white and black Americans interacted resulted in an emotional burden for black Americans, part of the "double consciousness" described by W. E. B. Du Bois, "this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others."[25] Robert Moses, an African American activist who worked as a field secretary for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), talked candidly about how he adjusted his behaviour and expression when he began study at Hamilton College, New York, because he was surrounded by white undergraduates: "One of the things I had taught myself to do was repress my feelings or at least expression of my feelings whenever I felt humiliated— to hide them. I think many African Americans becoming deeply involved with white society for the first time do this."[26] Feeling a necessity to self-regulate emotional expression was not uncommon among black students in disproportionately white schools. Martin Luther King Jr. experienced a similar necessity to strictly regulate his emotions while at Boston University, and according to biographer David Lewis sought to project "seriousness, personal neatness, and punctuality," being careful not to smile at classmates in order to avoid the stereotype of the "happy-go-lucky darky."[27] As Chapter 2 discusses in more detail, white Americans' racialised emotional expectations of African Americans, often projected through stereotypes in cultural

[24] "The Reminiscences of Lester B. Granger," n.d. 1963. Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews*. 313.
[25] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 34.
[26] Robert Parris Moses and Charles E. Cobb, Jr., *Radical Equations: Math Literacy and Civil Rights*. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001), 27.
[27] David L. Lewis, *Martin Luther King: A Critical Biography*. (London: Allen Lane, 1970), 28.

works and media, were deeply affecting, and those working menial jobs had little option but to adhere to expectations.

Moses' recollections demonstrate that this type of racialised emotional self-regulation in public was by no means limited to buses, streetcars, and trains. The nature of public transportation as a confined space in transition, however, created unique problems for interracial social exchange that are examined throughout this thesis. Black and white bodies negotiated limited seats and space, the racial rules for which were fluid and frequently disputed. Segregation was not always encoded in law, even in southern states, and therefore each person aboard could have a slightly different perception of how segregation should be observed in a given situation, based on their background and past experience. The effort to observe segregation 'correctly' was further complicated on public transportation that crossed borders of cities, counties or states. Black journalist George Schuyler, investigating southern segregation for an assignment, found that discussing travel within "the South" was problematic because he found "all sorts of contrary practices within thirty or forty miles."[28] Customs and laws also changed over time – those who returned to a city after twenty years away might not recognise the way in which locals behaved on the bus or streetcar, as Michael Mizell-Nelson's history of the New Orleans streetcar demonstrates.[29] The ways in which the space of public transportation provided rich opportunity for conflict and resistance is a major theme of this thesis.

The thesis will centre on public transportation within the borders of the mainland US, encompassing forms of transport that were open to anyone – at least theoretically – and for which a fare was paid. It excludes from its focus any forms of private transportation including personal automobiles, school buses, tour buses or anything intended for a specific group of people. On the other hand airplanes, which undoubtedly count as a form of public transportation when run by commercial airlines, are discussed rarely here because once air travel became a commercial prospect it was an elite form of transport that few African Americans could afford. Those who were rich and famous enough to fly across the nation mostly found the

[28] "The Reminiscences of George S. Schuyler," n.d. 1962. Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews*. 149.
[29] Michael Jack Mizell-Nelson. "Challenging and Reinforcing White Control of Public Space: Race Relations of New Orleans Streetcars, 1861--1965," Doctoral thesis, Tulane University, 2001. https://digitallibrary.tulane.edu/islandora/object/tulane%3A24178.

seats on board unsegregated.[30] There are reports of airlines refusing to sell tickets to African Americans, seating black passengers away from white passengers, and some southern airports had segregated waiting rooms; yet flying was usually a way to escape the indignities and perils of other forms of transportation.[31] It did not typically constitute an emotional experience on a par to that of the bus, streetcar, or railroad. President John F. Kennedy's famous suggestion that African diplomats who faced racial discrimination on the road between New York and Washington D.C. should fly instead demonstrates this disparity of experience.[32]

The other major focus of this study is emotions, and the terms "emotion" and "feeling" articulate particular and separate meanings throughout. Eric Shouse summarises the distinction between affect, feeling and emotion: "Feelings are *personal* and *biographical*, emotions are *social*, and affects are *prepersonal*." A feeling is a sensation that a person checks against their life experience, and then labels accordingly as, for instance, "anger" or "fear." Emotion is the outward expression of feeling, but the display could be sincere, exaggerated, or contrived. Affect is an intense sensation without context, existing outside of a personal frame of reference with which to label it a feeling. Infants experience affects and their expressive reactions to affects are emotions, but they do not have feelings because they "have neither the biography nor the language to feel."[33] Although she uses the term "emotion" differently, Lisa Feldman Barrett, a psychologist who specialises in affect, fundamentally supports this position. She argues that beyond the "core affective system," which consists of pleasantness, unpleasantness, activation (or arousal) and deactivation, feelings such as fear, anger and sadness are conceptualised and constructed based on prior experience rather than being inherent or universal, as

---

[30] Catherine A. Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 137-42; Daniel L. Rust, *Flying across America: The Airline Passenger Experience*. (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), 176.

[31] Rust, *Flying across America: The Airline Passenger Experience*, 176-78. See also Anke Ortlepp, *Jim Crow Terminals: The Desegregation of American Airports*. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2017); "Chester I. Lewis to Andy Premeyer," February 28 1959, *Racial discrimination complaints against segregated airport facilities*. Part 24, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault. Chester Lewis was a Kansas state leader of the NAACP, and the other written complaints about airports in this file are similarly concerned with incidents involving either NAACP leaders, or wealthy and powerful African Americans such as baseball star Jackie Robinson.

[32] Renee Romano. "No Diplomatic Immunity: African Diplomats, the State Department, and Civil Rights, 1961-1964." *The Journal of American History* 87, no. 2 (2000). 559. doi: 10. 2307/2568763.

[33] Eric Shouse. "Feeling, Emotion, Affect." *M/C Journal* 8, no. 6 (December 2005). 2-4. http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php.

many scholars have previously thought.[34] Although in many works there is no conceptual distinction between emotion and feeling, wherever "emotion" is used in this thesis it refers to an outward display but may or may not also encompass feeling; one of the difficulties in studying emotion is the inability to ascertain whether subjects feel the emotions they express or discuss in sources. Where "feeling" is used it typically refers to a sensation that has been experienced and labelled by the subject. Whether the authors of first-person accounts are accurately representing their feelings is another matter. There are some instances where "emotional" is used although the intent is to refer to feeling as well as the external expression of feeling – this is because there is no acceptable adjectival equivalent for "feeling," in English. "Affect" is not used, because the scope of the thesis is firmly within the social world.

Throughout the thesis there will be reference to "Jim Crow" cars and sometimes, in quotations, "colored" cars. Both of these terms refer to the same type of segregated train carriage, which were designated for African American passengers. African Americans referred to the entire system of segregation as Jim Crow, which was originally the name of a racist blackface minstrel character and popular song from the early nineteenth century. Many viewed the separate car, or demarcated section of a bus or streetcar, for black passengers as a manifestation of that discriminatory system. White Americans more often referred to the separate spaces for black passengers by their official names: the "colored" or "negro" car or section, verbally reflecting the fiction that the system treated African Americans equally – each race in their own space.[35] The nomenclature refused to acknowledge the reality, that white passengers were able to enter and occupy black space whenever they chose, whereas black passengers could inhabit only their own, usually inferior, allotted space.[36] This arrangement also reflects how emotions functioned in public spaces during this period; African Americans were confined to a narrow set of approved emotional expressions in interracial spaces, in contrast to the relative

---

[34] Lisa Feldman Barrett. "Constructing Emotion." *Psychological Topics* 20, no. 3 (2011). 362, 63. https://doaj.org/article/c678a0f7b52f4e1a91e95df59e586577; William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 37-38.

[35] Compare, for example, the press coverage of Arthur Mitchell's 1941 case: The *New York Times* referred to the car Mitchell was forced to move to as the "Negro car," whereas the *Afro-American* refers to it as the "jim-crow car." "Court Backs Rights of Negro on Trains." *New York Times*, April 29 1941, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/106063419; "High Court Okeys Sleep on Trains." *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, April 29 1941. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=BbclAAAAIBAJ&sjid=3PQFAAAAIBAJ&pg=2831%2C1685701.

[36] Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 78.

emotional freedom of white Americans. Of course, white Americans were hardly free from needing to regulate their emotions in public. As many social scientists have argued, social interaction necessitates an emotional performance finely tuned to the expectations of any given situation.[37] However, this thesis argues that African Americans endured a disproportionate weight of expectation based on race.

The time period under discussion within the thesis, 1896 to 1964, is the window in which segregated transportation laws were considered valid by the federal government, starting with 1896's *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision and ending with the 1964 Civil Rights Act that finally put to rest the idea that private companies could legally discriminate against passengers on the basis of race. An attempt to periodise segregation naturally presents problems; segregation, *de facto* and *de jure*, by no means began in 1896, and its legacy continued long after its legal demise in 1964. The *Plessy* decision marked a watershed of federally sanctioned segregation laws and, arguably therefore, a new era of segregated life. It was, nevertheless, based on customs that reached back to the beginning of rail travel.

Black abolitionists such as Fredrick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, who had escaped north to seek refuge from slavery in the South, found that they were forbidden to ride with white passengers in first class carriages in the 1840s. Jacobs instead sat in a noisy, smoky carriage and reflected, "It made me sad to find how the north aped the customs of slavery."[38] Douglass resisted by repeatedly sitting in the first class car on trains that passed through Massachusetts and defying the "volunteers" recruited by the conductor to remove him, at one time causing "twenty-five or thirty dollars" of damage to the seats as he clung to them.[39] The refusal of Douglass and other black activists to accept such treatment, along with the support of white abolitionists, led to the breakdown of segregation on northern trains.[40] There was a short period in the 1860s and 1870s during which African Americans fought the new segregation statutes being introduced in southern states after

---

[37] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* (Harmondworth: Penguin, 1990) Sociologists have also highlighted that the workplace is a particular site of emotional regulation, and that some occupations require stronger emotional regulation than others. See Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling.* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012)
[38] Harriet Ann Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself: Electronic Edition.,* (Chapel Hill. NC: University of North Carolina, 2003), http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html. 247-48.
[39] Fredrick Douglass, *Various Incidents,* (1855; repr., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2000), http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/douglass55/douglass55.html. 400; L. Diane Barnes, *Frederick Douglass: Reformer and Statesman.* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 35-36.
[40] Douglass, *Various Incidents.* 400; Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 2.

Emancipation, with some major successes.[41] Yet, by 1877, black teacher and activist Ida B. Wells was told on her way home from work in Tennessee that the situation had changed and she would have to leave the Ladies' Car in which she usually rode and instead occupy the Smoking Car. When she refused, the conductor tried to remove her forcibly and she bit his hand. She sued the railroad and initially won $500 in damages, but the state Supreme Court reversed the decision on appeal.[42] Her case signalled the end of the radical Reconstruction era of public transport, and the start of a new struggle for black citizens to have their rights acknowledged by law.

Historians have debated the extent to which these southern segregation laws validated by *Plessy* in 1896 were the start of a distinct era of African American oppression. C. Vann Woodward argued that the system of segregation was not as ingrained as southerners supposed, but was a more recent development of the 1890s.[43] When the argument appeared in 1955 it had implications for the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement, because it suggested that segregation was not an inevitable or necessary component of southern identity.[44] Most scholars embraced and extended Woodward's thesis, until Joel Williamson's *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina* in 1965, which focussed directly on South Carolina during Reconstruction, finding that *de facto* segregation was the norm long before *Plessy*.[45] The significant difference between the methodology of Woodward and Williamson is that Williamson worked specifically on the period of Reconstruction, and bestowed equal significance on both laws and customs, unlike earlier historians who had concentrated their work on the emergence of new segregation laws in the late nineteenth century.[46] J. Mills Thornton attempted to reconcile the apparently opposing perspectives of Woodward on the one hand, and Williamson on the other, noting that confusion has arisen because "scholars have so often confused the absence of segregation ordinances with the absence of white supremacy. Segregation as a manifestation of white supremacy, outside the schools and churches, ordinarily came late to the region, and when it came, it came as a requirement of law, with the

---

[41] *Journey from Jim Crow*, 2-3.
[42] Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Alfreda Duster, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 18-19.
[43] C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 7.
[44] James C. Cobb, *The Brown Decision, Jim Crow, and Southern Identity*. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 13.
[45] Joel Williamson, *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965)
[46] Howard N. Rabinowitz, *Race, Ethnicity, and Urbanization: Selected Essays*. (Columbia, MI: University of Missouri Press, 1994), 46.

exception of the railroad trains, only to the region's towns and cities."[47] Many rural areas of the South did not introduce segregation laws for local buses and other accommodations, because they were considered necessary only in areas where white control of black lives and livelihoods was slipping, as they were in urban areas where black workers could choose their employment.[48]

Howard Rabinowitz refocused the argument in 1978, contending that African Americans accepted or even created segregated customs during Reconstruction. He explained that this was either because "provisions were expected to be equal or because even inferior provisions often represented an advance over the previous policy of exclusion."[49] Nevertheless, as Blair M. Kelley has argued, African Americans fiercely resisted the entrenchment of segregation laws at the end of the nineteenth century. Her study shows that African Americans in the South waged radical campaigns of protest against segregated streetcars and trains.[50] Kenneth W. Mack sees these types of studies as a "curative" for the previous lack of attention to black responses to segregation, and argues for a "reorientation" of scholarly attention away from "the temporal ordering of legal and social change," in the New South. In his study of Tennessee railroads he contends that both *de jure* and *de facto* segregation arose in a much more experimental and disjointed manner than previously acknowledged, as different groups asserted their own interests through legal and social frameworks. He also emphasises that class and gender concerns were bound up with efforts to establish racial systems of social interaction, as demonstrated by the evolution from gender and class segregated carriages to racially segregated carriages.[51]

Few other scholars have published work specifically on segregation within public transportation, but notably Catherine Barnes' *Journey from Jim Crow* provides an overview of how legally segregated public transportation was first established, then defeated.[52] While the work is an extensive narrative of the legal, social, political, and

---

[47] J. Mills Thornton, "Segregation and the City," in *Fog of War : The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Kevin Michael Kruse and Stephen G. N. Tuck (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 53.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Rabinowitz, *Race, Ethnicity, and Urbanization: Selected Essays*, 50.
[50] Blair L. M. Kelley, *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy V. Ferguson.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 6.
[51] Kenneth W. Mack. "Law, Society, Identity, and the Making of the Jim Crow South: Travel and Segregation on Tennessee Railroads, 1875 - 1905." *Law & Social Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1999). 383. http://www.jstor.org/stable/829102.
[52] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*.

economic shifts over the late nineteenth century until the 1960s, Barnes often equates segregation laws with segregation practices, and does not attempt to tackle how feelings and emotions motivated and affected the work of key individuals and civil rights organisations who brought down the legal system. *Journey from Jim Crow* appears to be the only existing book-length study of segregated public transportation, but there are articles and book chapters that examine certain regions, periods or forms of public transportation with implications for the wider study of segregated public transportation. John C. Inscoe's "Railroads, Race and Remembrance," part of his book *Writing the South through the Self*, for example, emphasises the emotional and psychological impact of the segregated railroad for African Americans, although many of his conclusions speak to the experience of buses and streetcars.[53] It is surprising that there is not more direct scholarly focus on public spaces of transportation; for researchers who wish to understand more fully the oppression endured by African Americans during the Jim Crow era, the segregated streetcar, bus, and train car were public spaces in which both legal and social discrimination were spatially and temporally intensified, and therefore more visible, than in other public spaces.

After debating how to define eras of segregation, and the role African American agency played in the establishment of—or resistance to—segregation customs and laws, recent literature has seen the trend of scholars instead embracing more mundane aspects of segregated life in order to better understand how segregation functioned, as well as the subjective experience of individuals. This thesis is an extension of these recent works in its concern with the everyday experience of segregation, treating law and custom as equally significant and considering how they interact. Many recent studies examine a specific region or city, such as Stephen Berrey's *The Jim Crow Routine*, focussed on Mississippi, and LaKisha Michelle Simmons' study of New Orleans in *Crescent City Girls*.[54] However, the site of analysis

---

[53] John C. Inscoe, "Railroads, Race and Remembrance: The Traumas of Train Travel in the Jim Crow South," in *Writing the South through the Self: Explorations in Southern Autobiography* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 100. Other studies include Mack, "Law, Society, Identity, and the Making of the Jim Crow South: Travel and Segregation on Tennessee Railroads, 1875 - 1905."; Margaret Burnham. "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard." *Race and Justice* 5, no. 2 (March 3, 2015 2015). doi: 10.1177/2153368715573133; Robin D. G. Kelley, "Congested Terrain: Resistance on Public Transport," in *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York. NY: Free Press, 1996).

[54] Stephen A. Berrey, *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi.* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); LaKisha Michelle Simmons, *Crescent City Girls: The Lives of Young Black Women in Segregated New Orleans*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015)

for this thesis, interstate as well as intrastate buses and trains, necessitates a broader geographical view encompassing the entire US.

The emotional turn in history has led to scholars investigating how emotions can provide new perspectives on existing areas of enquiry. Neuroscientists, psychologists and philosophers are increasingly questioning the distinction between feeling and cognition, which has enormous implications for historians who wish to better understand how certain decisions have shaped history.[55] Frank Costigliola and other diplomatic historians have begun to treat emotions and feeling as a fruitful area of study for understanding foreign and domestic policy decision-makers; Costigliola argues that "foreign policy crises are crises of emotion."[56] Colin Jones has announced an emotional turn in the History of Medicine, and co-founded the Centre for the History of Emotions with prominent historians of medicine Thomas Dixon and Elena Carrera in 2008 with support of the Wellcome Trust.[57] Susan Matt and Peter Stearns contend that emotions history "can be explored for its own sake – because emotions themselves are intriguing and important – or for what emotions reveal about broader facets of the human experience and social patterns."[58] This thesis is concerned with the latter, and rather than historicising emotions themselves, considers the role of emotions and feelings within the space of segregated transportation to better understand the ways in which African American emotional expression was tightly controlled in white spaces. African Americans necessarily repressed certain emotions: in particular anger, outrage, pride and sometimes joy, while others, such as humility, restraint, and contentment, were compulsorily expressed in order to prevent unpleasant confrontations and violence.

Historians have begun to work on individual emotions and their role in the history of segregation and white supremacy. As Melissa Harris-Perry explains in her study, the Jim Crow system was a "powerful mechanism for the production of shame." White Americans expected African Americans to express shame whenever

---

[55] In many studies the word emotion is not distinguished from feeling. For more on the debate around the relationship between emotion and cognition, see Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, 14-15.

[56] Frank Costigliola, "Reading for Meaning: Theory, Language and Metaphor," in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael J Hogan; Thomas G Paterson (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 285. In the 2016 3rd edition of the book, a whole chapter, "Reading for Emotion," had been added by Costigliola, testament to the increasing significance given to emotions in the field.

[57] Colin Jones. "The Emotional Turn in the History of Medicine and the View from Queen Mary University of London." *Social History of Medicine* Virtual Issue: Emotions, Health and Well-Being (2012). http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/sochis/emotions.html (no longer available).

[58] Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns, *Doing Emotions History*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 12.

they came into contact with them: they would have to "slump, hang their heads, avoid eye contact, avoid bumping or jostling whites in public."[59] Harris-Perry explains the significant difference between shame and guilt, specifically that shame stigmatises the individual as disgraceful or wrong, rather than the acts an individual performs. Her analysis makes clear that shame is an emotion inherently evoked in systems of racial control and other forms of bigotry.[60] Jonathan Scott Holloway began to address the feelings of humiliation stemming from segregation and racial discrimination more broadly by examining his own experiences in the 1990s and comparing them with the "My Most Humiliating Jim Crow Experience" series, printed in the *Negro Digest* between March 1944 and June 1946, many of which revolve around travel and public transportation. Holloway emphasises that the humiliation inherent in segregated society went beyond embarrassment, altering the authors' sense of reality: "It destabilized an imagined sense of a world that welcomed you, and it reaffirmed the existence of a world that did not want you in it, at least not in any way that suggested you were a first-class citizen or peer."[61] Holloway and Harris-Perry have initiated the important work of addressing the emotional strain of living in a segregated society. However, the subjects of Holloway's study were limited to renowned African American writers who contributed to the series, and the anecdotes therefore bore the marks of what Holloway acknowledged as "unconscious class character and privilege."[62] The feelings of ordinary people on buses and trains remain obscured in Holloway's examination because their humiliation was not articulated as frequently through printed media. Although shame and humiliation are at the heart of any discussion of segregated public transportation, experiences of travelling on segregated buses, trains and streetcars comprise a broader range of emotion, some of which is felt yet concealed, some of which is expressed but not felt.

Despite new directions in studying emotions, the Jim Crow era, and civil rights battles to end legal segregation, scholars have so far missed the larger picture of emotional oppression as it functions within both segregated public spaces and public protest against segregation. Marilyn Frye uses the metaphor of the birdcage to

---

[59] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 112.
[60] Ibid., 108.
[61] Jonathan Scott Holloway, *Jim Crow Wisdom: Memory and Identity in Black America since 1940*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 43.
[62] Ibid., 46.

explain why oppression of subjugated groups is sometimes difficult to perceive fully. If each wire of the cage, or form of oppression, is examined in isolation, then it is not clear how the bird is trapped. It is important to view the cage macroscopically in order to see that the lives of oppressed people are "confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not accidental or occasional and hence avoidable, but are systematically related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction."[63] This thesis shows that the extensive white governance of black emotion was another wire in the cage of Jim Crow, imperceptibly operating alongside segregation, job discrimination, disenfranchisement and other forms of oppression to prevent African American dissent and restrict mobility. However, just as segregation could, on occasion, become a facilitator of resistance, strict self-regulation of emotion was an asset to the organisation of African American demonstrations.

There are, of course, considerable limitations to using emotions as a lens through which to view history. Carol and Peter Stearns, in their book on the history of anger, acknowledge: "we are rarely fully aware of all our anger even today, in our own lives; much less can we presume completely to understand the manifestations of anger in other people, in other societies, or in the past."[64] Their assessment doubtless applies to other emotions too, whether indignation, despair or ecstasy, begging the question of how historians can claim with complete confidence to report the emotional workings of individuals under analysis, particularly when the meaning of words denoting feelings and emotion change over time.[65] One simple answer is that they cannot, and yet by ignoring the emotional background and environment of a subject, scholars remove vital context that can help to explain otherwise inexplicable words and actions, and discount an opportunity to enrich understanding of the past. This thesis therefore takes a broad approach, analysing first-person accounts from key case study groups rather than individuals, in order to reliably recover a sense of the fluctuating emotional climates under which African Americans travelled.

First-person narratives, especially memoir, have become vital sources for scholars debating the nature of trauma, a field of study that has made valuable

---

[63] Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*. (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1983), 4-5.
[64] Carol Zisowitz Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History*. edited by Peter N. Stearns. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 13.
[65] Matt and Stearns, *Doing Emotions History*, 2.

engagements with African American experience.[66] Particularly relevant to segregation is the principle posited by Cathy Caruth, Dominick LaCapra and other trauma theorists, that trauma can function either structurally or historically: historical trauma refers to a specific event that results in trauma, but structural trauma is embedded in the environment, and works continually on the individual.[67] For example, an episode that began on a bus in Georgia resulted in historical trauma for at least one African American soldier. After he witnessed a bus driver punch a black woman in the back of the head, he was arrested along with the other black soldiers on board for protesting the bus driver's behaviour and sentenced to 30 days on a chain gang: "The entire series of events was like one long nightmare. It was an experience I shall never forget and one that I did not believe could happen in this 'Great Democracy.' It shook to the very core my faith in a nation where such things could receive the sanction of so many people as they do here in the South."[68] For others it was the pervasive disrespect and disgust that characterised interactions with white passengers, and the impossibility of expressing their feelings to their antagonists, that ground them down emotionally over time. For African Americans, segregation comprised structural, historical and, potentially, intergenerational trauma.[69]

Although it is important to recognise the relevance of the body of work on trauma to the experience of African Americans enduring segregation, this thesis does not use a psychoanalytic framework. Instead, it borrows from sociology and political science to consider African American passengers on public transportation as potential agents of change, rather than solely as victims of trauma. This thesis conceptualises rejection, abuse, and violence on public transportation as potential sources of moral shocks. A moral shock, as explained by James M. Jasper, is the experience or witnessing of an incident that violates ones' sense of self, and the resulting feeling of outrage. Similar to trauma, a moral shock can be "sudden, like an accident or public announcement, or they may unfold gradually over time… most are

---

[66] See especially Joy DeGruy Leary, *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*. (Milwaukie, OR: Uptone Press, 2005)

[67] Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Dominick LaCapra. "Trauma, Absence, Loss." *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (1999). 725. doi: 10. 1086/448943.

[68] Phillip McGuire, *Taps for a Jim Crow Army: Letters from Black Soldiers in World War II*. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1983), 201-03.

[69] For more on the trauma of segregation and intergenerational trauma see Ruth Thompson-Miller. "Jim Crow's Legacy: Segregation Stress Syndrome," Doctoral thesis, Texas A&M University, 2011, 26-27. http://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969. 1/ETD-TAMU-2011-05-9215/THOMPSON-MILLER-DISSERTATION.pdf.

dramatic and attention getting, but some are modest, more like the "last straw" that finally spurs action."[70] Suffering a moral shock, Jasper argues, is the first step towards becoming involved in organised political action, though it is important to acknowledge that not everyone continues further down this path.[71] Many people endured segregation and discrimination all their lives without ever engaging with activist organisations or legal recourse to drive change, a fact that becomes apparent particularly in the oral histories taken from Pullman porters that are examined in Chapter 2.

Oral history collections form a significant proportion of the primary source material in this thesis. They provide invaluable first-person insight into events that lack written records, especially because they record the perspectives of marginalised individuals and often place emphasis on the feelings and emotions of subjects. It is difficult, for example, to locate a "moral shock" without the help of a first-person account that can pinpoint these moments of emotional significance. Often recorded years or even decades after recalled events, it is possible that, with the right interviewer, oral histories might capture a more honest account of the subjects' feelings than can be found in sources contemporaneous to the events in question, especially when subjects have long been freed from any sense of obligation to protect the reputations of employers, organisations, or individuals with which they were once involved. Historians must, however, be wary of interviewees' interpretations of events – as cognitive psychologist Ulrich Neisser points out, "recall is almost always constructive."[72] In the process of recording oral history, interview subjects are obliged to build a generalised narrative from fragmented memories and disparate incidents, and the stories they tell vary depending on multiple factors, including what is currently happening in their lives, the interviewer, and other accounts of the same events the subject has encountered.[73] Incorporating oral histories into historical analysis requires consideration and negotiation of these limitations, but there is no substitute for allowing research subjects to tell their own stories in their own words.

---

[70] James M. Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 106.
[71] Ibid. For an exploration of what factors might prevent an aggrieved individual from taking action see Kathryn Abrams. "Emotions in the Mobilization of Rights." *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* 46 (2011). http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/facpubs/1035.
[72] Ulric Neisser, "Nested Structure in Autobiographical Memory," in *Autobiographical Memory*, ed. David C. Rubin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 78.
[73] For further discussion on the challenges of interpreting oral history interviews see Katie Holmes. "Does It Matter If She Cried? Recording Emotion and the Australian Generations Oral History Project." *The Oral History Review* 44, no. 1 (2017). doi: 10. 1093/ohr/ohw109.

Like any historical source, they present their own problems. Often covering decades of an individual's life, oral histories should not be relied upon for factual information, which is why archival documents and other printed records such as newspapers are combined with oral narratives whenever possible throughout this thesis.

Memoir is also an important source for pinpointing the experience and effects of feeling and emotion in particular historical periods. Throughout this thesis special attention is given to life writing and other accounts of 'ordinary' African Americans, people who have lived their life out of the public eye but have nevertheless set their narratives in print. This thesis also avoids using memoir the way that, according to Jennifer Wallach, historians have often used life writing – mining them for "anecdotes or for quotations to illustrate a historical point." Instead, much of the value of using memoir is that it allows for a diversity of experiences that are able to contradict "reigning historiographical interpretation."[74]

Wallach also suggests that the suspicion some historians harbour for the use of subjective sources, such as memoir and oral history, stems from a belief that constructing a narrative of 'historical objectivity' is the historian's task. Subjective sources are seen as incompatible with this endeavour. However, not only is the pursuit of an objective historical truth deeply flawed, but there are persuasive arguments that even if an objective view of history could be written, it would lack meaningful perspectives that subjective sources can bring, such as an understanding of how feeling and emotion functioned as part of events. Scholars such as Sharon Monteith and Katherine L. Nasstrom argue for greater inclusion of subjective sources, such as life writing or imaginative works, in the study of the civil rights movement. Monteith contends that the addition of these sources "brings us closer to defining in more precise ways the emotions the movement engendered," and points out that the shift in civil rights historiography to "grassroots studies and to group-centred organisations like SNCC" lends itself to the subjective sources, such as oral histories, plays, visual artworks, and storytelling, that are the products of those collaborations.[75]

---

[74] Jennifer Jensen Wallach, *Closer to the Truth Than Any Fact: Memoir, Memory, and Jim Crow*. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 14.
[75] Sharon Monteith. "'I Second That Emotion': A Case for Using Imaginative Sources in Writing Civil Rights History." *Patterns of Prejudice* 49, no. 5 (2015). 443. doi: 10. 1080/0031322X. 2015. 1103439.

There is a deficiency of voices in the archives belonging to African Americans who did not become activists; the Behind the Veil oral history project is one of few endeavours to explicitly engage with a variety of ordinary people – beauticians, nurses, teamsters, postal workers, longshoremen – to understand the Jim Crow era without searching for local stories of civil rights protest and organisation.[76] As Chapter 4 particularly will demonstrate, in first-person accounts describing African American life under segregation, activists often mention emotional encounters on public transportation, either the first time they understood that they were discriminated against on the basis of race, or a specific moment in which they received a moral shock and felt humiliated or outraged by abuse either witnessed or personally experienced.[77] These moments are usually framed as formative and cited as an explanation for their later activism. In contrast, anecdotes by non-activists describe regularly being cramped at the back of the bus or streetcar, standing over empty seats, but never complaining. Blanche Davis from Birmingham, Alabama explained, "I didn't feel so happy about it but it [*sic.*] wasn't anything else I could do."[78] Similarly, Jessie Lee Chassion from Freetown, Louisiana, concluded, "But that's the way it was."[79] Ira Lee Jones growing up in Birmingham in the late 1930s and early 1940s noted that, "there were no complaints. I guess we didn't hadn't [*sic.*] really thought of it at the time about complaining."[80] Each of these non-activist interviewees describes public transportation as a space in which voicing frustration or disagreement with their treatment did not seem a possibility for them.

However, historian Robin Kelley has attempted to broaden scholarly conceptions of what the term 'protest' encompasses, drawing on political anthropologist James Scott's concept of "infrapolitics" to argue that black resistance

---

[76] In addition to a digitised oral history collection, there is also an edited volume of selected oral history interviews. William Henry Chafe, ed. *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South*, Behind the Veil Project (New York: New Press, 2001).

[77] For examples in autobiography see Inscoe, "Railroads, Race and Remembrance: The Traumas of Train Travel in the Jim Crow South."

[78] Mausiki S. Scales and Tywanna Whorley interview with Blanche Davis, *Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South*. John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University Libraries, Durham, NC. no. btvct02022 (June 28 1994).
http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/behindtheveil_btvct02022/ 6-7.

[79] Michelle Mitchell interview with Jessie Lee Chassion, *Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South*. John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University Libraries, Durham, NC. no. btvct06053 (August 2 1994).
http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/behindtheveil_btvct06053/ 21.

[80] Paul Ortiz interview with Ira Lee Jones, *Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South*. John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University Libraries, Durham, NC. no. btvct10133 (July 22 1994).
http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/behindtheveil/?keyword=btvct10133 6.

to discrimination manifested in small, everyday acts by ordinary people. Kelley explains that these acts take the form of "daily conversations, folklore, jokes, songs, and other cultural practices" that create what Scott refers to as a "hidden transcript" within the dominant culture, which makes a further argument for why imaginative sources are also key to understanding the period.[81] Kelley uses the example of African American bus passengers in Birmingham, Alabama who, tired of the bus driver's threatening and racist behaviour, would ring the bell repeatedly but not disembark when the bus stopped.[82] Ira Lee Jones, one of the three non-activist oral history interviewees quoted above, gave another example of the hidden transcript on segregated Birmingham buses. Members of the black community who looked white would sit in the front half of the bus, and the ignorance of the bus driver to their real racial identity would provide amusement for Jones and the other black passengers, who "just laughed about it."[83] In a society where white Americans tightly controlled even the smallest African American emotional expressions in white-dominated public space, transgressing the segregated boundary under the radar of white authority constituted a slight but real rebellion, part of the "unobtrusive" or even "invisible" insurrection that Scott claims underpins more perceptible political acts traditionally examined by social scientists.[84] Taking this into consideration blurs the boundaries of who is considered to have resisted segregation, and who did not, and makes clear that in any study seeking to achieve a fuller picture of encountering and resisting segregated transportation, African Americans who are not known for conventional activism must be included in the analysis.

The thesis is not arranged strictly chronologically; Chapters 1 and 2 span the entire defined period of legal segregation. Chapter 3 focuses more narrowly, on the Second World War and immediately afterward. Chapter 4 examines the post-war period up to 1961. Each chapter examines how emotions functioned in travel on segregated transportation in a different context, although the analytical themes of feeling, emotion, and resistance are evident throughout. The thesis does not, of course, seek to cover all groups and elements relevant to the topic, but offers glimpses into communities, occupations and organisations that used public

[81] Robin D. G. Kelley. ""We Are Not What We Seem": Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South." *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993). 77. doi: 10. 2307/2079698.
[82] Ibid., 76.
[83] Ortiz interview with Ira Lee Jones. July 22, 1994.
[84] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 183-84.

transportation frequently, many of whom also resisted segregation and fought to bring it to an end.

Chapter 1 surveys landmark civil rights cases that shaped the legal status of African American passengers on buses, trains and streetcars from *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlining the progression of legal conditions that contextualise the subsequent chapters. It argues that, although resistance to legal segregation in public transportation was motivated by the anger, humiliation and fear faced by African Americans, until the late 1940s feelings were entirely absent from the legal arguments of the NAACP and others who challenged segregation. It demonstrates how the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) and the Supreme Court also discounted the feelings of African Americans about segregation when deciding cases relating to racial discrimination on public transportation. The chapter examines legal documents, the black and white press and memoirs to help explain why this was so, and to investigate what caused the shift in regarding emotions as an appropriate consideration for the courtroom for cases in the post-war period.

Chapter 2 examines the emotional history of Pullman porters who worked on the luxurious Pullman cars throughout the period of legal segregation. In 1926, ten thousand porters were employed by the Pullman Company, the vast majority of whom were African Americans, making it the largest US private employer of black workers in the 1920s.[85] In light of these figures, it is clear that the work of Pullman porters constitutes a significant proportion of the total travel undertaken by African Americans during the Jim Crow era. Yet, historians have so far neglected to view the work of porters in terms of how racial oppression affected them while performing their day-to-day work; almost all of the scholarly work in this area focuses instead on the distinguished labour history of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), the porters' union led by renowned unionist and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph. This chapter therefore takes a different approach, examining a case of unexplained death in 1930 to reveal the extent of the emotional pressures felt by porters, as well as how they navigated and resisted the racialised emotional dynamics inherent in their work environment.

Scholars of black civil rights history have noted the significant upswing in resistance to segregated public transportation during the Second World War and

[85] Alan Derickson, *Dangerously Sleepy: Overworked Americans and the Cult of Manly Wakefulness*. (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 87.

immediately afterwards, but have not yet fully accounted for the degree to which African Americans in the military abandoned fear of punitive violence in favour of militant activism and freer emotional expression during these years. Chapter 3 assesses correspondence, oral histories, press reports, and memoirs to identify factors activated by the war and military service that allowed black servicemen and women to express anger and outrage when confronted with segregated transportation and racial discrimination more widely. Factors that invigorated the seemingly fearless new culture of resistance include: the elevated status of African Americans who joined the armed forces, which made them more susceptible to moral shock in response to discriminatory treatment; the new bond between African Americans from different regions catalysed by military segregation; anger at the hypocrisy of government rhetoric; increased levels of travel for African American servicemen in racially discriminatory conditions; and experiences of alternative racial customs, either abroad or within the US. The chapter also examines the connections between this period of resistance by servicemen and veterans and what historians call the "classical" phase of the Civil Right Movement, which is a period considered to begin with the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954 and to conclude with the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.[86]

The final chapter examines this "classical" phase of the struggle, but shifts the focus to how emotions were managed in order to protest segregated transportation. It evaluates three case studies: the Journey of Reconciliation in 1947, the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955-6 and the Freedom Rides of 1961. These demonstrations have received significant scholarly attention as landmarks in the destruction not only of legally segregated public transportation but also of legal segregation more generally. Two thoroughgoing studies of the Freedom Rides have been published, which also address the Journey of Reconciliation, and multiple works on the Montgomery Bus Boycott provide detailed accounts, mapping the events and actions of all parties involved.[87] Marisa Chappell, Jenny Hutchinson, and Brian Ward have highlighted the calculated public image of respectability projected

[86] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past." *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005). 1234. doi: 10. 2307/3660172.
[87] Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Derek Catsam, *Freedom's Main Line: The Journey of Reconciliation and the Freedom Rides*. (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2009); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); David J. Garrow, *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott 1955-1956*. (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1989); Stewart Burns, ed. *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

by protesters during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, establishing emotional expression as an important component of that image's construction alongside bearing, clothing, and adherence to middle-class gender norms.[88] Chapter 4 extends this emotional line of analysis by concentrating on how feeling and emotion functioned in nonviolent protest, with particular emphasis on the ways in which civil rights activist groups devised and controlled their emotional expression in nonviolent campaigns against segregated public transportation between 1947 and 1961. It also places the nonviolent movement within the context of the everyday segregated travel addressed in the previous chapters.

At its heart, this thesis makes the case that alongside constraints on their ability to obtain housing, jobs, education, and the right to vote, African Americans suffered a less obvious and less well understood restriction on their emotional expression. As a site in which black and white passengers negotiated interracial social exchange on a daily basis in confined conditions, segregated public transportation intensified feelings and concentrated emotional conflict. Therefore, buses, streetcars and trains are terrain that is particularly rich in potential for emotional analysis. The chapters that follow explore segregated transportation through the lens of emotions, helping to illuminate the full context of racial control that white Americans exerted over African Americans – and how black activists converted this form of oppression into a weapon with which to attack segregation.

[88] Marisa Chappell, Jenny Hutchinson, and Brian Ward, ""Dress Modestly, Neatly ... As If You Were Going to Church": Respectability, Class and Gender in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Early Civil Rights Movement," in *Gender in the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith (London: Routledge, 1999).

Chapter 1
"Bound for Glory:" The Emotional Experience of Jim Crow in Segregated Transportation Cases

Hey, this train is bound for glory, this train
This train is bound for glory, I said, this train
Hey, this train is bound for glory, everybody riding her must be holy
'Cause this train is a clean train, I said, this train

Hey, this train don't pull no jokers, I said, this train
This train don't pull no jokers, ah, ah, this train
Hey, this train don't pull no jokers
No tobacco chewers and no cigar smokers
'Cause this train is a clean train, I said, this train
— Sister Rosetta Tharpe, "This Train" [1]

On January 7 1945, three black women in New York boarded a Southern Railway Company train known as The *Southerner*. The sisters, Lillian Falls, Vashti Brown and Muriel Holcombe, were accompanying their mother's body to Atlanta, Georgia, where she was to be buried the next day. Until they passed through Washington D.C., the women travelled in peace next to one another in the seats they had purchased in car S. 6, a first class car. Car S. 6 was clean and comfortable, with well-regulated heating and a large bathroom as good as those found in a Pullman car. The women had access to hot and cold running water, soap and clean towels. Before they reached Charlottesville, Virginia, however, Lillian Falls was approached by three white railroad staff: the conductor, and with him the passenger agent and the hostess for the railroad. Mrs Falls was told that she and her sisters would have to move to the 'coloured' car.[2]

At first the women refused to move, arguing that they had purchased allocated seats for the duration of the journey, and were interstate passengers; state

[1] "This Train" is a gospel folk song first recorded in 1922 by the Florida Normal and Industrial Institute Quartette and later made famous by Sister Rosetta Tharpe in the 1930s and again in the 1950s. Woody Guthrie recorded a version and took the phrase "Bound for Glory" as the title of his autobiography.
[2] This account is based on the court records of the case *Brown v. Southern Railroad Company* in the NAACP archives. Chas W. Berry, "Interstate Commerce Commission, No. 29607, Vashti Brown V. Southern Railroad Company " June 18 1947, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Brown v. Southern Railway Co.* Part 15, Series A. Report. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. pp. 2-90. ProQuest History Vault.

segregation laws, therefore, could not be applied to them. The passenger agent insisted that they were currently subject to the laws of the state of Virginia, and then left with the conductor and hostess. The conductor and passenger agent returned to cancel the women's tickets, issuing new reservations for them in car S.1. Still they refused to move. It was only when the conductor threatened to wire ahead to have them removed from the train that they finally relented and reluctantly moved into the "Jim Crow" car. After all, their mother's body had to be at the funeral the following day; they could not afford the delay that being forced to leave the train would entail. During the night, one of the sisters recorded her observations of car S.1, which suggested that its conditions could not be farther from the clean, holy train imagined by Sister Rosetta Tharpe in her famous 1939 recording. According to the brief later submitted to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) in the case *Brown v. Southern Railway Company*, the headrests were dirty and the footrests broken. The car was "drafty, dusty and odorous."[3] Cockroaches scuttled around the car amongst the dirt, which was frequently but ineffectively swept by the black porter throughout the night. The sisters began to feel ill. Mrs. Brown in particular suffered due to the cold temperature of the car, and all three visited doctors once they reached Atlanta.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) took on the case. According to the defence counsel, including Thurgood Marshall, Spottswood W. Robinson III, and Robert L. Carter, "these physical illnesses were directly a result of the humiliation and embarrassment of wrongly being ejected from the seats in car S. 6 to the dirty and inferior car S.1 in which they were forced to ride."[4] In other words, the sisters' feelings at being ejected, as well having to endure the material inadequacies of the Jim Crow car, manifested as medical symptoms. The ICC, formed in 1887 to manage the conduct of the railroad industry as part of the Interstate Commerce Act, disagreed and found that there was no evidence that the Southern Railway Company was responsible for the women's illnesses. The commission did, however, find that in being moved from their assigned seats to another car, the women had suffered "undue and unreasonable prejudice and disadvantage."[5] According to the examiner Chas W. Berry, the fault lay with the

---

[3] Thurgood Marshall, Robert L. Carter, and Spottswood W. Robinson, "Brief on Behalf of Complainants," March 24 1947, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Brown v. Southern Railway Co.* Part 15, Series A. Legal document. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 19. ProQuest History Vault.
[4] Ibid., 8.
[5] Berry, "Interstate Commerce Commission, No. 29607, Vashti Brown V. Southern Railroad Company " *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Brown v. Southern Railway Co.* June 18 1947, p. 13.

ticket agent who had issued the tickets to the three women in New York, thus exposing them to the future humiliation of being ejected from their assigned seats. He ruled that, in future, the Southern Railroad Company make their segregation policies clear to passengers "at the time or before they purchase their tickets."[6]

In the late 1940s, when *Brown v. Southern Railroad Company* was heard, legal segregation was becoming an increasingly urgent and emotive civil rights issue. For nearly four decades the NAACP had made the abolition of lynching a primary objective, working tirelessly to raise awareness and to introduce federal anti-lynching legislation. However, by the time of Harry Truman's re-election in 1948, the number of lynching victims had diminished and the continued difficulties of passing a bill with any impact forced the NAACP to reassess its priorities.[7] Thanks in part to the pressure exerted by A. Philip Randolph and his Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training, Truman was preparing to desegregate the military after signing Executive Order 9981, forbidding racial discrimination in the Armed Forces.[8] Signs of progress in this area may have helped to persuade the NAACP that it was time to push for legal desegregation, rather than focussing on other issues being faced by African Americans, such as voting rights or employment discrimination. Segregation and the unjust treatment accompanying that system were more immediate and regular frustrations to most African Americans than the tactics employed to disenfranchise them. Transport, in particular, was a public arena in which African Americans were continually reminded of their second-class status through countless acts of discrimination, large and small. In 1945 Thurgood Marshall wrote to the President of *The Journal and Guide*, Mr P. B. Young: "I do not know of any more pressing problem today than the problem of the enforcement of the segregation statutes in interstate commerce."[9] The unavoidable act of traveling on buses, streetcars and trains frequently evoked feelings of anger, fear, humiliation,

---

[6] Ibid.

[7] Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909-1950*. (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1980), 201. The work of Ashraf Rushdy on the end of lynching discourse complicates the idea that lynching had ceased. Rushdy points out that the form of racially motivated killing had begun to change in the late 1930s and, while African Americans were still being killed, the absence of a mob or the use of weapons instead of hanging lead many to consider the victims murdered rather than lynched. The NAACP argued that the motive behind the killing, rather than the form, was the defining characteristic of lynching. Ashraf H. A. Rushdy, *The End of American Lynching*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 98.

[8] Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909-1950*, 199. Raymond H. Geselbracht, *Civil Rights Legacy of Harry S. Truman*. (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2014), 110.

[9] "Thurgood Marshall to P. B. Young," June 20 1945, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: transportation*. Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

embarrassment, and frustration at acts of injustice and discrimination. However, expressing feelings that challenged the behaviour of white passengers and authority figures while on board put African Americans at risk of further harm. Passengers could seek legal recourse in the courtroom but, as this chapter will show, here African American feelings were also neglected, and their validity dismissed.

Brown v. Southern Railway Company failed as an NAACP test case, never making it to the US Supreme Court, and consequently it has not been of much interest to historians examining segregation in transport. Scholars have focused instead on Supreme Court cases that had a demonstrable impact on the story of Jim Crow: *Plessy v. Fergusson* (1896), *Mitchell v. United States* (1941), *Morgan v. Virginia* (1946), *Henderson v. United States* (1950), *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), *Browder v. Gayle* (1956), and *Boynton v. Virginia* (1960). These landmark decisions will be explored here but two forgotten cases, *Brown v. Southern Railway Company* and *Mays v. Southern Railway Company* are particularly revealing. These two failed cases do not represent important milestones on the journey to desegregation, but the transcripts of the court hearings and complainant briefs help to build the picture of a significant shift in the way that the battle against Jim Crow was fought. What follows is an examination of how emotions were deliberately concealed, and then later revealed as part of the legal strategy of the NAACP and others, as well as how African American emotional complaints were initially ignored, but eventually admitted into the courtroom by judges and examiners.

The NAACP and other civil rights organisations were highly selective in their choice of plaintiffs, and sought cases with features specific to their particular legal strategy at the time. Therefore, it did not follow that the most wronged passenger was seen as the most desirable test case. Cases that had been complicated by violence or criminal charges were less desirable for the purposes of challenging state segregation laws, which is why there is relatively little violence discussed in this chapter. The events represented in these cases do not reflect the worst treatment endured by African Americans on buses and the railroad. As Chapters 2 and 3 reveal, those who disagreed with the bus driver or train conductor risked being killed for their protests; countless others were badly assaulted or maimed. In the enclosed spaces of public transport, in which racial interactions revolved around control of a limited number of seats, and a finite amount of space, feelings were concentrated and conflict resulted. Outraged passengers regularly requested that the NAACP act to

alleviate the conditions for African American travellers, particularly in the South.[10] This pressure intensified, both in the period of the Second World War and immediately after the 1946 *Morgan v. Virginia* decision declared segregation in interstate travel invalid.[11]

The feelings of NAACP members evoked by Jim Crow buses and railroad cars put the issue at the forefront of the organisation's strategy for combating racial inequality. The 1930 Margold Report, for example, which outlined recommendations for where the NAACP should spend its $100,000 donation from the American Fund for Public Service, spent a total of twelve pages discussing the legal strategy for attacking segregated carriers, and only two pages on disenfranchisement, in which Margold recommended no legal action.[12] Yet, despite the fact that legal action against segregated transport was explicitly motivated by the personal experiences of African Americans, these emotions were in many ways invisible, or deemed irrelevant, to judges and examiners. Feelings about travel on segregated public transportation were largely disregarded in legal cases until the late 1940s, which has inevitably led to a distortion of the scholarship. This chapter traces the marginalisation of African American feeling and emotion in legal disputes around segregated public transport and the circumstances that led to feelings becoming a primary line of argument for the NAACP and a key matter for judicial consideration in legal challenges by 1956.

The first section pertains to the cases preceding *Morgan v. Virginia*, the second to the *Morgan* case itself, while the third analyses the change in legal strategy following the *Morgan* case, through further examination of *Mays v. Southern Railway Company* (1947), as well as closer consideration of *Brown v. Southern Railway Company* (1947). These neglected cases merit attention for what they reveal about the significance of feelings to segregated transport test cases in the wake of the 1946 *Morgan v. Virginia* decision. A fourth section will detail the NAACP's change in approach during the early 1950s when fighting the cases that became *Brown v. Board of Education*. The 1955 complaint *Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* and its companion case

---

[10] See, for example, "Pfc Robert Davis to the Editor of Amsterdam News," n.d. 1944, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Greyhound Bus Lines*. Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault. "NAACP Discrimination Complaint Files: Transportation," January 1, 1945 - December 31, 1946.

[11] William Hastie, 1946, *William H. Hastie legal issues file, 1946-1949*. Part 18, Series B. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

[12] Nathan R. Margold, "Preliminary Report to the Joint Committee Supervising the Expenditure of the 1930 Appropriation by the American Fund for Public Service to the NAACP," 1930, *Nathan R. Margold report on Campaign for Educational Equality, and civil rights court cases*. Part 03, Series A. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 215. ProQuest History Vault.

NAACP v. St Louis-San Francisco Railway Company will be discussed in the fifth section, along with the class action lawsuit accompanying the Montgomery Bus Boycott, *Browder v. Gayle* (1956), and *Boynton v. Virginia* (1960). Each of these cases is demonstrative of the role feelings played in segregated transport cases after they had finally been admitted into the courtroom. Through an analysis of these cases, some landmark and some forgotten, this chapter marks a shift in the importance and visibility of feelings and emotion in the courtroom, from being sidelined and ignored to finally being acknowledged by Supreme Court judges and placed front and centre in the legal strategy of the NAACP.

PLESSY AND *MITCHELL*: "DISCRIMINATION INTENDED TO HUMILIATE AND DEGRADE."[13]

The start of legally-sanctioned segregation can be traced back to the 1896 case *Plessy v. Ferguson.* The plaintiff, Homer Plessy, boarded a railroad train with an intrastate ticket from New Orleans to Covington, Louisiana, on June 7 1892 with every intention of being arrested.[14] He had agreed to do so for the Comité des Citoyens, a New Orleans-based civil rights group that aimed to challenge the 1890 Louisiana Separate Car Act. This railway statute was the first of many new state segregation laws being introduced in the South in this period and the Comité des Citoyens, being primarily composed of affluent light-skinned creoles unused to the indignity of segregation, had both incentive and resources to fight the trend, despite the long odds of victory.[15] Homer Plessy was so light-skinned that he had to identify himself to the conductor as 'colored' in order to be asked to leave the first-class carriage. He declined, resulting in his arrest.[16]

The Comité des Citoyens selected Plessy for his light skin colour because it hoped to make a point about the problems of segregating railway passengers based on racial appearance. Albion Tourgée, a white lawyer involved with the organisation, had originally wanted a light-skinned female plaintiff, reasoning that it would make it easier to appeal to the judges that a lady, in particular one who could pass for white,

---

[13] Albion Tourgée brief. In Mark Emory Elliott, *Color-Blind Justice: Albion Tourgee and the Quest for Racial Equality: From the Civil War to Plessy V. Ferguson*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 290.
[14] Jules Lobel, *Success without Victory: Lost Legal Battles and the Long Road to Justice in America*. (New York University Press, 2003), 104.
[15] Ibid., 100.
[16] Elliott, *Color-Blind Justice*, 265.

should not suffer the indignity of being forcibly ejected from a railroad car.[17] This plan suggests that he was considering the adverse emotional impact of segregation laws on the individual as part of his argument, reasoning that chivalrous feelings in judges would more likely be provoked if the individual expressing pain and humiliation in court resembled their own wives or female relatives. The plan was never enacted; the Comité des Citoyens vetoed the proposal of a female plaintiff, and the son of a prominent member was chosen instead. It is not clear why the Comité rejected Tourgée's original plan, although Mark Emory Elliot suggests two plausible explanations: firstly, the group wanted to project a masculine image; secondly, they may have baulked at the prospect of subjecting a female volunteer to the danger of sexual violence that a black woman in the custody of white men was known to face.[18] The first time around, committee member Rodolphe Desdunes's son, Daniel Desdunes, boarded an interstate train and was promptly arrested, as had been agreed with the railway company.[19] The case was dropped by the state, however, in May of the same year when the Louisiana Supreme Court ruled that the Separate Car Act could not apply to interstate travel, as established in *Hall v. DeCuir* in 1877.[20] Although this seemed to be a victory for the Comité des Citoyens, it meant that the case had no bearing on local railroad travel. The committee decided to start afresh with a new plaintiff. It was at this point that Homer Plessy was called upon to provoke arrest by sitting in a designated 'white' car on a journey within Louisiana.[21]

When Plessy's case reached the US Supreme Court in 1896, Tourgée began to realise its potentially catastrophic repercussions. He wrote that year to fellow activist Louis Martinet, impressing on him that it was "of the utmost consequence that we should not have a decision against us," because the US Supreme Court had

---

[17] Ibid., 264.

[18] Ibid., 265. For more on the danger of sexual violence black women faced in this period, see Darlene Clark Hine. "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West." *Signs* 14, no. 4 (1989). http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174692; Estelle B. Freedman, "Contesting the Rape of Black Women," in *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013). For discussion of New Orleans specifically see Simmons, *Crescent City Girls: The Lives of Young Black Women in Segregated New Orleans*.

[19] Railway companies were often reluctant to enforce new state segregation laws because of the exorbitant expense involved in providing two sets of facilities. In this case, the railway company cooperated with the Comité des Citoyens in attempting to challenge the Louisiana Separate Act. Elliott, *Color-Blind Justice*, 265.

[20] *Hall V. Decuir* 95 U.S. 485 (1877).

[21] *Color-Blind Justice*, 265.

"never reversed itself on a constitutional question."[22] Instead of appealing to the court from an emotional perspective, Tourgée argued that whiteness was a form of property that had been denied Plessy "without due process of law," and therefore the statute was unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment.[23] Tourgée believed that the judges of the US Supreme Court would find a property-based argument convincing, but he also argued that the Separate Car Act violated the Thirteenth Amendment, which banned slavery and the use of "badges of servitude."[24]

His strategy failed; the Supreme Court found there to be no constitutional violation in the enforcement of the Louisiana Separate Car Act, reasoning that segregated schools across the nation were an example of separate but equal accommodations "which has been held to be a valid exercise of the legislative power even by courts of States where the political rights of the colored race have been longest and most earnestly enforced."[25] The Court considered the "underlying fallacy" in Tourgée's argument to be that segregation necessarily marked African Americans as inferior.[26] "If this be so," Justice Brown declared, "it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it."[27] This statement was the only acknowledgement of African American feelings about being segregated in the Court's decision. Justice Brown set the tone for decades of future legal challenges, "gaslighting" African Americans by denying the existence of wrongdoing and denouncing black passengers' professed feelings as groundless or irrelevant.[28] By validating Louisiana's statute of 1890, with

---

[22] Albion W. Tourgée to Louis A. Martinet, letter, 31 October 1893. In Otto H. Olsen, ed. *The Thin Disguise: Turning Point in Negro History: Plessy V. Ferguson: A Documentary Presentation, 1864-1896* (New York: Published for A.I.M.S. by Humanities Press, 1967), 78.
[23] For more about how Tourgée argued that whiteness could be construed as property, see C. I. Harris. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (Jun 1993). 1707-91. doi: 10. 2307/1341787.
[24] Elliott, *Color-Blind Justice*, 289; Charles A. Lofgren, *The Plessy Case: A Legal-Historical Interpretation*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 49.
[25] *Plessy V. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 551.
[28] Gaslighting is a term used in psychology to denote a specific type of emotional abuse, defined by Kate Abramson as "a form of emotional manipulation in which the gaslighter tries (consciously or not) to induce in someone the sense that her reactions, perceptions, memories and/or beliefs are not just mistaken, but utterly without grounds." For a full explanation of the term's origins see Kate Abramson. "Turning up the Lights on Gaslighting." *Philosophical Perspectives* 28, no. 1 (2014). doi: 10. 1111/phpe. 12046.

its stipulation of "equal but separate accommodations," the Supreme Court ushered in more than sixty years of federally sanctioned state segregation law.[29]

For more than forty of those years there were few serious legal challenges to segregated transport. James Alexander Chiles, an African American lawyer practising in Lexington, Kentucky, sued the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company for forcing him out of the first class car. Although he was an interstate passenger, in 1910 the Supreme Court ruled that carriers could enforce their own policies with regard to segregation. Justice McKenna delivered the conclusion that "regulations which are induced by the general sentiment of the community for whom they are made and upon whom they operate cannot be said to be unreasonable."[30] McKenna, just like Justice Brown before him, disregarded the feelings of African Americans towards segregation when considering the "general sentiment of the community," though the evidence that these feelings existed was pervasive; the 1900s had seen a series of streetcar boycotts in protest of segregation statutes being introduced across the South.[31]

The NAACP, founded in 1909, did not even attempt to challenge segregation *per se* until the 1940s. Attorney Nathan R. Margold, who prepared a report on how the NAACP should spend money donated by the American Fund for Public Service, recommended in 1930 that, "as in the case of segregated schools, the most effective attack would be the bringing of suits to compel railroad companies in the South to provide equal accommodations."[32] The legal team was aware that the strong emotional attachment white southerners had to segregation should not be underestimated, and that to attack the system itself could result in adverse rulings that brought even tighter restrictions.[33] Margold also suggested trying to enlist "intelligent and friendly" railroad companies to bring suits against segregation because in those cases, he wrote, "the deprivation depends, not on any right of

---

[29] Justice Brown, delivering the court's opinion, quotes the Separate Car Act, the words of which were switched around and later became the often quoted principle of "separate but equal" in relation to segregation. *Plessy V. Ferguson*, 538.
[30] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 12; G. Edward White, *Law in American History*. Vol. II, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 445; Gerald L. Smith, Karen Cotton McDaniel, and John A. Hardin. "Chiles, James Alexander," in *The Kentucky African American encyclopedia*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2015. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=MPiACgAAQBAJ&lpg; *J. Alexander Chiles, Plff. In Err., V. Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company*, 218 U.S. 71 (1910).
[31] August Meier and Elliott Rudwick. "The Boycott Movement against Jim Crow Streetcars in the South, 1900-1906." *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 4 (1969). doi: 10. 2307/1900151.
[32] Margold, "Preliminary Report," *Nathan R. Margold report on Campaign for Educational Equality, and civil rights court cases*. 1930, p. 199.
[33] Hastie, *William H. Hastie legal issues file, 1946-1949*. 1946.

colored passengers to mingle freely with white passengers, but on the extra expense imposed upon the railroad through the necessity of providing separate but equal accommodations for the two races."[34] However, companies feared a backlash from white customers at a time when the popularisation of the automobile was already reducing passenger numbers. Margold's plan makes clear that one of the most important aspects of the NAACP's legal strategy at the start of the 1930s was downplaying African Americans' feelings towards being segregated, lest they be construed as a desire to sit beside white passengers.

The NAACP took Margold's advice, focussing on equality of accommodations, at least until the mid-1940s. Still, for the NAACP and other complainants, even proving that filthy and dilapidated cars, such as the one in which the sisters Falls, Brown and Holcombe were forced to ride, were not "substantially equal" to Pullman or first class cars was surprisingly difficult. Despite vast differences in sanitation, toilet facilities and comfort of the seats between Pullman and 'colored' cars, court judges and examiners from the ICC were often only interested in whether toilets and seats existed in both. If they did, that was usually sufficient for the ICC to label them "substantially equal."[35] The ICC made two liberal judgements in favour of complainants in the first few years after its formation in 1887, but from 1909 until *Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* in 1955, the committee so frequently refused to find evidence of racial discrimination in public transport that it became known colloquially among some lawyers as the "Supreme Court of the Confederacy."[36] Complainants instead aimed to reach the US Supreme Court by a long series of appeals through local courts.

In 1941 *Mitchell v. United States* was the first transport case to achieve a favourable ruling in the US Supreme Court. In 1937 Arthur Mitchell, the only African American sitting in Congress at the time, was outraged by the treatment he encountered while travelling to Hot Springs, Arkansas from Chicago. Having worked tirelessly to push anti-lynching legislation through Congress, Mitchell was suffering from low blood pressure and was excused from his duties in Washington to relax for a fortnight, engaging in some "fishing, boating and hiking" at a spa hotel that was exclusively for members and friends of an African American fraternal order, the

---

[34] Margold, "Preliminary Report," *Nathan R. Margold report on Campaign for Educational Equality, and civil rights court cases*. 1930, p. 203-04.
[35] See for example, *J. Alexander Chiles, Plff. In Err., V. Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company*.
[36] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 14; Katie McCabe and Dovey Johnson Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law the Life of Dovey Johnson Roundtree.* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 138.

Knights of Pythian.[37] From Chicago to Memphis, Tennessee, Mitchell travelled in the comfort of his first class compartment, at which point a Pullman porter transferred him to a sleeper car and assigned him a seat, for which he was to pay ninety cents over and above the three cents per mile that he was already paying for the round trip to Hot Springs.

Albert W. Jones, the white conductor, took Mitchell's ticket from Memphis to Hot Springs as they entered Arkansas, but refused to take payment for the seat Mitchell was then occupying. Court documents report that Jones, "compelled him over his protest and finally under threat of arrest to move into the car provided for colored passengers."[38] According to Mitchell's testimony before the ICC,

> We had quite a little controversy about it, and when he said I couldn't ride there I thought it might do some good for me to tell him who I was. I said, "I am Mr. Mitchell, serving in the Congress of the United States." He said it didn't make a damn bit of difference who I was, that as long as I was a nigger I couldn't ride in that car.[39]

After debating with the black porter whether he thought the issue worth going to jail for, Mitchell reluctantly moved to the "colored carriage," situated just behind the engine. His baggage was permitted to remain in the Pullman car.[40] The conductor came to him afterwards and told Mitchell that he could claim a refund for the difference in cost, which he never did.[41] For Mitchell, the humiliating confrontation in front of other wealthy Pullman passengers, followed by a long, uncomfortable ride in a dirty car, was so infuriating that he was planning to contact his attorney before he reached Hot Springs.[42]

---

[37] "Stenographers' Minutes before the Interstate Commerce Commission, Docket 27844, Arthur W. Mitchell Vs. The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company, Chicago, Illinois," March 7 1938, *Papers: March 7, 1938*. Box 37. Folder 3. CHM: Arthur W. Mitchell Papers, p. 37; "Mitchell to Hot Springs for Rest." *Plaindealer (Kansas City, KS)*, May 7 1937, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com; Historic American Buildings Survey, "Pythian Bathhouse & Hotel, 415 Malvern Avenue, Hot Springs, Garland County, Ar," 1933. LOC: Engineering Record, Landscapes Survey. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ar0041/

[38] *Mitchell V. United States Et Al.*, 313 U.S. 80 (1941).

[39] Jones' version of the conversation is, unsurprisingly, much milder. Jones testifies that he told Mitchell: "The law doesn't make any provision for a Congressman, any more than it does anybody else." "Stenographers' Minutes before the ICC," *Papers: March 7, 1938*. March 7 1938 22-23, p. 104.

[40] Ibid., 24-25.

[41] *Mitchell V. United States Et Al.*

[42] "In the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois. Arthur W. Mitchell, Plaintiff Vs. The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company, a Corporation, and Pullman Company, a Corporation, Defendants," May 10 1937, *Papers: May 3-11, 1937*. Box 30. Folder 8. CHM: Arthur W. Mitchell Papers, p.5; Dennis S. Nordin, *The New Deal's Black Congressman: A Life of Arthur Wergs Mitchell*. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997), 252.

In the complaint filed in May of 1937, Mitchell detailed the emotional impact of being publicly ejected from the Pullman car: he became "nervous" and "excited" to such an extent that he had to seek medical treatment after suffering such "vexation, indignity and disgrace."[43] However, the argument Mitchell's lawyer Richard E. Westbrooks made in front of the ICC, and later during appeals, evaded the emotional effects and instead focussed on the physical inequality of the accommodations Mitchell had been forced to use. He described the carriage in which he was compelled to spend the remainder of his journey as "poorly ventilated, filthy, filled with stench and odors emitting from the toilet and other filth, which is indescribable."[44] Jones refuted this allegation during the hearing.[45] Jones' testimony also claimed that the number of black passengers requesting Pullman services was fewer than one passenger per year on the stretch of line in question. These statistics helped to convince the ICC that the "colored car," which was upgraded in the months after Mitchell's complaint to a modern car with air-conditioning and flushing toilets, was sufficient and fair for the demand presented at the time, and that the discrimination Mitchell complained of was not "unjust or undue" under the local laws.[46]

Mitchell appealed to the federal circuit court, funding the case himself and rejecting any offers of help from the NAACP which he considered to be a "bunch of communists."[47] He was nevertheless in sync with their strategy; in his opening statement he told the judges that he "had not made his complaint because he was interested in riding with white people, but because he was an American citizen and entitled to equal accommodations under the law."[48] He was unsuccessful with the circuit court, but when the case reached the Supreme Court, the judges found in his favour. They decided that his ejection was unreasonable discrimination under the Interstate Commerce Act, and rejected the ICC's argument that the lack of demand

---

[43] "In the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois.," *Papers: May 3-11, 1937*. May 10 1937, p. 6.
[44] Ibid., 7.
[45] "Stenographers' Minutes before the ICC," *Papers: March 7, 1938*. March 7 1938, p. 110.
[46] *Mitchell V. United States Et Al.*
[47] "Federal Court Hears Mitchell Jim Crow Case; Congressman Pleads Own Case in Effort to Upset Interstate Commerce Decision," May 1940, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Arthur Mitchell decision on transportation case*. Part 15, Series A. Press release. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault; Erik S. Gellman. "'Carthage Must Be Destroyed': Race, City Politics, and the Campaign to Integrate Chicago Transportation Work, 1929-1943." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2, no. 2 (2005). 97. doi: 10. 1215/15476715-2-2-81.
[48] "Federal Court Hears Mitchell Jim Crow Case; Congressman Pleads Own Case in Effort to Upset Interstate Commerce Decision," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Arthur Mitchell decision on transportation case*. May 1940.

for Pullman service from "colored" passengers justified Mitchell not receiving the service he paid for. Chief Justice Hughes delivered the Court's opinion, stating that, "It is the individual, we said, who is entitled to the equal protection of the laws, — not merely a group of individuals, or a body of persons according to their numbers."[49]

The case set a precedent for future civil rights cases based in contract law – Mitchell had not received the first-class service he paid for because of race discrimination, and had been vindicated in the nation's highest court. It did not, however, come close to using tort law to address the adverse psychological and emotional impact of segregation that had motivated Mitchell to bring the suit in the first place. The decision was not, contrary to what the *Pittsburgh Courier* claimed in their headline, the "Most Momentous Decision Affecting the Race since 1857."[50] In fact, only a few wealthy African American passengers would feel the effects of the decision, especially if the statistics presented in court by the carrier reflected the true number of African Americans who sought out Pullman accommodations.[51] Even those who could afford to travel by Pullman still had difficulty purchasing the tickets at offices in the South, and would sometimes have to present themselves as a black servant to collect tickets on a fictional white master's behalf.[52] Nonetheless, the 1941 decision was announced just months before the outbreak of the Second World War, and with war came changes that had a huge impact on the struggle for desegregation.

MORGAN: "THE OLD CROW IS YET FLOPPING HIS SEGREGATED WINGS"[53]

[49] *Mitchell V. United States Et Al.*
[50] "Eight Real Americans...They Rendered Most Momentous Decision Affecting the Race since 1857... U.S. Supreme Court Justices." *Pittsburgh (PA) Courier* May 3 1941, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Roy Wilkins quoted this headline in "Roy Wilkins to P.L. Prattis," May 5 1941, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Arthur Mitchell decision on transportation case*. Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[51] Mitchell's lawyer Richard E. Westbrooks pointed out that it was impossible to measure the true demand among black passengers for first-class and Pullman accommodations because, as the white conductor admitted, railroad conductors would never sell a first-class accommodations to an African American passenger. "Arthur W. Mitchell, Complainant, Vs. Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway Company, Et Al.," July 6 1938, *Papers: June 29-July 6, 1938*. Box 39. Folder 5. CHM: Arthur W. Mitchell Papers, p. 250.
[52] Judith Rollins and Odette Harper Hines, *All Is Never Said: The Narrative of Odette Harper Hines*. (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995), 120.
[53] "R.T. Nelson to the *Pittsburgh Courier*," April 11 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Greyhound Bus Lines*. Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

The war changed the tone and sped up the pace of civil rights activism; African American soldiers fighting fascism abroad brought uncomfortable facts about discrimination at home to the surface. NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White and leader of the March on Washington Movement A. Phillip Randolph threatened to protest in the capital, prompting Franklin D. Roosevelt to create the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), one of the aims of which was to help African Americans into wartime jobs.[54] The 1940s saw the greatest net migration loss of African Americans from the South in any one decade, with 1. 5 million leaving the South to take up work in the defence industry in northern, mid-western and western urban centres.[55] One of the forty thousand black defence workers in Baltimore was Irene Morgan, a woman working at a Martin bomber plant on B-26 Marauders, and also the plaintiff of a civil rights case that forever changed the legal landscape of segregated transport.[56]

Morgan boarded a Greyhound bus home on July 16 1944, from Hayes Store in Gloucester County, Virginia. Unlike Arthur Mitchell, she was neither wealthy nor highly educated and had dropped out of high school because of family financial constraints. She was not a member of the NAACP at the time.[57] She had left her husband in Baltimore to stay for a while in rural Virginia where her mother lived, to convalesce after suffering a miscarriage, and she was hoping to get back to work in Baltimore as quickly as possible.[58] This plan was interrupted when she was arrested in Saluda, Virginia.

The mobility of African Americans in the South had been severely restricted from the time of slavery. In the 1940s black tenant farmers were kept disenfranchised and immobile through debt to their white landowners, who were also known to disable the privately owned vehicles of their tenants and to convince transit companies not to sell tickets to African Americans.[59] These practices were

---

[54] Kevin M. Schultz. "The FEPC and the Legacy of the Labor-Based Civil Rights Movement of the 1940s." *Labor History* 49, no. 1 (2008). 71. doi: 10. 1080/00236560701740093.
[55] Alferdteen Harrison, *Black Exodus: The Great Migration from the American South*. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 21-22.
[56] Kenneth D. Durr, *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940-1980*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 25; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 11.
[57] *Freedom Riders*, 12.
[58] Ibid., 11.
[59] Judge Julius Waties Waring recalled that in 1940s South Carolina peonage and kidnapping of African American labourers was not uncommon. In fact, a statute still existed that made it criminal offense for a labourer to break an agricultural contract by leaving a job. "The Reminiscences of J. Waties Waring," 1957. Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews*. p. 196-97; Euan Hague. "'The Right to Enter Every Other State' – the Supreme Court and African American Mobility in the United States." *Mobilities* 5, no. 3 (2010). 341. doi: 10. 1080/17450101. 2010.494839.

unheard of in the harbour city of Baltimore, Maryland, where Morgan grew up. Baltimore had its own racial problems but the growing black population could freely vote and held increasing political influence in the city. It was not so unusual for African Americans to own their own businesses or to go to college, whereas disturbingly little had changed in the Virginia countryside where Morgan's ancestors had worked as slaves since Emancipation.[60]

It is in this context that Morgan's unusual actions on the day of her arrest in July 1944 should be considered. She found herself sitting in front of white passengers, though only three rows from the back, and the bus driver told her to move.[61] It was the type of situation that occurred frequently in interstate bus travel, but particularly in Virginia, a gateway state between the North and the South. Black passengers ordinarily acquiesced to a driver's demand that they stand rather than break the 1930 Virginia statute that forbade racially mixed seating on public transport. In fact, the driver who instructed Morgan to move commanded another black woman, Estelle Fields, to move at the same time, which she did without protest.[62] Perhaps for Morgan, used to a more subtle form of segregation back home in Baltimore, the bus driver's demand was the "last straw" that sociologist James M. Jasper described, the moral shock that "finally spurs action," after the repression and peonage she had witnessed her mother and others subjected to in Gloucester County.[63] Her actions were, by all accounts, spontaneous, but by declining to conform to an unjust law, she rejected the entire southern institution of segregation.

Of course, Morgan's feelings and motivations for breaking state law were deemed largely irrelevant to the court case. At the time, the NAACP's legal strategy was one of pragmatism and caution, having learnt from bitter experience that the Supreme Court did not want to even consider, let alone overturn, *Plessy*. Instead, the state legal committee of the Virginia NAACP decided it would need "the right defendant in the right place at the right time" to put into practice a new strategy,

---

[60] Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 11-12; Risa Lauren Goluboff, *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 64-65.

[61] There is some confusion over where precisely Morgan was sitting when she was arrested. Barnes claims it was two rows from the back, Arsenault claims three, but they do at least agree that it was the back section of the bus, not the "white section" as claimed in Conrad Lynn. "The Southern Negro Stirs." *American Socialist* 3, no. February (1956). 7.
http://site.ebrary.com/lib/uon/docDetail.action?docID=10503131.

[62] "Along the N.A.A.C.P. Battlefront," *The Crisis*. July 1946, 210.
https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=_loEAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA193&pg=PA210#v=onepage&q&f=false.

[63] Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements*, 106.

based on a court decision of sixty years earlier.[64] The Supreme Court had found in the 1877 case *Hall v. DeCuir* that state-mandated *integration* of transit was a violation of the interstate commerce clause, and the NAACP legal team thought the same logic would apply to state mandated *segregation.*[65] The NAACP legal team dismissed other cases before finding, in Irene Morgan, their ideal plaintiff. Spottswood Robinson, the NAACP legal team's transportation specialist, and Martin A. Martin and Oliver Hill of the Virginia NAACP, took on the case.[66]

Once Morgan's conviction had been upheld in the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, and the NAACP was refused a rehearing, Spottswood Robinson filed the case with the US Supreme Court. The NAACP's first segregated transit case to reach the highest court, it was granted a hearing in January of 1946. William Hastie and Thurgood Marshall of the NAACP argued that the Virginia segregation law interfered with interstate commerce and the free flow of people through the country.[67] Tellingly, although the NAACP attorneys made no argument around the adverse emotional effects of segregation, they evoked Nazi Germany in the conclusion of their brief: "Today, we are just emerging from a war in which all of the people of the United States were joined in a death struggle against the apostles of racism."[68] Alluding to the terrible abuse levelled at Jews in Germany, and the United Nations Charter that had been signed the year before, the legal team emphasised that "the national business of interstate commerce is not to be disfigured by disruptive local practices bred of racial notions alien to our national ideas, and to the solemn undertakings of the community of civilized nations as well."[69] Their comments indicate a shift in thinking brought on by the Second World War; in shocking newspaper reports citizens across the US glimpsed the brutal effects of hatred and discrimination in Germany, resulting in a moral shock that threw the racial discrimination in their own nation into sharp relief.

---

[64] Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 16.
[65] In *Hall v. DeCuir*, the Supreme Court struck down an Act of Louisiana from 1869 that forbade segregation on public transport. The Court held that the Act was a burden to interstate commerce, and therefore violated the Commerce Clause of the US Constitution. Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 45-46.
[66] Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 17.
[67] Mark V. Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 73.
[68] "Jim Crow Travel Case to Be Argued March 6-7," February 23 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*. Part 15, Series A. Press release. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 4. ProQuest History Vault.
[69] Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 19.

The court found in favour of Morgan. Justice Reed observed that "people's feelings are aroused" by Jim Crow laws on public transport, but the announced decision ostensibly had nothing to do with the negative emotional effects of segregation.[70] Justice Burton, who dissented in the case, made clear its limits as a decision based purely on the "burden" of the Virginia statute on interstate commerce:

> The opinion of the Court does not claim that the Virginia statute, regulating seating arrangements for interstate passengers in motor vehicles, violates the Fourteenth Amendment or is in conflict with a federal statute. The Court holds this statute unconstitutional for but one reason. It holds that the burden imposed by the statute upon the nation's interest in interstate commerce so greatly outweighs the contribution made by the statute to the state's interest in its public welfare as to make it unconstitutional.[71]

Burton implied in his dissenting opinion that the statute contributed to "public welfare," which suggests either a denial of the humiliation and deprecation experienced by African Americans under segregation, or else he considered the "public" to be the white majority, whose interests the state was representing. In ruling solely on the grounds of a burden on trade, the Court was able to avoid altogether the Fourteenth Amendment, which is concerned with equal protections under the law. Albion Tourgée had been right to be concerned in the days before the *Plessy* decision: once the court had decided on a constitutional question, it would take a sea change for the judges to reverse themselves.

The announcement of the *Morgan* decision was heralded in the black press as the beginning of a new era of transport. The *Baltimore Afro American* proclaimed on the 8 June, "In the future, because of the Irene Morgan case decision, colored citizens will not be relegated to the rear and most uncomfortable seats in buses trafficking to and from the South. It is expected that this ruling will also be interpreted to apply to trains as well".[72] The July 1946 issue of *The Crisis* also celebrated the ruling, but reported soberly that "test cases under the decision are likely to arise in the near future, but one would be rash to predict their outcome. The issue was comfort of travel, not race."[73] When the newspaper interviewed Irene Morgan for a whole-page spread on the decision, she was sceptical, and warned that

---

[70] Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 74.
[71] *Irene Morgan V. Commonwealth of Virginia* 328 U.S. 373 (1946).
[72] "Next: Intra-State Jim Crow." *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, June 8 1948, AFRO Archives. http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2205&dat=19460608&id=5bUlAAAAIBAJ&sjid=dvUFAAAAIBAJ&pg=3279,3423688.
[73] "Along the N.A.A.C.P. Battlefront," 211.

"the question remains whether the Greyhound Bus Company will instruct its drivers to observe the Court's ruling."[74] Her doubts proved valid; after the decision was handed down many bus companies simply instituted their own segregation policies.[75]

Refusing to obey the segregation policies on buses was still grounds for arrest; police instead arrested black passengers for "disturbing the peace." Samuel Mason Bacon was killed in a jail cell after his bus journey to Natchez, Mississippi from Akon, Ohio was interrupted on March 12, 1948. Witnesses interviewed for the FBI report suggested that Bacon was abusive and drunk, causing him to be removed from the bus at Fayette, Mississippi, where Marshall Coleman killed him in the jail cell "in self defence." Bacon's family disputed the way that witnesses characterised him and claimed that the real reason for his arrest was his refusal to stand while vacant seats existed for boarding white passengers.[76]

The *Morgan* decision applied only to interstate transport, further limiting its short-term effects. Nevertheless, there were significant long-term consequences; the case set the Journey of Reconciliation in motion in April 1947, an important precursor to the Freedom Rides of 1961, both of which are explored in greater detail in Chapter 4. The decision also left the NAACP with only one viable argument left to make, a truth that had compelled the legal action against Jim Crow law from the beginning: that segregation was an inherently unequal system, which caused African Americans emotional and psychological distress, regardless of whether they were given access to equal facilities.

MAYS AND BROWN V. SOUTHERN RAILWAY CO.: "THE INSULT AND DEGRADATION TO COLORED PEOPLE IS GONE."[77]

After *Morgan*, the NAACP legal team was left with a Supreme Court decision that was much narrower than Walter White had been suggesting in press releases.[78] While the black press generally touted the decision as the end of Jim Crow travel, the

---

[74] Richard Dier. "Mrs Morgan Hails J.C. Bus Victory," *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, June 15 1946. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=txomAAAAIBAJ&sjid=of0FAAAAIBAJ&pg=3779%2C2213768.

[75] Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 75.

[76] Mary Nguyen, "Law Enforcement Involvement in the Death of Samuel Mason Bacon," (Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic: Northeastern University School of Law, 2013) Working document. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/samuel-mason-bacon.pdf (Accessed November 21 2016); "SNYC Asks Probe of Jail Slaying." *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, 1948. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/SamuelBacon.MS_. 1948.pdf.

[77] Irene Morgan, quoted in Dier, "Mrs Morgan Hails J.C. Bus Victory," 11.

[78] Walter White, "Walter White to List Attached," June 5 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*.

NAACP began to realise that it was a long way from making desegregated transport a reality. The Fourteenth Amendment's anti-discrimination clause only applied to state action, so the NAACP could not invoke it to force the private carriers to integrate.[79] In November of that year the NAACP's legal team held a conference of legal staff and attorneys to work out a new approach, though they still had two outstanding transportation cases to argue, both against the Southern Railway Company.[80] *Mays v. Southern Railway Company* and *Brown v. Southern Railway Company* used *Morgan* as a precedent, but the ICC records show that a key feature of the NAACP's argument departed from the foundations on which Morgan's case was built, in that each foregrounded the negative emotional impact of enduring segregated travel on the individual.

The NAACP brought six cases involving railroad companies before the ICC in 1947, each on the grounds of discriminatory treatment under the Interstate Commerce Act. None of these succeeded in convincing the ICC that the plaintiffs should receive damages for emotional distress suffered as a result of being forcibly segregated.[81] In *Brown v. Southern Railway Company*, outlined at the beginning of this chapter, the sisters made it clear that they had suffered no financial loss as a result of being moved into the Jim Crow car. The NAACP legal team argued instead that the humiliation and embarrassment of the experience, compounded by the inferior physical condition of the Jim Crow car, had made the sisters ill. But the ICC examiner Charles W. Berry dismissed this notion:

> The evidence does not show that their sickness was due to any cause for which the defendant was responsible, and no attempt was made to show the actual amount of expense complainants incurred because of such illness.[82]

The ICC wanted the NAACP legal team to provide a monetary figure to reflect the medical damage suffered – they could not. Therefore, the Southern Railway Company was instructed to make their segregation policies clear to passengers prior to booking, but no damages were awarded to the sisters.[83] In fact, the ICC ventured

---

[79] Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 75; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 19.
[80] "Monthly Report of the Legal Department," November 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*, p. 3.
[81] "Legal Department Annual Report," 1947, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*, p.12.
[82] Berry, "Interstate Commerce Commission, No. 29607, Vashti Brown V. Southern Railroad Company " *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Brown v. Southern Railway Co.* June 18 1947, p. 2.
[83] Ibid., 1.

to explain what, other than segregation, could have caused the emotional distress documented and suffered by Brown, Holcombe and Falls:

> Complainants were indignant, and felt humiliated, embarrassed, and unjustly treated because they were required to move to car S-1 and were under strain caused by the death of their mother, whose body they were accompanying to Atlanta. The natural, even if unconscious, reaction would be to magnify the inconvenience they encountered in the long journey by coach and to list all the incidents and conditions which they thought might justify criticism of defendant, its agents, and employees.[84]

Berry's decision and accompanying comments makes clear the ICC's unwillingness in 1947 to recognise any connection between the condition of segregation itself and negative feelings that equated to medical harm. Berry argued that the only undue discrimination the sisters had suffered was being seated in one place, and then moved. He interpreted *Morgan* as narrowly as he could, pointing out that there had yet to be a case that invalidated segregation *per se*.[85]

Mays v. Southern Railway was also decided by closely following *Morgan*. The *Mays* case again points to a shift in the NAACP's strategy, in which the organisation began to foreground the emotional effects of segregation in its cases. The plaintiff in this case, Benjamin Mays, was the president of Morehouse College in Georgia. Mays directed the college in his mission to produce "Morehouse Men," black men who were successful lawyers, doctors, and other respected professionals, but who also gave their time and expertise back to the black community.[86] One of his students was Martin Luther King Jr. who, according to Mays, would later honour him in speeches as a "spiritual mentor."[87]

The situation Mays faced in 1944 on a Southern Railway Company train was different from the one faced by Falls, Brown and Holcombe; he was prevented from sitting at a table designated for white passengers on entering the dining car when the train was in South Carolina, but he spent the rest of his trip to New York in the Pullman seat he had booked. Nonetheless, the case bore a distinct resemblance to *Brown v. Southern*, both in the way that "embarrassment" and "mental distress" were a core part of the NAACP's argument, and in the ICC's response to the case.[88]

---

[84] Ibid., 11.
[85] Ibid., 11,13.
[86] John Herbert Roper, *The Magnificent Mays: A Biography of Benjamin Elijah Mays*. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2012), 210-17.
[87] Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 265.
[88] Thurgood Marshall and Spottswood W. Robinson, "Exceptions on Behalf of Complainant," November 22 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.*, p.23.

According to Mays' court testimony, he entered the dining room at around 7:00pm to find white passengers at the table normally reserved for African Americans. He did not come to the dining car straight away when notified that it was open for service, and the curtain that divided the black section from the rest of the dining room was drawn back, under the assumption that if black passengers did not present themselves in the first 20 minutes, there was no demand for the seats.[89] When Mays attempted to seat himself at an empty table in the middle of the dining car, the white steward E. M. Hames told him he would have to wait for the racially designated table to become free. An off-duty steward, called Harris, was sitting in the dining car too, and testified that he got out of his seat to help his colleague, by explaining to Mays why he could not be seated at that moment.[90]

Harris testified that he simply "stepped up" to help a busy colleague who was trying to deal with a tricky customer while "the waiters were standing around with money and checks on their trays."[91] Still, from Mays' perspective, the situation looked different: "Just about that time another gentleman came to the steward's rescue, rather briskly, with a determined look in his face. They pushed me."[92] As far as Mays knew at that time, the other man confronting him was a white passenger, and memories of a railroad journey he had taken nineteen years before may have been at the forefront of his mind during the confrontation:

> Almost instantly after the train left Columbia, there was a knock on the drawing room door. Three men demanded to see the "nigger" who was riding Pullman in the car ahead. When I went to the door, two of them, aiming their pistols in my face, wanted to know why I was riding Pullman and who had sold me the ticket. Before I could reply, they ordered me to get my bags and move as fast as I could to the segregated Negro coach. I obeyed. … As we moved along, many white men and boys jumped up to join the parade.[93]

Although he did not mention this past incident in his testimony, the fear Mays described feeling as he was marched through the train at gunpoint may well have influenced his view of the situation in 1944, when he was faced with two white men attempting to make him leave the dining car. According to both his autobiography

---

[89] Frank. C. Weems, "Interstate Commerce Commission, No. 29299, Benjamin E. Mays V. Southern Railway Company," October 22 1946, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.,* p. 7.
[90] Ibid., 6.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., 4.
[93] Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 94-95.

and his testimony at the time of case, he walked backwards out of the door, "fearing to turn away from them."[94]

Mays, like Falls, Brown and Holcombe, testified during the ICC hearing that he was not bringing the case because the experience had left him out of pocket; in fact, he quipped that he had probably saved money by not having a meal until the next morning.[95] Instead, Mays highlighted the negative feelings he suffered, arguing that he felt "very uncomfortable" and "embarrassed" after the confrontation in the dining car.[96] He acknowledged that he was later offered service in the dining room, but claimed that the fifteen minutes left in which to be served and eat was insufficient. In addition, he claimed he was reluctant to return to the scene of the incident.[97] Hames' witness statement differed in its timings; according to Hames, there were fifty minutes in which Mays could have dined. On the 22 May 1946, examiner Frank C. Weems decided that Hames' timings must be correct, because according to court records Mays claimed that he left the dining car around 7:30pm, and was approached by the steward to come back to the dining car at the same time of 7:30pm.[98] Mays felt that the court stenographer had misquoted his timings, pointing out "I certainly could not have stood for thirty minutes between 7:00 and 7:30pm, when they tried to get me out of the dining hall."[99]

Weems admitted that Mays did suffer unreasonable and undue disadvantage in not being permitted to sit at a designated white table, if a white passenger was allowed to sit at a designated black table. However, he added that since the 1944 case *Henderson v. Southern Railway Co.* – which would later go on to become the 1950 landmark case *Henderson v. United States* – the new rules implemented by the Southern Railway were adequate to ensure equality of treatment. Therefore no further action was required.[100] The new rules instructed dining car stewards to place a 'reserved' card at the curtained, partitioned table designated for black passengers, and not to

---

[94] Ibid., 198.
[95] Weems, "Interstate Commerce Commission," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.* October 22 1946, p. 4.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Letter from Benjamin E. Mays to Attorney Robert L. Carter, Assistant Special Counsel for the NAACP, May 8, 1947, quoted in Benjamin E. Mays, Freddie C. Colston, and Samuel DuBois Cook, *Long Journey: Dr. Benjamin E. Mays Speaks on the Struggle for Social Justice in America*. (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2011), 34.
[100] *Henderson V. United States*, 339 U.S. 816 (1950); Weems, "Interstate Commerce Commission," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.* October 22 1946, p. 10.

seat white passengers at the table for the duration of service.[101] Weems also rejected Mays' claim to damages based on mental and emotional distress, ruling that "no basis for an award of reparation for damages has been shown," and, "a finding of damages cannot be based on general allegations or statements alone."[102]

The NAACP legal team, including Thurgood Marshall, Robert L. Carter, and Spotswood W. Robinson, III, filed exceptions to the findings. They argued that the new regulations were neither sufficient nor reasonable. The exceptions contended that, contrary to Weems' decision, Mays was clearly deserving of damages:

> It cannot be successfully argued that complainant suffered no damage by virtue of the violation of his rights on the defendant's train. He was illegally and wrongfully denied the right to a meal in defendant's diner, suffered embarrassment and mental distress. These are elements of damages which are appropriate for the consideration of the Commission in determining the question of reparations and are so recognised by the vast majority of American courts.[103]

"Infliction of mental suffering" was a relatively new form of tort law when the case was decided, but in 1939 when legal scholar William L. Prosser called on the profession to recognise it as a new tort he counted more than a hundred existing decisions based on mental anguish, "in one disguise or another," most of them in the 1920s and 1930s.[104] The reluctance to recognise "mental" suffering in courts stemmed from the purported difficulties in measuring injuries regarded as "metaphysical," but Prosser contended that "mental suffering is scarcely more difficult of proof, and certainly no harder to estimate in terms of money, than the "physical" pain of a broken leg."[105]

Hotel keepers, telegraph companies, and common carriers like the Southern Railway Company belonged to a special group that had been held liable for inflicting mental distress long before anyone else. As John J. Kircher put it, they had historically been "the only game in town," leaving citizens unable to simply take their business elsewhere when left outraged or demeaned.[106] Prosser observed that railway

---

[101] Marshall and Robinson, "Exceptions on Behalf of Complainant," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.* November 22 1946, p. 23.
[102] Weems, "Interstate Commerce Commission," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.* October 22 1946, p. 10.
[103] Marshall and Robinson, "Exceptions on Behalf of Complainant," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Mays v. Southern Railway Co.* November 22 1946, p. 23.
[104] William L. Prosser. "Intentional Infliction of Mental Suffering: A New Tort." *Michigan Law Review* 37, no. 6 (1939). 874. doi: 10. 2307/1282744.
[105] Ibid., 875.
[106] John J. Kircher. "The Four Faces of Tort Law: Liability for Emotional Harm." *Marquette Law Review* 90, no. 4 (Summer 2007). 796.

companies had been held liable for passengers being insulted by employees, humiliated in arguments over fares, or being "mistaken" for black and placed in a Jim Crow car.[107] Yet, despite such a legal pattern, Weems refused to accept that being publicly denied accommodations because of a racial carrier policy produced any of the emotional suffering in Mays that he claimed – to do so would have set a precedent undermining the entire foundation of segregation.

According to Mays' autobiography, he and the NAACP fully intended to sue the Southern Railway Company for damages after the ICC handed down its final decision.[108] Correspondence between Mays and the NAACP attorneys after the decision suggests that Mays was reluctant to appeal, and the NAACP legal team did not consider the chances of victory great because they would have to argue the case in front of an Atlanta three-judge district court.[109] The NAACP had also been aware since 1946 of the *Henderson* case, which had made its way through the courts and was about to enter the US Supreme Court as *Henderson v. United States*.[110] The legal team was presumably reluctant to sink resources into Mays' case when Elmer Henderson's case looked set to achieve the desired ruling.

The NAACP decided not to pursue appeals in either the *Mays* or *Brown* cases. A report by NAACP attorney Marion Wynn Perry argued that, in *Brown*, the physical inequalities between the car in which the sisters had booked seats and the car to which they were moved were too difficult to prove. This left the legal team with only emotional harm to use in an appeal, the "humiliation of segregation" as Perry put it, an argument that the legal team had discerned "was not a major point before the Commission."[111] Perry suggested a strategy: they would have to "prove by sociological material that segregation is humiliating, a badge of servitude and an unwarranted limitation upon citizens solely because of their race."[112] She concluded that while both cases had merit in terms of eliciting sympathy, ultimately, inequality

---

http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1073&context=mulr; Prosser, "Intentional Infliction of Mental Suffering: A New Tort," 881-82.

[107] "Intentional Infliction of Mental Suffering: A New Tort," 881-82.

[108] Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 199. Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 136.

[109] Mays, Colston, and Cook, *Long Journey*, 34.

[110] "Robert L. Carter to Charles Clark, Esq.," October 6 1949, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Henderson v. U.S.* Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

[111] Miss Perry, "Memorandum to the Legal Department," June 4 1948, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Brown v. Southern Railway Co.*, p. 5.

[112] Ibid.

of accommodations could not be demonstrated in either case. She also advised that, "segregation per se should not be fought in the area of transportation."[113]

Despite the dead-end the NAACP had reached, Elmer Henderson, a lawyer and employee of the FEPC, won his case, demonstrating that the tide was finally turning against segregated transportation. After the Court found in Henderson's favour in 1950, the "infamous curtain" was banished from the dining car for good.[114] The court's opinion in the *Henderson* case took into account that the curtain in the dining car differentiated black passengers from white in a way they deemed unacceptable:

> We need not multiply instances in which these rules sanction unreasonable discriminations. The curtains, partitions and signs emphasize the artificiality of a difference in treatment which serves only to call attention to a racial classification of passengers holding identical tickets and using the same public dining facility.[115]

Justice Burton did not dwell on it for any length, but this short comment suggested that some Supreme Court justices were beginning to give credence to the idea that segregation itself was emotionally harmful to the segregated group. Moreover, that this comment was included in the decision itself suggested that the judges were starting to admit the feelings of African Americans as a valid consideration for the court.

BROWN V. BOARD: "THAT FEELING WAS NOT, AS *PLESSY* HAD HELD, A MERE CREATION OF THE BLACK PSYCHE. IT WAS REAL."[116]

Marshall, Carter and Robinson understood from the failure of the *Brown v. Southern* and *Mays v. Southern* cases that they would need to find a way to satisfactorily make tangible the emotional damage inflicted by segregation within a courtroom setting, if the institution of segregation itself, rather than its poor application, was ever to be found unconstitutional. Between these transport cases of 1946 and 1947, and the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* school segregation case, the NAACP legal team began to engage with social scientists, just as Perry had suggested. After the publication of Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal's ground-breaking study of the

---

[113] Ibid., 6.
[114] Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 199.
[115] *Henderson V. United States*, 825.
[116] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 145.

cycle of racial prejudice in 1944, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*, the late 1940s and early 1950s saw a proliferation of social science studies and papers detailing what the authors termed the "psychological" or "psychic" damage produced by segregation, in both education and transport contexts, as well as more generally.[117] Although the effects in these studies were often not described as such, the specific named effects were those that are emotional or felt, for instance: frustration, hostility, inferiority, aggression, humiliation, and persecution. They also named the emotional effects of segregation on the group who enforced segregation: guilt, superiority, confusion, fear.[118]

In 1950 Thurgood Marshall and Robert Carter approached an African American psychologist, Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, to help them prove the damaging psychological effects of segregation. The NAACP legal team decided that their best option was to attack segregation within an educational context, because in schools the "inequalities are more glaring and the injury to the community is more apparent."[119] Dr. Kenneth Clark had been working on a paper for the Mid-Century White House Conference on Children and Youth, which studied the effect of segregation on the developing personalities of children. Both Clark and his wife Dr. Mamie Clark were known for their experiments designed to establish the attitudes of children towards their racial identities through studying their attitudes towards dolls representing different races.[120] They found that black children in integrated schools in Springfield, Massachusetts were more likely than segregated black children in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, to identify with, and want to play with, the white doll rather than the black doll. In fact, when asked which doll looked like them, more children from Springfield showed distress, and some children left the testing room in tears. Dr.

---

[117] Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944); M. Deutscher and I. Chein. "The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation; a Survey of Social Science Opinion." *The Journal of psychology* 26 (1948). https://search.proquest.com/docview/1290596705; A. D. Beittel. "Some Effects of the "Separate but Equal" Doctrine of Education." *The Journal of Negro Education* 20, no. 2 (1951). doi: 10. 2307/2966459; Robert L. Carter. "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A Social Science Statement." *The Journal of Negro Education* 22, no. 1 (1953). doi: 10. 2307/2293629; James W. Prothro and Charles U. Smith. "The Psychic Cost of Segregation." *Phylon (1940-1956)* 15, no. 4 (1954). doi: 10. 2307/272851; Martin M. Grossack. "Psychological Effects of Segregation on Buses." *The Journal of Negro Education* 25, no. 1 (1956). doi: 10. 2307/2293140.

[118] In the sample of studies and articles listed in the previous footnote, these effects were some of the most frequently cited as being felt as a direct result of segregation.

[119] "William H. Hastie to Robert L. Carter," December 16 1946, *William H. Hastie legal issues file, 1946-1949*. Part 18, Series B. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

[120] Kenneth Bancroft Clark and Woody Klein, *Toward Humanity and Justice: The Writings of Kenneth B. Clark, Scholar of the 1954 Brown V. Board of Education Decision*. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 69.

Kenneth Clark interpreted these results in a way that seemed counter-intuitive, even to other psychologists. Rather than seeing the suffering prompted in the northern children as an indication that integration caused confusion and dysphoria about their racial identity, Clark insisted the segregated children in the South were the ones who were suffering the most damage, that their acceptance of their place within white supremacy was psychological defeat: "adjusting to pathology is not health; the way the northern kids were fighting it can be seen as a better sign."[121] This conclusion was controversial and the NAACP was clearly concerned about how the results could be interpreted, because it only wanted to use the data the Drs. Clark recorded in the South as part of their legal campaign.[122] Regardless of the psychological basis for Clark's argument, it preempted the idea put forward by Martin Luther King Jr. in a speech in 1957 in North Carolina, that remaining "maladjusted" was the appropriate reaction to living in a white supremacist society: "I never intend to adjust myself to the evils of segregation and the crippling effects of discrimination."[123]

Along with a separate case worked on by attorney James M. Nabrit Jr., four NAACP cases would make up *Brown v. Board of Education*, the case that overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* with the help of the Drs. Clark.[124] In *Briggs v. Elliott*, one of the four, Thurgood Marshall, directly attacked the institution of segregation in front of a packed courtroom of African American observers:

> Let there be no doubt, he told them, about what he now demanded for the children of School District 22 of Clarendon County, South Carolina, and by extension for their fellows across America: equal protection of the laws, now denied them by segregation. That was their right – their "personal and present right," he said,- under the Fourteenth Amendment, and to deny them that right was to harm them irreparably, permanently, unconstitutionally.[125]

Marshall made the argument that the NAACP legal team had been avoiding for decades: a direct challenge to segregation that forced the Supreme Court to reconsider the constitutional question. In forcing the issue, Thurgood and the legal team were taking a great risk, if a calculated one; the NAACP had always been

---

[121] Jason Sokol, *All Eyes Are Upon Us.* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachuesetts Press, 2017), 12-13.
[122] Ibid., 13.
[123] Martin Luther King, "The Role of the Church in Facing the Nation's Chief Moral Dilemma," April 25 1957, in Clayborne Carson et al., *The Papers of Martin Luther King Jr.: Symbol of the Movement, January 1957 - December 1958.* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 191.
[124] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 92.
[125] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 135. Dovey Johnson Roundtree's former law mentor, James M. Nabrit Jr., took her to the Supreme Court to see Thurgood Marshall argue the *Briggs v. Elliott* case. Description of the courtroom from "The Reminiscences of J. Waties Waring," 1957, 350.

cautious in picking its battles, and was acutely aware that making a challenge against segregation on constitutional grounds at the wrong time could result in a decision that tightened the grip of Jim Crow.[126]

Instead, the decision of the Supreme Court in 1954 found segregation in schools unconstitutional. Justice Warren delivered the opinion, justified with arguments found within social science studies:

> To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. … The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law, for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn.[127]

It is clear from the phrases and concepts used by Warren in the opinion of the court that the judges read much of the expert evidence from the social sciences in the decision-making process. The idea that the impact of segregation on the minority group is greater when enforced by law appears to have been gleaned from the 1952 report "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation."[128] Warren also referred to the "feeling of inferiority" discussed by Clark, Chein, Cook and other social scientists. Warren came to the conclusion that legally sanctioned segregation was detrimental to the "educational and mental development" of African American children and deprived them of benefits they would have if educated in an integrated school system.[129] He stated, "this finding is amply supported by modern authority," and cited five examples of studies in a footnote.[130] The evidence supplied by Clark and others is credited with having won the case for the NAACP. Carter

---

[126] "William H. Hastie to Robert L. Carter," *William H. Hastie legal issues file, 1946-1949*. December 16 1946.

[127] *Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

[128] Kenneth B. Clark, Isidor Chein, and Stuart W. Cook. "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A (September 1952) Social Science Statement in the Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka Supreme Court Case." *The American psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004). doi: 10. 1037/0003-066X.59.6.495.

[129] *Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka*.

[130] These works were: Kenneth B. Clark, Effect of Prejudice and Discrimination on Personality Development (Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1950); Helen Leland Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky, "Personality in the Making; the Fact-Finding Report of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth" (New York, N.Y., 1952); Deutscher and Chein, "The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation; a Survey of Social Science Opinion"; Isidor Chein. "What Are the Psychological Effects of Segregation under Conditions of Equal Facilities?" *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2 (1949); Robert M. MacIver, *Discrimination and National Welfare; a Series of Addresses and Discussions*, (New York: Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1949); E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949). The footnote also suggested "and see generally Myrdal, *An American Dilemma* (1944)."

later said in interview "I have never wavered in the belief that social science data supplied the essential ingredient for success in *Brown*."[131]

Whatever the later criticism of the methodology used by social scientists who informed the decision, in 1954 the evidence presented satisfactorily made tangible the negative felt effects of segregation on segregated groups for the Supreme Court judges, where previous cases had failed. What the judges chose to ignore, however, was evidence regarding psychological damage to the segregating group. The survey of social scientists carried out by Deutscher and Chein in 1948 reported that many respondents found significant damaging effects on the majority group, such as: guilt, confusion, unrealistic thinking, hatred, rebellion, despair, moral conflict, superiority and fear.[132] Dr. Kenneth Clark had also argued prior to 1954 that "race prejudice damages the children of the dominant group as well as the children of the minority group against which the prejudice is directed."[133] Yet the Supreme Court made no mention of these effects in its decision. The neglect of this significant part of the social science research consulted suggests that the justices may have been using the evidence to support rather than inform their decision. A number of legal scholars have suggested exactly this. Sanjay Mody in the *Stanford Law Review*, for example, contends that the outcome of the case would have been exactly the same without the studies cited in footnote eleven, and that it was the integrity associated with social science, not its research, that was clung to by the Supreme Court judges as justification for a controversial verdict.[134]

KEYS, *BROWDER* AND *BOYNTON*: "I HAVE NO FEARS AND REALLY NO HATE."[135]

---

131 Clark and Klein, *Toward Humanity and Justice*, 83.
132 Deutscher and Chein, "The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation; a Survey of Social Science Opinion," 277-80.
133 Clark and Klein, *Toward Humanity and Justice*, 3.
134 Sanjay Mody. "Brown Footnote Eleven in Historical Context: Social Science and the Supreme Court's Quest for Legitimacy." *Stanford Law Review* 54, no. 4 (2002). 794. doi: 10. 2307/1229579. For earlier scholars who suggest that the decision was not based on the social science cited, see William E. Doyle. "Social Science Evidence in Court Cases." *The Educational Forum* 41, no. 3 (March 1 1977). doi: 10. 1080/00131727709336250. Dean M. Hashimoto. "Science as Mythology in Constitutional Law." *Oregon Law Review* 76 (1997). http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/lsfp/676/.
135 Sarah Keys, commenting on her case in 1975. Ruth Jenkins, "Ex-Wac Recalls Historic Decision," *Dawn*. February 8 1975, 23.
http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2205&dat=19750208&id=NgwnAAAAIBAJ&sjid=OQMGAAAAIBAJ&pg=2804,1227235.

On the 9 December 1952, while Thurgood Marshall was arguing *Briggs v. Elliott*, an African American attorney named Dovey Johnson Roundtree was watching the proceedings from the court gallery with interest and what she describes in her autobiography as "awe."[136] Two months earlier, Roundtree and her law partner, Julius Winfield Robertson, had taken the case of a Women's Auxiliary Corps (WAC) Private named Sarah Keys, a case which was closely tied to the outcome of the school segregation suit. For Roundtree, winning this case was a personal mission; Keys' story closely resembled an experience Roundtree endured in wartime when a WAC officer herself. Keys told Roundtree and Robertson that she was travelling home from Fort Dix, New Jersey, to her home in Washington, North Carolina, when the driver asked her to move from her seat five rows from the front to allow a white marine to sit. Keys, proudly dressed in her army uniform, told him she preferred to stay where she was.[137] In a time before *Morgan*, the driver might have called the police to arrest her, but instead he simply prepared another bus, asked everyone on the bus except Keys to board the new bus, and slammed the door in Keys' face, leaving her stranded after midnight in the bus station.[138] She received no help from bus terminal staff, and after asking a policeman for help he told her to shut up, arrested her and physically threatened her. She asked the police to notify her family of her arrest, but later discovered they had not done so.[139] A few days later, she was found guilty of disorderly conduct in a hearing in Roanoke Rapids, where the mayor "praised the vigilance of the local police force."[140]

Roundtree prepared her argument around the Motor Carrier Act, the bus equivalent of the Interstate Commerce Act, which prohibits "undue and unreasonable prejudice" – the foundation of Arthur Mitchell's suit.[141] Roundtree's hope was that if the Supreme Court agreed with Marshall's argument in the schools cases that segregation violated the Fourteenth Amendment, it would pave the way for the Motor Carrier Act to be interpreted this way in her own case, because the Fourteenth Amendment and the Interstate Commerce Act had been tied together in

---

[136] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 135.
[137] Ibid., 125.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Jenkins, "Ex-Wac Recalls Historic Decision," 18.
[140] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 126.
[141] Throughout her account of the case, Roundtree refers to the Interstate Commerce Act, but Barnes clarifies that the *Keys* case was based on the Motor Carrier Act because it related to an incident during bus travel. The two Acts are extremely similar in purpose and wording, however, and simply cover different modes of public transport. Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 88.

Mitchell v. United States.[142] They moved to sue both carriers, Carolina Trailways and Safeway Trails, for a string of violations:

> We sued for breach of contract of interstate passage; for violation of the Interstate Commerce Act's ban on "unreasonable prejudice"; for the false arrest that had violated Sarah's right to equal treatment under the Fourteenth Amendment; and for the mental anguish she'd received as a result of her exposure to "ridicule, contempt…and grievous indignities."[143]

Roundtree and Robertson wished to highlight the negative emotional impact on Keys and therefore hoped that the case would be tried in a Washington D.C. federal district court with a jury that could be appealed to for sympathy. As legal scholar Kathryn Abrams observes, "emotion is often more salient in jury trials than in bench trials or appeals" because jurors, unlike judges, are not professionally obligated or trained to cultivate an emotional distance from cases.[144]

Roundtree and Robinson actively avoided bringing the case in North Carolina, where the incident occurred, because of the likelihood that a judge there would rule against them.[145] They were not necessarily seeking a more emotionally objective trial, so much as seeking a judicial decision based on emotions more favourable to their cause. Nevertheless, their hopes were dashed. The southern company refused the summons because it was based in North Carolina, rather than the District of Columbia, and then on February 23 1953 the northern line proved in a District Court hearing that it was not responsible for passengers on connecting lines beyond baggage.[146]

This disappointing result left Keys, Roundtree and Robertson with only one option available to them, and one that initially held out little hope: taking the case before the ICC. However, when *Brown v. Board* was decided prior to their hearing date, Roundtree and Robertson felt that the Supreme Court ruling was game changing, and made full use of the new precedent when they filed their briefs. Despite being fully aware of the ICC's almost unchecked history of pro-segregation rulings, Roundtree and Robertson were sure the verdict would be a "foregone conclusion" in their favour. The Supreme Court had made entirely clear with *Brown v. Board* the way that the tide was turning with segregation, and they felt their case was

---

[142] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 128.
[143] Ibid., 131.
[144] Abrams, "Emotions in the Mobilization of Rights," 568-69.
[145] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 130.
[146] Ibid., 137-38.

too strong for even the ICC to dismiss.[147] They were wrong. On September 30 1954, Roundtree and Robertson received an envelope containing the ICC examiner Isadore Freidson's decision and six pages justifying why Keys had not been subjected to any "unjust discrimination or undue and unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage."[148] The complaint was dismissed.

Roundtree used her connections to communicate the ruling to African American Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, who sent an indignant telegraph to the chairman of the ICC, Richard F. Mitchell, demanding Freidson's removal.[149] Mitchell agreed that the decision was surprising, admitting in a letter to him:

> I cannot understand how Mr. Freidson arrived at the conclusion he did. It seems to me completely out of line with the cases cited. However, the matter will be circulated to the full commission and [it] will vote upon same.[150]

For the second hearing, the Eisenhower administration urged the ICC to issue a "blanket order" to desegregate interstate public transportation.[151] At the same time as the *Keys* case, the NAACP legal team was filing suits against eleven southern railroad companies and two terminal facility companies on behalf of "its branches, membership, board of directors and employees," a case which came to be called *NAACP v. St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Company.*[152] Front and centre of the complaint was the "discrimination, humiliation and embarrassment" suffered by the plaintiffs.[153] The government requested that the ICC consider the *NAACP* case and *Keys* at the same time, allowing the brief for the NAACP case to apply to *Keys* as well. In this brief, signed by the Attorney General Herbert Brownell, it was argued that enforced segregation was "inherently unequal."[154]

The commission ruled on both the *Keys* and *NAACP* cases on November 7 1955, deciding that segregation implied inferiority and, as such, amounted to "unjust discrimination and undue and unreasonable prejudice and disadvantage."[155] The ICC

---

147 Ibid., 149.
148 Ibid., 147.
149 Ibid., 149.
150 "US to Urge New Rules against Travel Bias," *Jet*. 28 October 1954, 4. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=B78DAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PA3&.
151 Ibid., 3.
152 "Complaint," November 23 1953, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: NAACP v. St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Co.* Part 15, Series A. Legal document. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 1. ProQuest History Vault.
153 Ibid., 10.
154 Brief for the United States of America as Amicus Curiae, October 18, 1954, *NAACP* Docket. Quoted in Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 98.
155 McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 152.

ordered that Jim Crow seating on interstate buses, trains, and in terminal waiting rooms must stop, and carriers were given six weeks to comply. The decision received a great deal of national press attention; the *New York Times* even printed the full text of the ICC's decision.[156] Even with such a clear and specific ruling, the desegregation of interstate public transport was neither immediate nor plain sailing. The one dissenting commissioner, J. Monroe Johnson, took over the chairmanship of the commission shortly after the decision and worked against the ruling until his retirement the following year.[157]

The jurisdiction of the ICC was limited to travel affecting interstate commerce; segregation on buses, streetcars and trains at the local, intrastate level was yet to be condemned. Nonetheless, *Brown v. Board* and *Keys* provided excellent precedents for further litigation, in which segregation *per se* had been found unconstitutional and the feelings of African Americans toward being segregated were now being discussed and considered in court. *Browder v. Gayle*, filed by attorney Fred Gray of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), was the accompanying class action to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which began in December of 1955 with the arrest of Rosa Parks, and lasted for just over a year. Gray filed the suit in February 1956 when it became clear that the Alabama state court was in no hurry to hear Rosa Parks' appeal. Before *Browder v. Gayle* was heard by the three-judge District Court in May, however, Fred Gray had to lead the defence of Martin Luther King Jr., who was indicted by the Montgomery County Grand Jury in March for organising an illegal boycott against Montgomery City Lines Inc.[158]

Alabama law prohibited boycotts without "just cause or legal excuse," and so the prosecution tried to establish that the boycotters were acting under the direction of King, rather than grievances of their own against the bus company.[159] Gray and the NAACP legal team called witnesses to demonstrate that the participants in the protest had genuine reasons for suddenly remaining off the buses, having previously been regular passengers. There was abundant evidence that King was not the

---

[156] Times Special to The New York. "Text of the ICC's Decision Ordering End to the Segregation of Races on Trains," *New York Times*, November 26 1955, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/113377025.
[157] McCabe and Roundtree, *Justice Older Than the Law*, 154. "J. Monroe Johnson Dead at 86." *New York Times*, July 3 1964, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/115585773/2504175627A74600PQ/1.
[158] For a full timeline of events, see Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 39-51.
[159] Anti-boycott statute. Title 14, Section 54 of the Code of Alabama. Quoted in Robert J. Walker, *Let My People Go!: The Miracle of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2007), 247.

originator of bad feeling towards city buses. Thelma Glass, of the Montgomery Women's Political Council, gave evidence on meetings between the organisation and city officials in 1953 at which they had cited six specific areas of concern:

> Negroes had to stand over empty seats when no whites were riding; requesting them not to occupy those seats when they were unoccupied; Negroes pay fares at the front door, get off and go to the rear door to board the bus; when fares are paid at the front passengers should get on at the front; there is a danger of a passenger being struck without the driver knowing it; and there have been instances where persons have paid their fares and the bus has driven off and left them standing; buses stop in sections occupied by white at every corner, but in sections occupied by Negroes they stop at every other block; since all pay the same fare the busses should stop at every corner in all communities.[160]

Glass's testimony revealed that segregation itself was one injustice out of many that African Americans were required to suffer when traveling in Montgomery. Some of the issues stemmed from the method of implementing segregation in the city, the separate entrances for white and black passengers for example, but the underlying problem in this account was not the negative feeling resulting from segregation *per se,* so much as the way that segregation provided opportunity for white bus drivers and passengers to subject African Americans to discriminatory treatment. Attempts to complain about the service to the driver often resulted in verbal or physical abuse, or arrest for "disorderly conduct."[161]

The MIA originally initiated the boycott to press for better treatment of black passengers within the bounds of state and city segregation codes, but changed their goal to desegregation under the insistence of the NAACP's National Legal Staff, who had agreed to handle the cases resulting from the boycott.[162] In the wake of *Brown v. Board*, the NAACP was fighting for nothing less than full desegregation and would not become involved in "an Alabama case asking merely for more polite segregation."[163] Emotional responses to segregation and other forms of mistreatment, far from being dismissed as irrelevant as in earlier cases, were imperative in the hearing for King's indictment. The NAACP defence council asked questions such as "What do you mean by the fact he was nasty to you?" and "Have

---

[160] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 60-61.
[161] For example, Jo Ann Robinson recalls an incident in 1940s Montgomery in which a Mrs. Geneva Johnson was arrested for disorderly conduct for "talking back" to a driver when he "upbraided her" for not having the correct change for her fare. Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 20-21.
[162] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 110; "Roy Wilkins to Dr. Martin Luther King," April 12 1956, *Montgomery Bus Boycott, Alabama*. Part 20. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[163] Roy Wilkins to W.C. Patton, December 27 1955. In *Daybreak of Freedom*, 110.

you heard the drivers call the Negroes any names?"[164] Despite the evidence presented, which outlined systematic abuse of black passengers at the hands of white drivers stretching back for years, King was found guilty and fined.[165]

Meanwhile, law and custom gradually shifted in other parts of the South. Sarah Mae Flemming, a black domestic of Eastover, South Carolina, brought a case supported by the South Carolina NAACP against the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company after a bus driver objected to her sitting in front of white passengers. Instead of relocating to the back of the bus, she tried to get off the bus at the next stop, using the front door. The driver elbowed her in the stomach and told her to use the rear door.[166] Her first suit challenging the state's segregation law was dismissed, but on appeal to the Fourth Circuit court she won, two of three judges agreeing that *Plessy v. Ferguson* was no longer the controlling precedent, but *Brown v. Board*. The South Carolina Electric and Gas Company appealed and the Supreme Court, though apparently ready to uphold the Fourth Circuit's decision, decided it could not rule on the case at that time because the case had not yet gone to trial and received a final decision in the lower courts.[167] However, the Court's four word decision, "The appeal is dismissed," issued in April 1956, was interpreted widely as a confirmation that segregation statutes had been declared unconstitutional, prompting thirteen southern bus companies in Virginia, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas to order desegregation of their buses. Once the mistake was understood the bus companies did not reverse their actions, and interested parties looked to the Montgomery case to finally settle the question.[168]

When *Browder v. Gayle* was tried in the District Court in May of 1956, the city again dismissed African American feelings, and sought to portray the boycott as the work of one charismatic man, rather than the outcome of countless humiliations and frustrations stemming from the experiences of African Americans. It was frequently women who participated as plaintiffs, in part because black women constituted a significant proportion of bus users, but also because African Americans in

---

[164] Ibid., 63.
[165] Martin Luther King, Jr., and Clayborne Carson, *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.: Birth of a New Age, December 1955 - December 1956*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), 185.
[166] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 117; John Hammond Moore, *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community, 1740-1990*. (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 421.
[167] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 118.
[168] Ibid., 118-19; James Marlow. "Bus Segregation Ruling Causes Some Confusion," *Kentucky New Era*, April 26 1956. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=0e4rAAAAIBAJ&sjid=d2cFAAAAIBAJ&pg=2807%2C1964327.

Montgomery knew that black women were less vulnerable to retaliatory violence and economic punishment than black men.[169] Claudette Colvin, one of the named plaintiffs, was fifteen years old when she was arrested in Montgomery for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus on March 2 1955. Gray, working with Robert L. Carter and local attorney Charles B. Langford, saved her testimony until last for impact; her arrest was a clear stand against segregation long before the boycott began and King was appointed leader of the MIA.[170] As the city attorney Walter Knabe attempted to trap Colvin into admitting that King was behind it all, she remained fixed on conveying the inequality of treatment and negative emotions that stemmed from segregation on the city buses. She told him plainly that the boycott arose from a broad recognition in the Montgomery black community that they were treated with contempt and violence whenever they boarded a bus:

> It was in the beginning when they arrested me, when they seen how dirty they treated the Negro girls here, that they had begun to feel like that…although some of us just didn't have the guts to stand up.[171]

Colvin's testimony, along with that of the other plaintiffs, made plain the "discourtesy, inconvenience and humiliation" that the segregated system perpetrated on paying passengers using public transportation in Montgomery. [172] The decision on June 5 held the state and city laws unconstitutional. It took until December for the Supreme Court to affirm the decision, reject the city's appeals and issue the desegregation order, but on December 20 the black citizens of Montgomery boarded the buses again.[173]

Both interstate and intrastate segregation had been found unconstitutional, but that did not immediately end its practice. The patterns of desegregation were hugely inconsistent across carriers in the late 1950s, and in deep southern states police conducted spot-checks to enforce segregated seating on buses.[174] The last remaining frontier of legal segregation in public transportation was terminal restaurants, which were not covered by the Interstate Commerce and Motor Carrier Acts and therefore excluded from the ICC's decision. On December 20 1958 Bruce Boynton was arrested for refusing to leave the designated white area of a terminal

---

169 Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 37.
170 Phillip M. Hoose, *Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice.* (New York: Melanie Kroupa Books, 2009), 87.
171 Ibid.
172 "Prepare for Final Court Ruling in Montgomery Jim Crow Bus Case," June 7 1956, *Montgomery Bus Boycott, Alabama.* Part 20. Press release. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
173 Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 49.
174 Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 130.

restaurant in Richmond, Virginia. The grounds for his arrest did not rely on any state segregation law but a Virginia trespass statute. He was found guilty at trial and fined $10, but the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund had become interested in the case, which it asked the Supreme Court to review.[175]

The NAACP asked the Court to consider two constitutional issues with relation to *Boynton*. Firstly, it cited the interstate commerce clause, which gave the federal government power to prohibit state statutes that burdened interstate commerce and had been the grounds on which *Morgan* was decided. Secondly, it cited the Fourteenth Amendment, which forbade discrimination against any individual through state action. The Fourteenth Amendment argument introduced the thorny question of whether companies should be able to call upon the state's police services to enforce a private segregation policy.[176] Notably absent from the NAACP's petition for certiorari was any mention of the Interstate Commerce and Motor Carrier Acts, which forbade subjecting any individual to "undue or unreasonable prejudice or disadvantage," and had been the grounds on which *Mitchell*, *Henderson* and *Keys* had been decided. The Justice Department, as with the *Keys* case, filed an amicus brief, also citing the two constitutional questions and arguing that black passengers should be "free to travel the length and breadth of this country without hindrance or humiliation, and to receive precisely the same service, no more or no less, as any other passenger."[177]

The Court, as always, preferred to settle the matter on statutory rather than constitutional grounds, and managed to bring in the missing Interstate Commerce Acts in order to make its ruling.[178] Justice Hugo Black delivered the decision reversing Boynton's conviction, reasoning that,

> Interstate passengers have to eat, and the very terms of the lease of the built-in restaurant space in this terminal constitute a recognition of the essential need of interstate passengers to be able to get food conveniently on their journey and an undertaking by the restaurant to fulfill that need. Such passengers in transit on a paid interstate Trailways journey had a right to expect that this essential transportation food service voluntarily provided for them under such circumstances would be rendered without discrimination prohibited by the Interstate Commerce Act.[179]

---

[175] Ibid., 144; Louis H. Pollak. "The Supreme Court and the States: Reflections on Boynton V. Virginia." *California Law Review* 49, no. 1 (1961). 18. doi: 10. 2307/3478655.
[176] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 145; Pollak, "The Supreme Court and the States: Reflections on Boynton V. Virginia," 20.
[177] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 147.
[178] Pollak, "The Supreme Court and the States: Reflections on Boynton V. Virginia," 30.
[179] *Bruce Boynton, Petitioner V. Commonwealth of Virginia*, 364 U.S. 454 (1960).

Feelings were not a large part of the defence, or the decision-making in this case. No doubt this was in part because the case appealed a criminal conviction, rather than a civil action that would require the proof of the plaintiff's suffering, but it was also because segregation had finally, in legal terms, become discrimination *per se*. There was no need for the NAACP to argue that being segregated was "a badge of inferiority," as the Supreme Court had denied in *Plessy v. Ferguson* sixty-four years previously, because the feelings of African Americans on the matter were now accepted, and deemed relevant, to the legal process.

* * * *

The transformation in how courtrooms dealt with African American feelings, or chose not to, is a complex one. This chapter has only examined transportation cases, and one education case; a wider survey of segregation test cases would provide a broader picture. However, tracing emotions through the test cases considered here has pinpointed some influential factors. The seismic shifts resulting from the Second World War inevitably had an impact on the US public's awareness and attitude towards racist and discriminatory practices, including segregation. Thurgood Marshall and William Hastie's allusion to the nation's "death struggle with the apostles of racism" as part of their brief for *Morgan* is indicative that they were aware of a new philosophical era dawning, one which more strongly embraced equality for all Americans and attempted to dispassionately assess the flaws in the US system that perpetuated injustices on non-white citizens.[180] As well as studies by Gunnar Myrdal and the Clarks, the war impacted on sociology and psychology more widely. Psychologists, some of whom had come to the US fleeing Nazi Germany, attempted to understand what had persuaded individual Germans to acquiesce to and carry out the brutal extermination of Jews and other social groups, and published their findings.[181] The comparison between the political landscapes of Nazism and American white supremacy in the latest literature and opinion pieces made a pro-segregationist stance increasingly untenable for liberal white Americans. The start of the Cold War at the end of the 1940s also put the United States under global scrutiny

[180] "Jim Crow Travel Case to Be Argued March 6-7," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Morgan v. Commonwealth of Virginia*. February 23 1946, p. 4.
[181] Rob McIlveen, "Historical Perspective," in *Social Psychology*, ed. Richard D. Gross (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998), 7.

for its rhetoric of freedom and democracy, providing another incentive to publicly reject institutionalised racism.[182]

The Truman administration, which entered the Oval Office in the dying days of the war in 1945, demonstrated a commitment to civil rights through the issue of the Executive Order to abolish discrimination in the Armed Forces in 1948. Truman also named four appointees to the Supreme Court during his time in office, including Chief Justice Fred Vinson, and worked with the Justice Department to pursue "an aggressive amicus brief strategy" to signal clearly to the Court that he wished them to make speedy and radical decisions in favour of expanding civil rights law. This unprecedented strategy was later effectively employed by the Justice Department under Eisenhower to encourage the ICC to act decisively in the 1955 *Keys* and *NAACP* cases. The administration's careful Supreme Court appointments and publicly declared determination to address racial inequality set the tone for the *Brown v. Board* decision, made one year after Truman left the White House.[183]

The moment that Chief Justice Earl Warren recognised and reiterated the social science evidence submitted in *Brown v. Board* marked an important shift in the acceptance of African American feelings into the courtroom. The NAACP, working with Dr. Kenneth Clark, provided a scientific justification for an opinion that the Supreme Court judges had repeatedly hinted at in previous cases, but were previously unable to fully express. In *Morgan*, their decision hinged on maintaining free interstate commerce but, as legal scholars have argued, the circumstances suggest that a desire to invalidate the Jim Crow statute was the real motivation for the decision.[184] The *Henderson* case saw Justice Burton, who had dissented in *Morgan*, rule that the curtain or barrier segregating black passengers was discriminatory. The decision clearly took

---

[182] Carol A. Horton, *Race and the Making of American Liberalism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 124.

[183] Michael R. Gardner, *Harry Truman and Civil Rights: Moral Courage and Political Risks*. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 165-74. There is debate among scholars around Truman's motivations for taking such an overt civil rights stance, and while Gardner argues Truman was motivated by an innate sense of morality, others see his "crusade" as more complex and politically minded. See, for example, Steven R. Goldzwig, review of *Harry Truman and Civil Rights: Moral Courage and Political Risks* by Michael R. Gardner, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 3 (2003). doi: 10. 1353/rap. 2003.0062.

[184] Conference notes, William O. Douglas Papers, Library of Congress, Box 122, File: Argued Cases, No. 704, Morgan v. Virginia; Conference notes, March 29, 1946, Wiley Rutledge Papers, Library of Congress, Box 140, File: October Term, 1945, Case memos, 701-750. Quoted in Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 74. For scholars who argued that the commerce clause was a mask for a civil rights-based decision, see Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 48; Cynthia D. Zimmerman. "Constitutional Validity of State "Jim Crow" Laws under the Commerce Clause." *Virginia Law Review* 32, no. 3 (1946). 675. doi: 10. 2307/1068356.

into account the professed feelings of the segregated group. The NAACP's psychological evidence did not persuade the Supreme Court justices to overturn *Plessy* when ruling on *Brown v. Board* – the majority had already made up their minds that enforced racial segregation was morally indefensible – but it provided a credible, precise language through which they could introduce the emotional perspective of African Americans into the courtroom, without themselves appearing emotional or partisan.[185]

It was still expected that judges maintain a dispassionate view in their rulings, but there was nonetheless a trend towards feelings entering the courtroom for consideration at the time that *Brown* was decided. A new tort law of intentional infliction of emotional distress was established, impelled by legal scholars Calvert McGruder and William Prosser in 1936 and 1938 respectively, and published as a supplement to the Restatement of Torts in 1948.[186] Although common carriers had been subject to this tort long before its official inclusion in the Restatement, it follows that the increasing credibility of emotional distress suits after 1948 made it more difficult for judges to ignore African American claims that segregation caused emotional harm.

Finally, this chapter has traced the tenacious and bold efforts of African Americans, both as litigants and as legal counsel, to object to the discrimination of Jim Crow transportation and to continually remind lawmakers and politicians that African Americans were not, as many white Americans liked to believe, content with "separate but equal" facilities. The Great Migration supported an increase in the political power of African Americans, who could vote in the North and earn a sufficient income to donate to civil rights organisations. The nonviolent protest movements of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s also helped to keep the pressure on politicians and other decision-makers – and will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 4.

The next chapter investigates the African American men who spent their working lives on the segregated railroad. The Pullman Company was once the largest private employer of black Americans, and the role of the black porter spanned the

---

[185] G. Edward White, "The Crucible of Brown V. Board of Education," in *Earl Warren, a Public Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 162-63.
[186] Calvert Magruder. "Mental and Emotional Disturbance in the Law of Torts." *Harvard Law Review* 49, no. 7 (1936). doi: 10. 2307/1333061; Prosser, "Intentional Infliction of Mental Suffering: A New Tort."; Kircher, "The Four Faces of Tort Law: Liability for Emotional Harm," 979.

entirety of the Jim Crow era.[187] Therefore, Pullman porters' experiences, as found in archival and oral records, are a rich dataset from which to study how racialised emotional control functioned within public transportation, and the connections between the unique spaces of racial negotiation on public transportation and the types of civil rights resistance that emerged in the mid twentieth century.

[187] Larry Tye, *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class*. (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), 28.

Chapter 2
The Slave, the Diplomat and the Union Man: Pullman Porters and Emotional Labour on the Railroad

Jog-a-long, boys, jog-a-long, boys,
Be careful when you smile,
Do the latest style,
But jog-a-long, jog-a-long boys.
Jog-a-long, boys, jog-a-long, boys,
Don't fool with goo-goo eyes,
That would not be wise,
But jog-a-long, jog-a-long boys.
— Pullman Porters Quartette, "Jog-a-Long Boys," 1927[1]

John Henry Wilkins, an African American porter for the Pullman Company, was killed during the early morning of the 6 April 1930 while working on the Kansas City Special from Jacksonville, Florida.[2] A group of young local boys, three black and one white, found his body tied to a tree near Locust Grove, Georgia.[3] A brief description of these circumstances evokes the infamous form of lynching in which the victim is hung from a tree or telegraph pole, often mutilated, and left on display. This scene was different. Wilkins' body was tied only loosely by his neck to the trunk of a sapling, using the sleeves of his white Pullman jacket. His body was discovered in a kneeling position, knees resting on the ground. While the reason Wilkins was bound to the tree remains uncertain, it is clear that the act was not intended to kill him.

Wilkins' death was attributed to his multiple injuries, including depressions in his skull and a wound under one arm.[4] If the situation in which the body was found was not puzzling enough, he was discovered 17 miles from the train's nearest

[1] From Pullman Porters Quartette, "Jog-a-Long Boys," on *Black Secular Vocal Groups Vol. 1: The Twenties (1923 - 1919),* Document Records, 1997, MP3, originally released in 1927.
[2] "Statement of J. P. Crawford, Pullman Conductor, Southern Train No. 8, Jacksonville to Atlanta, Leaving Jacksonville," April 4 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Operating Department, Series 3, Subject Files, 1930-1966. Newberry library: Pullman Company Papers.
[3] "Mr. H. F. Price, White, Locust Grove, Georgia, Says," April 8 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Statement, p. 3; "Pullman Porter Is Slain, Tied to Tree," April 7 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Newspaper clipping.
[4] "L. A. Young to F. B. Kemp," April 8 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum, p. 2.

scheduled stop.[5] The sequence of events that led to Wilkins' death has never been wholly established. The coroner's inquest concluded that Wilkins, "came to his death as a result of causes unknown," and no one was prosecuted in connection with the incident.[6] The Pullman Company decided to launch its own investigation, which certainly operated under motives other than seeking justice for Wilkins. Yet, the case file reflects an intensive and meticulous effort to piece together all possible details of the matter, if only to protect the company from accusations of wrongdoing or neglect by establishing whether such accusations might have foundation. Outside of the possibility that the records of the investigation were extensively fabricated, the company's case file constitutes the best available information on how Wilkins died. The inquiry revealed various conflicting accounts of Wilkins' character, and multiple versions of the timeline leading up to and following the time of death.[7] Studies of Pullman porters and their union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), often mention the Wilkins case in passing, stating as fact the theory that he was lynched.[8] Yet scrutiny of the Pullman Company file, over 300-pages long and erroneously entitled *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*, reveals that there are other valid theories.[9] This chapter departs from the focus and methodology of previous labour studies in conducting a detailed examination of the porter's work environment, using the Wilkins file as a case study, as well as contextual accounts from oral history projects and archival sources, to explore the emotional dynamics, challenges, and risks of this work.[10]

---

[5] "Pullman Porter Strangely Slain." New York Times, April 6 1930, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/98990024/3DD382766E7C4F1DPQ/2. "F. B. Kemp to B. H. Vroman," April 5 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.

[6] "Deep Mystery in Porter Killing," April 25 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Newspaper clipping; "[G.A. Kelly] to John H. Lathrop," September 19 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Letter.

[7] The case folder contains numerous witness statements and testimony from passengers and crew, the facts of which frequently contradict each other. See P. W. Harvey, "Statement," April 5 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*; R. Smith, "Statement," May 25 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*.

[8] For example, see Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 53; Brailsford Reese Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Its Origin and Development*. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946), 56.

[9] There is no suggestion in the file that ill health had anything to do with Wilkins' death. The title of the file is presumably to camouflage the scandalous qualities of a potential murder case.

[10] Prominent labour studies works on Pullman porters include: Brailsford Reese Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Its Origin and Development.* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946); William Hamilton Harris, *Keeping the Faith: A. Philip Randolph, Milton P. Webster, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1925-37*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1977); Melinda Chateauvert, *Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Beth Tompkins Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Susan E. Hirsch, *After the Strike: A Century of Labor Struggle at Pullman.* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

Although the Pullman Company's investigating agents never came to an official conclusion about how exactly Wilkins met his death, an examination of their inquiry exposes the unique racial difficulties and vulnerabilities inherent in the work of porters who spent their lives travelling the railroad. Navigating changing segregation laws and customs across the nation, battling economic discrimination, and satisfying the racialised emotional expectations of passengers and crew, are but a few of the stresses that Wilkins' story highlights, and which this chapter explores. Attention to emotions in this context alters our understanding of the porters' work and of the emotional experience of public transportation in the Jim Crow era more broadly, as it becomes clear that the labour porters performed was as emotional as it was physical, and that these demands were based on assumptions about them as black men as well as porters. As a space both confined and mobile, the railroad car was a distinctively hazardous site of racial interaction and negotiation, conditions the 1920s black vocal group known as the Pullman Porters Quartette acknowledged in singing the advice, "be careful when you smile" to their fellow porters. Their warning becomes more relevant and poignant in the context of Wilkins' case, which highlights both the white control exercised over black emotions that was a quotidian part of the porters' work, and the physical danger of racist violence that was intertwined with that emotional control, which porters justifiably feared.[11] Ultimately, seeking to understand the conditions in which porters worked makes apparent that, for many, the work was difficult or impossible to reconcile with the emotional expectations placed on them. Adhering to the Pullman Company's demands of porters' emotions did not necessarily safeguard their jobs, or their lives.

This chapter is divided into three sections: "The Slave," "The Diplomat," and "The Union Man." Each section corresponds to a different lens or persona through which Pullman porters understood their professional role and their place in the world. Although the slave persona emerged first and the union man last, they overlap over time, making it possible for a porter to embrace the union man persona in the 1920s and 1930s precisely because it contradicted the slave persona still associated with the job, and yet still view his role on the Pullman car as that of a diplomat. "The Slave" traces how the historic beginnings of the Pullman porter led to the public perception of a distinct porter personality type based on the happy Sambo slave character of blackface minstrelsy. Porters were also required to adopt a

[11] Pullman Porters Quartette, "Jog-a-Long Boys."

physical intimacy with white passengers that today appears to diverge from the efforts made to segregate white and black Americans on public transportation. Further analysis of the Sambo stereotype helps to explain this contradiction and establish some of the unusual working conditions Wilkins and other porters experienced daily. "The Diplomat" explores the ambassadorial qualities required of porters to successfully negotiate the racialised expectations of their behaviour and emotional expression, an effort termed "emotional labour" by occupational sociologists. This section also assesses how the porters' mobilised work environment complicated efforts to maintain an appropriate countenance, and explores the possibility that Wilkins' death may have been a result of his failing to successfully conform to the racialised expectations of white passengers and crew. "The Union Man" examines how Pullman porters resisted the emotional control passengers, crew, and the Pullman Company exercised through union organisation. Wilkins' story is situated at a critical moment of change for Pullman porters, after A. Philip Randolph had begun to organise the BSCP in 1925 but before they had won recognition from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Pullman Company. Accordingly, the investigation into Wilkins' death also provides insight into how the union attempted to recruit members in the aftermath of the incident by addressing the porters' fear of racial violence, as well as the everyday emotional burdens inherent in the life of a porter.

THE SLAVE

In the days after Wilkin's body was found there was much speculation in both the white and black press about the causes of his death. In general white newspapers refrained from pushing one single theory, but black newspapers such as *The Afro-American* and the *Kansas City Call* suggested that Wilkins was lynched.[12] The *Afro-American* went as far as citing a motive, reporting: "colleagues of Wilkins claim that the white train crew stopped the train at Locust Grove and lynched Wilkins. They were angry at him, they said, because, unable to find a berth for a white woman, he

[12] "Lynching of Porter Points to Train Crew," April 17 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Newspaper clipping; "No Clue to Pullman Porter's Lynchers." *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, April 19 1930. http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=UBnQDr5gPskC&dat=19300419&printsec=frontpage&hl=en; "Deep Mystery in Porter Killing," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. April 25 1930.

sought to appease her and smiled at her."[13] Witness statements in the Pullman Company file contradict this claim. According to testimony by other porters and the rest of the train staff, Wilkins left the train in the early morning when the majority of passengers and many crew would have been asleep, and none of the interviewed passengers from Wilkins' car stated that they had been awoken by a passenger boarding and attempting to secure a berth during these hours. None of the signed witness statements from passengers or crewmembers acknowledge a train stop at Locust Grove. While the Pullman Company's collected testimony does not conclusively demonstrate that the train crew did not make an unscheduled stop to lynch Wilkins, the lack of evidence to support the lynching theory, beyond the *Afro-American*'s unnamed sources, throws it into considerable doubt.

Nevertheless, this version of events was entirely plausible to African American communities that took an interest in the story. The particular detail of Wilkins having been tied to a tree, when reported without specifics, naturally gave the impression of his death as an archetypal southern lynching. Even those who were closer to the case believed some version of this story, such as an off-duty white conductor named Burgum who was traveling in Wilkins' car. Burgum confidentially told Pullman investigators that he was "inclined to believe that Porter Wilkins was caught in Lower 7 with the woman and forced out the window."[14] In the context of 1930s Georgia, it was completely credible that he had been killed because he had become too intimate with a white woman, or even just displayed what others considered to be undue interest or friendliness.[15] That there was a widespread belief that Wilkins had been lynched, despite the lack of evidence, can be explained by examining the broader racial context of lynching in this period.

Racially motivated lynching became commonplace in the late nineteenth century, around the same time as George Pullman, founder of the Pullman Company, began hiring African Americans to serve on his luxury train cars. Although some white Americans accepted lynching as a valid reaction to a perceived increase in black sexual aggressiveness toward white women since Emancipation, black activists such as Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells revealed the truth: that

---

[13] "No Clue to Pullman Porter's Lynchers," 2.
[14] "J. J. Leary to Mr. Edw. J. Brennan," May 21 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.
[15] According to the Tuskegee Institute's records of lynching for each state, Georgia saw the second highest incidence of lynchings of African Americans between 1882 and 1968. Mississippi saw the highest. Doug Linder, "Lynchings: By State and Race, 1882-1968," Tuskegee Institute, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingsstate.html. (Accessed 25 Oct. 2016)

lynching was a tool of terrorism, to keep African Americans afraid and to restrict their social and economic mobility in lieu of legal slavery.[16] Walter White wrote an article in December 1920 for *The Nation* that revealed the conditions of violence and terror white Americans in Arkansas were creating in order to continue agricultural exploitation of black workers who were organising to resist. White's investigation disputed the prevalent narrative reported in the white press, which suggested that the black farmers there had organised to massacre white landowners.[17] The years following the First World War saw a spike in recorded lynchings and anti-black riots as tensions over job competition came to a head and African American servicemen returned to their hometowns, many empowered by their wartime experiences.[18] The summer of 1919 became known as the "Red Summer," such was the extent of the violence across the country.[19] Although the lynching numbers dropped again during the 1920s, the fear of racial violence and the powerful imagery of lynching still affected African Americans in 1930, informing how black communities interpreted Wilkins' death.[20] Wilkins' fellow porters understood that their presence within the Pullman car was precarious: displaying too much interest in white female passengers, or otherwise failing to live up to racialised emotional expectation could lead to conflict, and sometimes violence.[21] In order to understand how and why these conditions emerged, it is necessary to trace them back into the cultural roots of the Pullman porter, which are closely entangled with the end of slave ownership.

It is not true that Pullman Company founder George Pullman hired his porters directly out of slavery, a commonly held belief among public and porters. It

---

[16] Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases.* (New York Age Print, 1892); Walter Francis White, *Rope and Faggot.* (New York: Arno Press, 1969); Rushdy, *The End of American Lynching*, 10-11.

[17] Walter F. White, "'Massacring Whites' in Arkansas," *Nation.* December 6 1919. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nih&AN=13666964&site=ehost-live.

[18] David F. Krugler. "A Mob in Uniform: Soldiers and Civilians in Washington's Red Summer, 1919." *Washington History* 21 (2009). 49-51. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25704908. For more on the Red Summer see Cameron McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*. (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2011); William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919*. (New York: Atheneum, 1970)

[19] McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*. As historians have observed in recent studies, what constitutes a lynching is not stable or specific, but has undergone shifts over time and much contestation. See, B. J. Hollars, *Thirteen Loops : Race, Violence, and the Last Lynching in America.* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2011), 5; Rushdy, *The End of American Lynching*, 97, 136.

[20] The number of killings by lynching dropped from an average of 56.9 annually between 1910 and 1919 to 28. 1 per year between 1920 and 1929. Data taken from Doug Linder. "Lynchings: By Year and Race." Tuskegee Institute, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingyear.html (Accessed 21 May).

[21] Unknown operative, "Re: B. Of S. C. P. St. Louis," April 9 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins.* Report.

is well documented, however, that the first porters, probably in the 1870s, were largely former house slaves who did not shy away from the same kind of work they had performed as domestic slaves: shining shoes, cleaning, carrying heavy luggage.[22] Pullman porters were almost always African American, and witnessed the rise of the Jim Crow era after Reconstruction, marked by the appearance of the signs in carriages and on platforms, as well as laws across the South. Before the Pullman Company ceased operations in 1969, its porters saw segregation's legal demise with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, following nearly seven decades of bitter arguments and violent conflicts on the railways, as African American passengers resisted Jim Crow laws. The employment of a group of black men to staff luxury train carriages filled with wealthy white passengers, reporting to white superiors, was a situation inevitably fraught with racial tension. Occasionally these tensions erupted into violence, of which Wilkins could have been a victim.

The work environment of the Pullman car sometimes recalled the racial hierarchies of slavery, even decades into the twentieth century. Black porters performed more physical labour for considerably less pay and longer hours than white Pullman conductors.[23] A porter could not be promoted to conductor, although some porters could become "porter-in-charge" when necessary, performing the conductors' duties in addition to their own for a small amount of extra pay.[24] Company handbooks stated that the conductor held "full control and authority" over his crew, and according to Pullman Company Vice President O. P. Powell, overseeing the porters' service to passengers was the conductors' "most important duty."[25] Accordingly, Powell considered J. P. Crawford, the Pullman conductor on the Kansas City Special on the day Wilkins died, responsible for the incident. In Powell's opinion Crawford should have "exercised better control of the employees

---

[22] "G. A. Kelly to Mr. Crawford," November 12 1935, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department, Series 3, History Files, 1860-1968. Box 1. Folder 71. Letter. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives. Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 25, 27.

[23] For a comparison of Pullman porter, maid and conductor wages, see Melinda Chateauvert, *Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 27. There were two types of conductor on services with Pullman cars: a Pullman conductor but also a train conductor responsible for the whole train. Unless stated, mentions of conductors refer to Pullman conductors.

[24] Jack Santino, *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle: Stories of Black Pullman Porters*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 24; David D. Perata, *Those Pullman Blues: An Oral History of the African American Railroad Attendant*. (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 18.

[25] "Instructions for Employees on Cars of the Pullman Company," 1903, *Pullman Company Instruction Books 1872, 1903, 1906, 1905, 1911*. Operating Department, Series 3, Subject Files, 1930-1966. Box 2. Folder 23. Employee Handbook. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives, p. 15; "O. P. Powell to F. B. Kemp," May 8 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.

under him and taken steps to prevent the use of liquor," referring to the Company's theory that Wilkins had been inebriated when he died.[26] That Crawford was reprimanded for failing to properly govern the porters' behaviour serves to underline the power dynamic between the two groups.

Porter Virgil Orite Smock, who worked for Pullman between 1936 and 1960, recalled that one conductor he worked with, from Mississippi, attempted to recreate plantation culture on the Pullman car:

> I don't know whether he owned a plantation or not, but he looked on his porters as his boys, and nobody jumped on him. I don't care if the superintendent got on there, if you started harassing, he said [*with a deep southern drawl*], "Now, wait a minute. That's my boy. Now, ah, if you have anything to say to him, you talk to him when he ain't on these cars. When he's on here, he belongs to me, and I don't want nobody running over him."[27]

In Smock's recollection, the southern conductor assumed a slaveholder's paternalistic attitude towards the porters, considering himself their owner and protector. In the days before a strong union emerged, the porters' seniority rights could be overridden by conductors who demanded to work with favoured porters, a situation which further entrenched the power of white conductors over black livelihoods.[28]

Passengers also indulged in the fantasy of being a rich plantation owner, so although there might have been many black slaves on an antebellum plantation belonging to a white slaveholder and his family, the Pullman porter found himself in the reverse situation as the lone servant in his car, surrounded by white "masters." Despite white society's preoccupation with physically separating black and white Americans, porters performed tasks of the utmost intimacy for white passengers: bringing them blankets and pillows, caring for their children, listening to their troubles.[29] Garrard Wilson Smock, Virgil's brother and fellow ex-porter, recalls passengers who were perfectly comfortable asking him to retrieve their belongings while they sat on the toilet.[30] Without considering the legacy of domestic slavery, it is difficult to reconcile the employment of African Americans in a role of such close proximity to white passengers. Retired black railroad cook Sam Turner pointed out

---

[26] "O. P. Powell to F. B. Kemp," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. May 8 1930.
[27] *Those Pullman Blues*, 36.
[28] Kuhn, Joye, and West, *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948*, 70.
[29] See, for example, W. A. Rice and Henry Lee, "Let a Pullman Porter Give You a Tip," *Pageant*. February 1951.
[30] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 55.

in an interview in 1986, that in the mid-twentieth century white passengers still expected the person who waited on them to be black:

> See, we played that role so long till it just made us look natural, being porters. The white folks was always used to that because in slavery times, the white man and his family, he always had the maid, she was there at that time. They called 'em mammies then. She would wait on the children, cook for 'em, and prepare the food. And I guess they just had that in their minds that that is just our regular job, that what we supposed to be. They just look for us to do it, and they comfortable with us doin' it.[31]

Turner submits that, for African Americans, the transition from slave to porter was simply what white Americans expected; it was inevitable. Although there is undoubtedly some truth in this explanation, it does not take into account the vast number of white Americans who had never owned slaves, and had never been wealthy enough to keep black servants. The introduction of black porters by George Pullman was not simply a continuation of the status quo, but an opportunity for all white passengers to receive an experience that had previously been open to only the rich upper classes in the South's plantation culture.

Pullman offered an opulent hotel experience too, if not to the masses, then to a large section of the American public who had never experienced anything like it before. As Pullman-fanatic Lucius Beebe reflected, looking back in 1961 when the importance of the railways was slowly declining and the Pullman Company along with it,

> For the cost of an extra fare of extremely modest proportions Americans who had never before encountered anything but the essential elements of shelter and the most primitive décor found themselves part of a midst of velvet portières, splendid crystal chandeliers, hot and cold running water and at least some of the manners and comportment these amenities imposed or implied.[32]

Black porters were crucial to the luxurious feel of Pullman's cars. That the porters were almost always black and the passengers were almost always white helped to keep an important class distinction based on race, which heightened not only the middle-class white passengers' travel experience but their perception of their own social position and wealth.

In a practice echoing the antebellum tradition of naming slaves after their master, the porters were "George Pullman's boys" and therefore many passengers

---

[31] Ibid., 95.

[32] Lucius Beebe, *Mr. Pullman's Elegant Palace Car : The Railway Carriage That Established a New Dimension of Luxury and Entered the National Lexicon as a Symbol of Splendor.* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), 18.

referred to each and any porter as "George." Some porters accepted this, and even, in a display of Stanislavski-style method acting, adopted George as their name outside of their work life.[33] Others, like ex-porter Willie Lee Frelix, recalled confronting passengers about the disrespect inherent in the practice.[34] The Pullman Company began installing porter name cards in the cars to discourage this practice in 1926, though it is unclear whether this was an attempt to undermine the work of the newly formed BSCP, or in response to the campaigning of the Society for the Prevention of Calling Sleeping Car Porters George, set up in 1916 by a lumber merchant named George Dulaney. The organisation was not a serious one, only admitting members named George, but received much publicity, perhaps aided by celebrity members including George "Babe" Ruth and King George. Nonetheless, in 1941 the organisation had 33,000 members, all named George, suggesting that the installation of name cards did not quickly halt this custom.[35]

As a traveller on a Pullman car, white professionals could fantasise a glamorous southern past, a fantasy that the Pullman Company exploited. Advertisements depicted porters as a picture of smiling deference, and public service pamphlets issued by the Pullman Company featured cartoon illustrations of porters with the black faces and thick white lips of blackface minstrelsy and vaudeville (Figures 1 and 2), creating expectations of the kinds of behaviour and emotional expression that would be included as part of the Pullman fare.[36]

---

[33] Kateleen Hope Cavett interview with Ventress Laroe Jackson Roberson, Rondo Oral History Project, Minnesota Historical Society. no. AV2007. 22. 26 (September 18 2003). http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=11119647& 9. When asked what her father's name was by the interviewer, Roberson initially answers "George Dewey Jackson" before qualifying her answer with "Actually, it was Dewey, but you know, at that time that was the one that formed the company and all names had to be George."

[34] Kateleen Hope Cavett interview with Willie Lee Frelix, Rondo Oral History Project, Minnesota Historical Society. (February 20 2004). http://collections.mnhs.org/cms/display.php?irn=11119405& 27.

[35] "Unknown Pullman Employee to Mr. Austin N. Keegan," March 14 1952, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Letter.

[36] Apeda Studio, "I Love Her - She Loves Me," 1922, *Sheet music of songs from various musicals, plays, movies, and television*. The New York Public Library: Music Division. http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/70cc616d-4c63-e208-e040-e00a18066712; "There's One Thing I Don't Do," 1944, *There's One Thing I Don't Do!, C. 1944* Public Relations Department, Series 2, Advertising Brochures, 1925-1964. Box 1. Folder 44. Pamphlet. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives. See the Pullman Industrial Heritage Archives online for advertisements featuring Pullman porters. "How Many People Make a Good Night's Sleep?," 1948. Advertisment. Pullman State Historic Site: Industrial Heritage Archives. http://pullman-museum.org/cgi-bin/pvm/newMainRecordDisplayXML.pl?recordid=11291; "All Aboard... For a Happy Vacation Go by Train!," 1949. Advertisment. Pullman State Historic Site: Industrial Heritage Archives. http://pullman-museum.org/cgi-bin/pvm/newMainRecordDisplayXML.pl?recordid=9376

These expectations hark back to a number of racist stereotypes, but in particular they



Figure 1: Sheet music cover for "I Love Her – She Loves Me," 1922



Figure 2: Detail of Pullman Company pamphlet "There's One Thing I Don't Do," 1944

align with the character of "Sambo." Sambo, a staple in minstrel shows after the Civil War, lived on in different forms into the twentieth century and became closely aligned with the character of the Pullman porter in the public imagination of both the North and South.[37] Stanley M. Elkins outlined Sambo in his 1959 work *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* as "docile but irresponsible, loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing," and argued that the condition of slavery in the US was a mould that had formed this personality among slaves.[38] Elkins proposed that Sambo was not a mere stereotype but a real personality type, formed when slaves internalised their condition. Eugene D. Genovese, Ralph Ellison and other scholars of African American culture disputed his thesis. They argued that Sambo was a role played by slaves to outwit their masters, as much a facade as the burnt cork white performers had applied to perform blackness in minstrel shows.[39] Elkins' work was criticised for only discussing male slaves, and using only written accounts of white slaveholders, rather than any testimony from

[37] Robert Penn Warren, *Who Speaks for the Negro?* (New York: Random House, 1965), 53; Nikki Brown, ed. *Jim Crow a Historical Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014), 282.
[38] Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 82.
[39] Eugene D. Genovese. "Rebelliousness and Docility in the Negro Slave: A Critique of the Elkins Thesis." *Civil War History* 13, no. 4 (1967). 311. doi: 10. 1353/cwh. 1967.0048; Ralph Ellison, "If the Twain Shall Meet," in *Going to the Territory* (New York: Vintage, 1987), 100-01.

slaves.[40] This last criticism is key, because it refers to a third explanation for the Sambo tradition: that it was, in part, neither internalisation nor "role," but a construction placed upon the personalities of slaves by white slave-owners to justify their position to themselves and to others. Although Elkins wrote in terms of personality, not emotions, the Sambo type is defined, at least in part, by emotion: cheerfulness, contentment and gratitude. The Sambo stereotype can therefore be understood in terms of a specific set of emotions as well as behaviours.

The Pullman Company placed a similar construction on porters, claiming in public relations copy that "porters are regarded as a dependable and indispensable friend," and that they possessed an "instinctive racial fondness for children," which was a reassurance to the public that porters were harmless, avuncular men of an "Uncle Tom" type, who could take care of children and protectively watch over young women travelling alone.[41] George Pullman himself is reported to have believed that African Americans possessed a singular personality type that made them especially suitable for waiting on his white passengers.[42] He was not alone in expressing this idea. African American leader and educator Booker T. Washington promised white southerners in his famous 1895 Atlanta Compromise address that:

> …you can be sure in the future, as in the past, that you and your families will be surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen. As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-dimmed eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defence of yours…[43]

Washington's words, designed to build bridges between black and white southerners, were so close to the Pullman Company's idea of a perfect porter that they could have been written by the company's marketing department.[44]

---

[40] Peter Ling. "The Incomparable Elkins." *Rethinking History* 1, no. 1 (1997). 73. doi: 10. 1080/13642529708596303; R. H. King. "Domination and Fabrication: Re-Thinking Stanley Elkins' Slavery." *A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 22, no. 2 (2001). 9. doi: 10. 1080/714005195.
[41] "The Pullman Porter", n.d., *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Publicity copy, pp. 3-4; Melick, Jake Wolf and Weldon "A Pullman Porter Speaks His Mind", April 1948, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Magazine article, p. 82.
[42] Beth Tompkins Bates, *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 17.
[43] Booker T. Washington et al., *The Booker T. Washington Papers*. Vol. 3, (Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 583–87
[44] Pullman Company public relations copy pays tribute to a porter named Oscar J. Daniels, "who gave his life to save his carload of passengers" in "Anecdotal Material About Pullman Porters," 28 November 1949, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Publicity copy. pp. 3-4.

From songs, film and advertisements, to the literature of the early twentieth century, porters were portrayed as contented servants, frequently the butt of jokes for their supposed stupidity and greed for tips. A 1919 magazine advertisement for F. B. & C. shoes depicts a young white woman peering out from behind a railway car curtain at a smiling Pullman porter, who is holding two pairs of shoes, with the accompanying dialogue:

> "Mine are the shoes with F. B & C. in them, porter."
> "There must be a lot 'er ladies with names like yours. Mos' all these shoes got F. B & C. in them."[45]

Another magazine advertisement from 1941 for a Listerine anti-dandruff product features a Pullman porter playing his whiskbroom like a guitar and singing the blues because his passengers no longer need him to brush off their shoulders, having rid themselves of dandruff.[46]

In the 1920s white author Octavus Roy Cohen created a popular Pullman porter character named Epic Peters, and wrote a series of short farcical stories with Peters as protagonist. The reader joins Peters on his runs, where he sees everything, understands little, but somehow comes out of whatever comedy of errors he has been involved in with a generous tip. The 1930 dust jacket of *Epic Peters, Pullman Porter* (Figure 3) sets the tone of the stories; Peters is depicted as stooping and gormless, with white minstrel lips. The narrator reveals Peters' innermost thoughts:

> Somehow, with the crinkle of the dollar bill still tickling his palm, the train shed seemed less empty and gloomy. His lips expanded and he hummed a few lines of a little song that was always more or less in evidence when he was not unpleased with the world:
>
> I plays my cards against my chest,
> I nusses all my chips;
> I never joke an' Ise never broke,
> 'Cause Ise hell on gettin' tips.[47]

---

[45] "F. B & C. Shoe Advertisement," February 18 1919, *The Ladies' Home Journal For September*. Pullman State Historic Site: Industrial Heritage Archives. http://www.pullman-museum.org/cgi-bin/pvm/newMainRecordDisplayXML.pl?recordid=7412

[46] Lambert Pharmacal Company, "I Got Them Whisk-Broom Blues..." 1941, *Beauty and Hygiene (1911-1956)*. Advertisement. The Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History, Duke University, NC: Ad* Access. http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess_BH0566/

[47] Octavus Roy Cohen, "The Berth of Hope," in *Epic Peters, Pullman Porter* (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2012), 2.

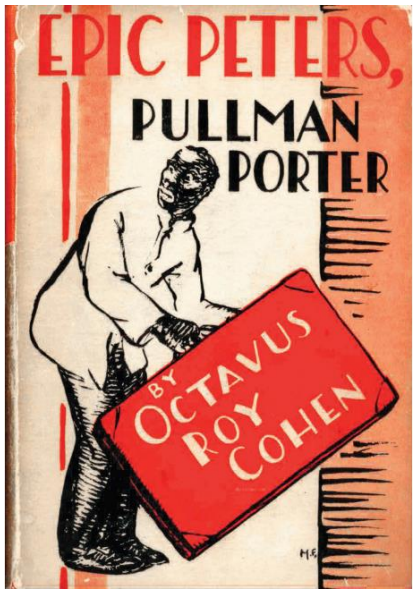


Figure 3: Dust jacket for the first edition of 1930 published by D. Appleton and Company.

Even in this very short extract, a number of Sambo "traits" are made apparent: Peters is avaricious, yet content enough with his work to sing a self-satisfied song of his own devising. Cohen creates a porter character who is "faithful and efficient on the road," and makes it clear that Peters is exceptionally naïve when he fails to understand that two of his passengers are using him to double-cross each other.[48] The narrative voice reveals a personality type that closely resembles Elkins' description of Sambo.

The Sambo conception of the Pullman porter was not limited to creative works, but spilled into non-fictional representations, as demonstrated in articles written about porters for major white newspapers where their reported speech was often written in a dialect like that of Epic Peters. One interview with a group of porters in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1931 reports their displeasure with the lack of tips received, but general contentment with their lot. Their speech is phonetically written, in a black southern "eye dialect":

> 'Yes, suh', Aaron went on, "tis a real job to keep people comfortable and happy. Afteh a while you get so you don't wan' to do nothing else. An' you won't find nobody but a real southe'n colo'ed gentleman to do a job of pohte'ing like it ought to be done.' [49]

[48] Ibid.
[49] Frank Dorsey. "Experiences of a Pullman Porter," *Los Angeles Times*, August 30 1931, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/162546609.

Here, and in many other articles in the first half of the twentieth century, the porters were characterised as rural southerners, undereducated, and unfailingly loyal to the Pullman Company.[50] The facts belie this stereotype: the majority of porters came from the North, mostly Chicago and New York.[51] According to Dr. Benjamin Mays, a former porter himself, many were highly educated, working over the summer to pay for college.[52] Finally, running contrary to the Pullman Company's idea of loyalty, from 1925 the porters engaged in a bitter battle with the company, voting for strike action in 1928.[53] Frank Dorsey chose to ignore these facts, and instead presented a set of amusing stereotypes as representative of the "experiences of a Pullman porter," to distance the reader from the porter. He even declared the interview over when his interview subject was "interrupted by the entrance of a small darky with a watermelon."[54]

Newspaper articles like these exemplify the third explanation for the Sambo tradition; through his writing, Dorsey attributed Sambo-like qualities to the porters. Yet, unless Dorsey entirely fictionalised his quotations, the porter named Aaron voiced opinions neatly in line with the Sambo stereotype. Whether Aaron consciously played this role for the reporter is impossible to establish, but anecdotal evidence suggests that there were compelling reasons to become an actor when dealing with white passengers, as Jack Thorne's 1892 memoir demonstrates:

> Answer one of them direct and to the point, and he will call you an impertinent "nigger". Hold your hat in your hand and say "Yes, sah; yes, sah!" to everything he says, and he will say, "Smart boy that. John, where were you raised? Who was your master?[55]

---

[50] See, for example, "Bought Auto with Tips: Pullman Porter Then Speeded His Car and Landed in Court." *Washington Post*, March 25 1910. http://search.proquest.com/hnplatimes/docview/145035830/5198717B09594F40PQ/11#; "What Others Think About It: Traveling through the Storm." *Los Angeles Times*, February 24 1931. http://search.proquest.com/hnplatimes/docview/162370380/BD103E3C48A24F51PQ/15##; "Retired Porter Thanks Job for his Education." *Los Angeles Times*, March 10 1946. https://search.proquest.com/docview/165653016?. An Epic Peters story also appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*: Octavus, R. C. "Fast black." *Los Angeles Times,* December 4 1932. https://search.proquest.com/docview/163031394?.

[51] "J. P. Kenney to A. E. Greco," June 7 1953, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department, Letter.

[52] Benjamin Mays recalls that in 1915 he went to work for the Pullman Company, who recruited any students who were "tall enough, strong enough, and had seventeen dollars to buy his cap and uniform." Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 38-39.

[53] For more about the strike that was called off by Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters leader A. Philip Randolph, see Bates, *Pullman Porters*, 98-99.

[54] Dorsey, "Experiences of a Pullman Porter."

[55] Jack Thorne, *Recollections of a Sleeping Car Porter,* (Jersey City, NJ: Doan & Pilson, printers, 1892), https://archive.org/details/recollectionsofs00thor. 29. Jack Thorne was the pen name of David

Although the master-slave dynamic became subtler and more abstract in the twentieth century, Thorne's experience is reflected in much later accounts from porters, as the next section explores. When porters embodied the desirable emotions associated with the Sambo personality: ease, modesty and gratitude, for example, white passengers approved of their presence within what was deemed a white space. Deviation from the expected manner resulted in conflict, and it is possible that Wilkins fell victim to these circumstances. The next section explores the effort expended by Pullman porters to maintain the appropriate emotional expression, and the ways in which the environment of the Pullman car presented obstacles to their efforts. Under these conditions porters developed a diplomatic persona, working hard to smooth over difficult situations and solve problems to passengers' satisfaction, using whatever means necessary but minimising assaults on their dignity. In these instances the management of emotions was not only an occupational requirement, but could also be used as a tool to achieve their desired ends. Analysis of the delicate emotional parameters porters worked within also sheds light on the theories that developed around Wilkins' death.

THE DIPLOMAT

In April 1948 an article appeared in *Coronet* magazine, apparently written by a Pullman porter of 43 years service, in which he argued that over his career the nature of the porters' work had shifted: from caring for the physical comfort of his passengers to attending to their mental comfort. The main reason for this, he suggested, was improvements in train technology that made certain tasks, such as brushing dust from clothes or opening and closing windows, redundant. Instead, porters showed their continued value in their use of "applied psychology."[56] He described a typical situation that a porter might face:

> There's always one passenger who will ruin the dispositions of everyone in the car if the porter hasn't mastered the art of doing nothing – diplomatically. On one trip it was the lady in Section 11 who complained that she was "freezing to death." I assured her she would hear the steam coming up immediately. I'm always glad to play an obbligato on the steam pipes with my berth key to make one passenger happy, *if* the temperature is already agreeable to the others.[57]

Bryant Fulton. William Gleason. "Voices at the Nadir: Charles Chesnutt and David Bryant Fulton." *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910* 24, no. 3 (1992). 23. doi: 10.3149/jms.0801.59.

[56] Jake Wolf and Weldon Melick, "A Pullman Porter Speaks His Mind," *Coronet*. April 1948, 81.

[57] Ibid.

The porter makes a show of adjusting the temperature of the car for one passenger, without actually making the adjustment, taking into consideration the other passengers' comfort. The passenger, it is implied, is fooled by the sound of the steam and believes that the room is getting warmer. In this porter's conception of his role he is not the foolish and greedy Sambo stereotype, but a diplomat who discreetly outmanoeuvres his passengers, taking control of a situation while letting the passengers think they are in control. This porter is closer to Jeeves, the competent and dignified valet of the farcical P.G. Wodehouse stories, than the blundering Epic Peters. Just like Jeeves, he maintains an appropriately deferential emotional expression in his dealings with those he serves, but works deftly behind the scenes to manage the situation the way he sees fit.

In the 1980s, organisational sociologists began producing studies suggesting that the workplace was not the site of pure rationality it was previously assumed to be, but was governed by feelings and emotion.[58] Thus began an investigation of what Arlie Hochschild termed "emotional labor," defined in her 1983 work *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display."[59] In her study of flight attendants, Hochschild argued that emotional labour was a job requirement that could have negative effects on an individual, because it represented an intensive effort that could produce stress and fatigue among employees. Although the study of emotional labour did not take off until the 1980s, corporation-specific emotional labour had existed long before the airlines studied by Hochschild were incorporated – the Pullman Company's emotional expectations of its porters being one example.

Examining emotional labour from a dramaturgical standpoint based on Erving Goffman's work on social performance, Hochshild introduced the terms "surface acting" and "deep acting" to apply respectively to whether the emotion was consciously acted or internalised through effort on the part of the individual. She also posited that it is extremely difficult to maintain surface acting that is at odds with internal feelings for long periods, such as those worked by Pullman porters. Instead, "we try to reduce this strain by pulling the two closer together either by changing what we feel or by changing what we feign."[60] If Hochschild is correct,

---

[58] A. A. Grandey. "Emotion Regulation in the Workplace: A New Way to Conceptualize Emotional Labor." *Journal of occupational health psychology* 5, no. 1 (2000). 95. doi: 10. 1037//1076-8998.5. 1.95.
[59] Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*, 7.
[60] Ibid., 90.

porters who remained in the job for years may have been forced to internalise the emotions they needed to express in order to meet the expectations of white passengers and crew. However, Blake Ashforth and Ronald Humphrey argue that a third possibility exists: "the expression of spontaneous and genuine emotion."[61] Former Pullman porters who have been interviewed for oral history projects often express satisfaction and enthusiasm when reflecting on their time on the railroads.[62] Since the interview subjects are no longer in the Pullman Company's employ or required to adhere to corporate emotional expectations, their positive recollections of the work can be regarded as sincere, if perhaps distorted by the distance of time. In the context of the theories of emotional labour developed by Hochschild, and elaborated on by Ashforth and Humprey, the evidence suggests that a combination of surface acting, deep acting and genuine feeling may have shaped porters' emotional expressions.

The Pullman Company explicitly promoted the porters' smiles in advertising as part of the Pullman travel experience, just as in the latter half of the twentieth century airlines sold the promise of smiling flight attendants.[63] The company made it clear in employee instruction books that it expected both white conductors and black porters to give a high level of personal service to passengers, and be "obliging and courteous at all times."[64] The porters, however, bore the vast majority of the customer interaction, and carried the additional burden of racialised expectations of their behaviour and emotional expression. Their deftness and discretion in handling the many and varied problems arising on long-distance railway journeys led to their

---

[61] Blake E. Ashforth and Ronald H. Humphrey. "Emotional Labor in Service Roles: The Influence of Identity." *The Academy of Management Review* 18, no. 1 (1993). doi: 10.5465/AMR. 1993.3997508.

[62] Porters talk of the work being relatively well paid, compared with the alternatives for black men at the time; the opportunity to travel all around the country, and passengers: some friendly, some generous, some famous. The same porters often have many complaints about the job and the Pullman Company but found enough to like about the work that they stayed for years, sometimes their whole working lives. See, for example, Santino, *Miles of Smiles*, 139. Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 48, 69; Cavett interview with Willie Lee Frelix. February 20, 2004. 19.

[63] See the Pullman Industrial Heritage Archives online for advertisements featuring smiling Pullman porters. For example: "How Many People Make a Good Night's Sleep?," 1948; "All Aboard... For a Happy Vacation Go by Train!," 1949. For more about airline marketing of smiles see Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*, 5.

[64] "Instructions to Conductors," 1926, *Conductors Instruction Books, 1926, 1935, 1939, 1952*. Operating Department, Series 6, Employee Instruction Books, 1872-1956. Box 2. Folder 21a. Company handbook. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives, p.1; "Instructions to Porters," 1925, *Porters Instruction Books, 1925, 1935* Operating Department, Series 6, Employee Instruction Books, 1872-1956. Box 2. Folder 33. Company handbook. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives, p.1.

developing a reputation for diplomacy.[65] *The Pittsburgh Courier* ran a special four-part series on the Pullman porter, entitled "Diplomats of the Railroad," a moniker that acknowledged the unexpected commonalities between the two professions: shrewdness, discretion and, perhaps most importantly, the professional smile.[66]

White passengers considered smiles to be as integral to the job as any of the black porters' physical duties, as porter and activist E. D. Nixon explained:

> …you had to be so careful, because anyone getting on the train can just roll up and say you didn't shine his shoes or brush him off when he got on and he didn't like your attitude or you didn't smile when you spoke to him.[67]

Just as diplomats who take an emotional stance "at odds with declared state policy" are often observed, "being dismissed or forced to retire," porters were punished for either failing to smile or for expressing undesirable emotions such as irritation or anger.[68] The reprimand often took the form of an economic penalty; if not dismissed, the porter would either be assigned a run that was known to yield few tips, or would not be assigned any run at all for a particular period.[69]

Interviews with retired Pullman porters demonstrate that the restricted space of the Pullman car made it especially difficult to maintain the expected smiles and, equally, hide emotions considered undesirable to the work, such as anger, dejection, and pride. As a porter with a self-confessed "Irish temper," George Henry Smock was in the unusual position of being fired twice—and was written up by his manager at least once—for failing to perform emotion appropriately.[70] The mildest reaction of anger he describes came after he had painstakingly squeezed lemons to make lemonade for a passenger:

> So I make up the lemonade, and I take it out there to him, and he asks how much he owed me, and told him – I think it was 31¢ – and he gave me 40¢ and said "Thank you," which was 9¢ for all the work I was doing. And I picked it up, and I went by the buffet. I sailed the doggone tray – the little stainless steel

---

[65] See, for example, George Goode, "Pertaining to the Pullman Porter," n.d., *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Magazine article, p.16; "The Pullman Porter... An American Institution," April 1951, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Magazine article, p. 3.
[66] "Another Courier Exclusive," 1953, *Porters, 1925-1955*. Public Relations Department. Promotional material.
[67] Interview with E. D. Nixon. Jack Santino and Paul Wagner, *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle,* (San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 1983), VHS.
[68] Todd H. Hall, *Emotional Diplomacy: Official Emotion on the International Stage*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 23.
[69] Santino, *Miles of Smiles*, 36, 47.
[70] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 7-8.

> tray - sailed the tray into the kitchen, and you know all the kitchen is metal anyway, and you could hear the sucker ring from now on end![71]

The passenger was a spotter, hired by the Pullman Company to test the customer service given by the porters, and Smock was formally reprimanded. In contrast to other incidents he describes, however, it appears he made some attempt to regulate his emotions in the passenger's presence. He does not mention saying or doing anything to betray his anger to the passenger directly, but the close proximity of the metal kitchen gave away his feelings to the spotter. In the confined space of the railway car, there was little opportunity for private release of emotion. Additionally, porters' working hours were notoriously long and sleep denial considered normal—a situation that could not have made the performance of a consistently cheerful disposition easier.[72] In this light, the murdered Wilkins' clean record of 11 years of Pullman service can be regarded as impressive.[73]

For many porters, the majority of their pay came from passenger tips rather than the basic Pullman Company salary, which explains why Smock became so angry about a tip disproportionate to the effort he spent. For porters who were assigned the right runs and who could keep smiling through anything, the tipping system allowed them to make a decent living and own a house and a car.[74] E. D. Nixon related a revealing anecdote about a time in Mobile, Alabama when star baseball player Babe Ruth tipped him and found Nixon's "thank you" to express insufficient gratitude:

> You know what he said? He said 'Nigger, you don't know how to pull your hat off when a white man gives you a tip?' I said, 'Mister, if you expect me to climb for fifteen cents, you can keep it.' And everybody just hollered.[75]

The way Nixon tells it, with a punchline that made everyone laugh, allows him to come off better in the exchange than Ruth. Nevertheless, Nixon is still referred to as "nigger," and he still has to address the man who insulted him as "Mister." Unable to safely express anger at the slight, Nixon instead resorted to humour to defuse the situation and keep his dignity intact, a response that evokes

---

[71] Ibid., 7.
[72] Alan Derickson. "'Asleep and Awake at the Same Time': Sleep Denial among Pullman Porters." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 5, no. 3 (2008). doi: 10. 1215/15476715-2008-004.
[73] "Porters of the Louisville District to Mr. L. S. Hungerford," April 22 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Letter.
[74] Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 77.
[75] Donnie Williams and Wayne Greenhaw, *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People Who Broke the Back of Jim Crow*. (Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 2006), 29-30.

James Scott's explanation of the "micro" power struggles of "infrapolitics," in which the subordinate group resists oppression through everyday acts, in this case a joke that undermines the dominant party.[76] In order to remain employed, porters were required to hide any militant or activist tendencies, which conflicted with their duty to make white passengers feel at ease.[77] Challenges to the racialised expectations of emotional expression, such as Nixon's refusal to express exaggerated gratitude for his tip, demonstrate a broader, subtler form of resistance that allowed some porters to keep their job and their self-respect.

The Pullman car was a unique space of racial negotiation, due to two main factors. (1), the cars were confined spaces, and (2), they were nearly always in motion. The car's movement across the nation resulted in continually shifting racial customs and laws, but there was also the fact that the Pullman car could not be safely exited while moving at speed. The problem deepened during and after the Second World War, when the Pullman Company undertook the intensive transportation of servicemen across the country on behalf of the government. The combination condensed tensions that were already running high in wartime and the immediate aftermath, into an area measuring 58 square feet.[78] October 1945 saw an outbreak of violence on a train carrying sailors from Seattle to Chicago. According to Porter Morse Bing Jr.'s statement for the Pullman Company, three of the sailors had been drinking and attempted to make Bing dance for them. When he refused, saying he could not dance, one of the sailors replied that all "niggers" could dance and that he was just a "God damned nigger." The sailor told Bing that if he would not dance he would "knock the hell" out of him. He struck Bing, knocking his glasses to the floor. When Bing tried to leave the car, his way was blocked by another sailor who said, "let's throw him out the window." Bing escaped to find the Pullman conductor, who accompanied him back to his car. Despite having the additional authority of the conductor, on their return one of the sailors attacked Bing with a broken bottle over

---

[76] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, 197.

[77] The Pullman Company sometimes cited passengers' comfort as a reason to dismiss porters who were involved in organising for the BSCP. One of reasons given for the dismissal of C. L. Dellums when he became a union organizer was that he distributed BSCP leaflets "to the annoyance of [Pullman] passengers," but also mentions concerns that Dellums could "incite [Pullman] Patrons against the Company." O. P. Powell, "Subject: Activities, Services and Dismissal of San Francisco District Porter C. L. Dellums," n.d. 1927, *Organizers*. Employee and Labor Relations Department, Series 4, Labor Negotiation and Agreement Files, 1920 - 1969. Box 24. Folder 553. Memorandum. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives.

[78] Floor area taken from information provided in a 1935 booklet printed by Pullman, based on the stated square footage of the drawing room. RSW. "Appendix 1: Accommodations." http://www.pullmancar.org/Appendix-1.pdf (no longer available) (Accessed November 10 2016).

the shoulder of the Pullman conductor and severed a blood vessel in Bing's jaw. He was seen by a navy doctor travelling in his own car and then taken from the train to hospital on the doctor's advice.[79]

Such cases demonstrate the vulnerabilities of the porters' situation: the interaction had explicitly racist overtones, suggesting that the violence stemmed from a desire to exercise racial control over the porter's behaviour and emotions. Unable to negotiate the social interaction in such a way that would not compromise either his job or his dignity, Bing attempted but failed to remove himself from the situation. The only way to leave would have been to exit a moving train, a desperate act that was likely to be fatal when the train was travelling at speed. These reported instances of violence raise the possibility that Wilkins attempted to leave the moving train in order to escape a violent attack that threatened his life. Whether he was killed by the wound under his arm or his head injury, perhaps sustained as he hit the ground, this theory would explain the footprints that reportedly led to the body from the tracks, without a corresponding set of prints leading back to the tracks.[80]

The motion involved in the porters' work was also an important consideration in how they expressed themselves – encounters with passengers and crew from a different area could complicate the requirements of the performance. James A. Martin, a porter for the Pullman Company from 1925 until 1967, explained that while hauling soldiers during the Second World War, the Pullman Company separated crews by geographical region so that, for example, a train travelling from New York to Oakland, California would have one team of north-eastern porters with a north-eastern conductor until they reached Kansas City, after which a Kansas City crew would take over. In one instance Martin recalled that northern porters were unexpectedly required to complete an entire journey or "run," working with a southern conductor:

> …it was a custom for the southern porters to say "yes and no sir" to the conductors, the white conductors. And these northern porters, … this particular one didn't do that. And this conductor wrote him up he wrote - oh, he wrote a letter about that long, the things this porter had done.[81]

---

[79] "Morse Bing Jr. To G. W. Kelly," November 3 1945, Records of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters (Bethesda, MA: University Publications of America), Series A, Part 3. Reel 2, Frame 0766, Microfilm.

[80] "F. B. Kemp to B. H. Vroman," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. April 5 1930.

[81] Greg Leroy interview with James A. Martin, *Interviews about the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*. Chicago History Museum, compact disc, (n.d 1978). Transcribed by the author.

Martin's anecdote demonstrates that porters needed to be aware of multiple factors affecting racial expectations: not only where the train car happened to be at any given time, but also the part of the country individual passengers or crew originated.

For some porters, changing their emotional expression to fit their surroundings was the most comfortable solution to these changing expectations: showing deference and embracing certain aspects of the slave persona when travelling through the South, but relaxing the performance when travelling in the North or West. Ernest Ford, one of Santino's interviewees, operated this way, explaining that:

> When I was up North, I acted like a northerner. It was, "yeah, no," see. When I go South, with the conductor, it was "yes sir, no sir." You govern yourself according to the area you are in.[82]

However, others craved more consistency, even choosing to always perform the higher level of deference rather than to have to adapt throughout the journey. Garrard Smock explained why he would prefer to work with a southern conductor than a northern one while working on his route between San Francisco and Los Angeles:

> I today would rather work for a southern person than I would for a northern person out here on the West Coast. The South, you know where he's coming from. You know his policies. … The guy out here in the North, he says, "You know one thing? I want you to know that I'm on your side 100 percent," and pat you on the back [*pats his shoulder*]. That's while he's talking to you, but when he gets out there in Beverly Hills, it's altogether different. See what I mean? His feelings is altogether different: "Ah, them goddamn niggers, so and so, blah-blah…." But you know where that southerner comes from.[83]

Smock's explanation suggests that altering his emotional expression as a journey progressed was an effort, perhaps a stressful one that he would rather avoid by enduring consistent racial discrimination. It also highlights that white staff on the train adjusted how they interacted with porters depending on their location. This phenomenon was not limited to crew members: on runs from Washington, D.C. to Virginia, white passengers' behaviour could transform by the time they emerged from the other end of the tunnel under the Potomac River, as Jack Santino found in his interviews with retired Pullman porters in the Washington D.C. area:

> A passenger might start calling porters "nigger" instead of "porter." Once, a passenger insisted that a Negro passenger be removed from the coach as soon

[82] Santino, *Miles of Smiles*, 30.
[83] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 42.

> as the train had entered the South, even though he had not complained previously.[84]

Porter and BSCP leader Milton Price Webster also experienced this phenomenon, admitting in a union meeting that whenever he crossed the Potomac he got "a kind of deep feeling, a funny feeling" which always left him "silent."[85] Wilkins was from Kansas City, Missouri, and was therefore accustomed to different racial norms from those of Deep South states. The differences could be significant; E. D. Nixon remembered being stunned by the disparity between interracial customs in Missouri's St Louis, and his hometown of Montgomery, Alabama, recalling, "I was dumbfounded and shocked down to my toes when I got up there and found black people and white people sitting down at the same table eating in the railroad station."[86]

One of the most important racial norms that Wilkins and other porters had to bear in mind on journeys in the Deep South was the intense taboo against intimate or sexual contact between black men and white women. Showing interest in a white woman in the South, or simply appearing to, could have cost Wilkins his life. The newspaper report that suggested Wilkins had been lynched because he had "smiled" at a white woman is not well supported but nevertheless underlines a key paradox in the life of a Pullman porter: the emotions he was required to perform as part of his work could jeopardise his career and his safety.[87] Porters referred to their work as "miles of smiles" but were aware of the dangers inherent in the expression.

The claustrophobic nature of the space inevitably had an impact on interracial social exchanges between black male porters and white female passengers. According to James T. Steele, who worked for the Pullman Company on the buffet car between 1936 and 1960:

> …being on a car is just like being in the South. When you're walking down the street and a white lady's coming this way, you're supposed to get your black self outta the streets and let her go by. Then you get back on the sidewalk.[88]

Here Steele refers to the danger created by forced proximity. In the limited space of the Pullman car, black male bodies and white female bodies risked physical contact,

---

[84] Santino, *Miles of Smiles*, 28.
[85] Joseph F. Wilson, ed. *Tearing Down the Color Bar: A Documentary History and Analysis of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 275.
[86] Donnie Williams and Wayne Greenhaw, *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People Who Broke the Back of Jim Crow* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2006), 28.
[87] "No Clue to Pullman Porter's Lynchers."
[88] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 80.

thereby breaking the fundamental tenet of racial interaction. The confinement and motion of the Pullman car created a space in which the conditions of segregation were especially tenuous and therefore policed particularly vigilantly by white males. Former President of the prestigious black Morehouse College, Dr. Benjamin Mays, recalls being paraded through the train by white men and boys at gunpoint after he had boarded a train at Birmingham, Alabama and attempted to travel in the Pullman car for which he had bought a ticket.[89] A porter named E. Patrick gave a statement attesting that a train conductor had beaten him and had him arrested for drunkenness after discovering him talking to a group of white sailors on the way back to his own Pullman car. Patrick attested that the conductor asked him, "don't you know that a nigger is not suppose [*sic.*] to be riding in the white coaches with white people in the state of Mississippi."[90] Stories like these demonstrate the extent to which white train staff and passengers regulated what they considered to be the correct racial order within the Pullman car.

The Pullman Company also policed the cars, hiring undercover agents known as "spotters" to ride in the cars as passengers and record their porters' responses. After reports of poor service or wrongdoing, Pullman Company officials would put a porter on the list for being "checked."[91] While many of these mystery passengers were hired to catch porters being impolite or stealing, white female spotters were recruited to detect sexual interest.[92] The Pullman Company must have considered setting up these "honey traps" vital to their business; James T. Steele pointed out that they "would pay you $77. 50 a month, and then pay $2,000 to get something on you."[93] Between November 1941 and August 1944, twenty-eight porters were dismissed from the company for offences characterised as "familiarity with women."

---

[89] Mays, *Born to Rebel*, 94-95.
[90] "Statement of Porter E. Patrick," April 4 1945, *Porters*. Employee and Labor Relations Department, Chief Special Agent, Series 1, Railroad Police Incident Files, 1944-1945 Box 1. Folder 14-15. Newberry Library, Chicago: Pullman Company Papers.
[91] "Complaint of Mrs. W. J. Proctor, Actions of Porter S. Bea, Cincinnati, Car E. Blackstone (931), Line 1142, NYC 5, May 22-23, 1945," 1936-1959, *Complaints - Porter Service, 1936-1959* Employee and Labor Relations Department, Series 3, General Labor Files, 1900-1970. Box 29. Folder 671. Report. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives.
[92] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 78; Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 103.
[93] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 78. It is not clear where Steele got the figure of $2000, it may be entirely fictional, yet his remark makes the important point that the Pullman Company was financially invested in checking porters' behaviour.

The details of the offences ranged from the specific, "entered lady's berth at night," to the vague, "annoyed woman passenger."[94]

The practical reasons for which the Pullman Company hired spotters become clear in another of Steele's anecdotes: a 67-year-old porter named Forsythe was accused of twice having sex with a female passenger, who then took the Pullman Company to court. According to Steele, a note from a white doctor saved Forsythe, confirming that he had been impotent for years. While Steele does not give enough detail for the facts of this story to be verified, documents in the Pullman Company archives show that the company did go to court over lawsuits of this kind.[95] Steele also describes a time when he was targeted by a female passenger, and had to ask the train conductor to go into the woman's room with him to avoid potential accusations.[96] Steele admits that he had to suppress his feelings in such situations: "You got to be strong, see, because I'm gonna tell ya: temptation is great."[97] The consequences of being accused of sexual contact with passengers varied according to where the event occurred. Steele's experiences were of Los Angeles-based runs, where an accusation from a passenger could mean immediate dismissal, especially before the BSCP became powerful enough to demand a fairer hearings process.[98] Steele observed that, once the union became recognised, it provided some protection from accusations of inappropriate behaviour towards female passengers:

> When they got strong, then you had a chance. But before then, if this white woman say you felt her legs or you tried to do so-and-so to her, they would take her word and pay her so much money and kick your ass out in the streets. … But if you didn't have a union then, you ain't got no voice.[99]

On runs into the South, however, the sexual taboo was so strong that being lynched was an easily conceivable outcome.

Porters were not only vulnerable to accusations of improper behaviour, but were also victims of unwanted advances themselves. In 1940 Benjamin Sumner

---

[94] "List of Porters and Conductors Dismissed for Familiarity with Women," n.d., *Porters and Conductors - Discharge - "Familiarity with Women Passengers," 1940-1958* Labor Relations Department, Series 3, General Labor Files, 1900-1970. Box 24. Folder 550. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives.
[95] Ibid.
[96] *Those Pullman Blues*, 78.
[97] Ibid., 79.
[98] Martin, 1978; Milton P. Webster "Legal Definitions of the Phrase 'Beyond a Reasonable Doubt'", *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, (Series A, Holdings of the Chicago Historical Society and the Newberry Library, 1925–1969, Part 3: Records of the BSCP Relations with the Pullman Company, 1925–1968. Reel 2, Frame 0719. 1953). Chicago History Museum: Records of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters.
[99] Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 80-81.

Welles, white diplomat and foreign policy adviser to President Roosevelt, solicited paid sex from a Pullman porter named John Stone. When Stone refused, Welles called in other porters individually, who each in turn refused him.[100] The requirements of porters to be friendly and aim to please passengers, combined with an imbalance of power with regards to their class and occupational status, suggests that porters were vulnerable to the desires and whims of passengers, and could come under pressure to act in ways that went beyond the normal scope of their role, and against their own wishes. There is no evidence that the porters in question suffered retaliation as a result of refusing Welles' request, but this was not always the case, as in the aforementioned assault on porter Morse Bing Jr., in which he was racially abused, beaten, and cut with a glass bottle by sailors after refusing to dance for them.[101]

The clear peril of interracial associations for porters explains why the black press leapt to the conclusion that Wilkins was lynched. Witnesses also made the connection, noting that Wilkins had been talking to, and possibly flirting with, the white woman in berth lower 7.[102] The woman, who gave her name as Mrs. George Henderson, was described by passengers as "bold," "tough," and, "apparently of no refinement;" Mrs. Rasmussen, who occupied lower 4, alluded to her possibly being a prostitute, claiming she was "evidently a sport as she has that 'hard look' so characteristic of such women."[103] In fact, the Pullman Company investigation uncovered evidence that Mrs. George Henderson—or Edith R. Reynolds as they discovered her real name to be— had killed her husband with a knife five years previously and was known to have stabbed a number of others, unquestionably making her a strong suspect in the case.[104] However, although going to great lengths to track her down and to gather intelligence on her, the company felt the status of the case did not warrant "such extreme measures" as interviewing "a dangerous and

---

[100] White House Secret Service told the porters to maintain their silence but by 1943 Welles' enemies had used the information to remove him from his post as Under-Secretary of State. For greater detail see Christopher A Parkes, "The Welles of Loneliness: Sumner Welles and the Creation of American Foreign Policy" (London School of Economics and Political Science, 2015), 199-202, 07; Douglas M. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays: Exposing the FBI's "Sex Deviates" Program* (2015), 36-68.
[101] "Morse Bing Jr. To G. W. Kelly."
[102] "J. J. Leary to Mr. Edw. J. Brennan," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. May 21 1930; P. W. Harvey, "Supplement Statement," April 7 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*; "Assistant Superintendant Lively to Mr. F. B. Kemp," April 12 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.
[103] "J. J. Leary to Mr. Edw. J. Brennan," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. May 15 1930; "Mr. Wm Venn to Mr. F. B. Kemp," April 5 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.
[104] She is also known as Edith Hansen in some of the documents, resulting from a different marriage.

unscrupulous woman."[105] The investigation had reached the limits of its usefulness to the company. Had Reynolds attacked Wilkins in the night, he may not have felt able to call out or seek help for fear of being thought the attacker—the "black rapist" was, after all, a powerful trope in public imagination. Witness reports place Wilkins and Reynolds together that night: Burgum noticed Wilkins pick up Reynolds' handbag and take it to her in the ladies' dressing room. "In my opinion," he wrote, "they were more familiar than colored porter or white woman passenger should be."[106] Porters were caught between two contradictory assumptions about their character based on race: they were expected to be loyal carers of women and children, and yet thought of as a potential rapists. Wilkins and other porters were therefore placed in a precarious situation, navigating between these assumptions in their performance of emotional labour. Hence, the Pullman Porters Quartette's warning to, "be careful when you smile," and not to "fool with goo-goo eyes" reminded porters of who might be watching their friendly smiles to white women, and what the potential consequences might be.

Before labour leader A. Philip Randolph founded the BSCP in 1925, porters had no independent union to work in their interests. In any case of suspected wrongdoing, such as a female passenger making a complaint of inappropriate behaviour, a porter had no official recourse and was forced to accept the Pullman Company's judgement and punishment.[107] The next section examines how the BSCP addressed this and other emotional strains of the job, both through the change it brought to the porters' working conditions, and by providing an opportunity for porters to reject the cheerful, mollifying personas required of them during their working hours.

THE UNION MAN

[105] "J. J. Leary to Mr. Edw. J. Brennan," April 12 1930. Memorandum. "In Re: Edith R. Reynolds", 23 Apr. 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Report; "In Re: Edith R. Reynolds", 24 Apr. 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Report; "J. J. Leary to Mr. Edw. J. Brennan," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. May 15 1930.

[106] W. H. Burgum, "Statement," April 5 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*.

[107] There are some cases of porters keeping or being given back their jobs after someone went to their local Pullman office to speak on their behalf. George Henry Smock once engaged in a fight with a white platform man in Texas but avoided losing his job after his father Gerrard, a longtime porter for the company, reprimanded his superior for sending his son south against his wishes. Perata, *Those Pullman Blues*, 11. Mrs J. B. Tucker also successfully demanded her husband's job back after he was fired for her union activities. Santino, *Miles of Smiles*, 45.

During the emergence of the BSCP, the creation of the new "Union Man" persona was sharply juxtaposed with the "Slave" persona still associated with porters. Between 1925 and 1928 A. Philip Randolph's socialist magazine *The Messenger* became a mouthpiece for the union, frequently denouncing the Pullman Company and the porters who agreed to do its bidding:

> The handicap under which the porters are now labouring are [sic] due to the fact that there are too many Uncle Toms in the service. With their slave psychology they bow and kowtow and lick the boots of the Company officials, who either pity or despise them. The company uses these me-too-boss, hat-in-hand porters to spy on the independent manly men.[108]

A Pullman operative reported Randolph's words at a mass meeting in St. Louis, in which he again presented a choice between the slave and the union man: "The thing to do is to get that fear of the white man out of your heart and be men and when you vote for the Employee's Representation Plan you vote for slavery and when you vote for the Brotherhood you vote for freedom."[109] Randolph presented the BSCP as an antidote to the racialised expectations of "Sambo" that lingered around the professional role of porter. The BSCP was not necessarily advocating for a change of emotional performance within the Pullman cars. In fact, union officials urged porters to pay special attention to "rendering good service on the cars," to make it "hard for the Pullman Company to turn public opinion against [the porters] as a group."[110] Randolph's "Uncle Toms" were those perceived to have internalised the slave mind-set to the extent that when dealing with Pullman Company officials they acted against their own interests, as well as the interests of porters, and therefore African Americans more widely.

His rhetoric of "Union Man" versus "Slave" seemed to work in the fledgling years of the union, between 1925 and 1928, as indicated by soaring membership numbers. That porters had begun to take on and use those ideas themselves is demonstrated by an anonymous hand-written note forwarded to Pullman Company Vice President O. P. Powell in 1927, along with a clipping from a white newspaper voicing support for the BSCP's efforts:

---

[108] A. Philip Randolph, "Pullman Porters Need Own Union," *The Messenger*. August 1925.
[109] Mr. A. V. Burr, "Report on Mass Meeting Held by A. Phillip Randolph, General Organiser of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids at Union Memorial Church, Leffingwell and Pine St., St. Louis, Mo., 3:30 P.M. Sunday, October 24, 1926. Chairman W. H Deaverney of New York City, N. Y.," October 25 1926, Propaganda. Bills, Posters, Stickers, etc. Sent Out by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1926–1927 (Newberry Library: Records of the BSCP), Part 3. Reel 9, Frame 0617, Microfilm.
[110] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, 329.

> READ THIS PAPER. WE ARE NO LONGER SLAVES. OUR UNION IS BACKED UP BY THE U.S. GOV. BOARD AND WE WILL MAKE YOU PAY US MO [*sic.*] MONEY. WE WILL THROW INSPECTOR RORRISSON OFF THE TRAIN SOME NIGHT ALSO PIG BACON. I WRITE AS ALL US PORTERS FEEL.[111]

The Superintendent who received the threat wrote in his communication to Powell that, "This is the first evidence I have had of any such spirit amongst the porters at this point," suggesting that the union's rhetoric of militant manliness in opposition to placid slavery encouraged porters to express themselves in a more direct and hostile manner towards the company, if only anonymously.[112] The threat to throw the Inspector off the train is better understood in the context of informal punishments that porters endured on the job at the hands of white inspectors and conductors, which the Wilkins case further illuminates.

Shortly after Wilkins' death a group of porters began to petition the Pullman Company to investigate. A letter of complaint was written, addressed to L. S. Hungerford, the Vice President and General Manager of the Pullman Company, and copies were sent around to different districts to gain porters' signatures. In addition to calling for a "rigid investigation," the porters asked the Pullman Company to take more effective steps to protect them:

> We wish to call attention to the habit very often practiced in the South, where Pullman porters for some misdemeanour are often taken from the cars and left at some small town, in many cases without proper means to get back to his terminal. We believe that it is no more than fare [*sic.*] that these porters be returned to their terminals. Under the present system a porter has very little protection unless the Company will come to his rescue in such cases.[113]

Clearly, porters who signed the letter suspected that Wilkins could have died after being ejected from the train at Locust Grove for a minor infraction. According to a 1944 study carried out by the Pullman Company, the primary reason that porters were put off trains was "insubordination" towards a conductor or inspector, who then would take "revenge on the porter by unloading him in an out-of-the-way

---

[111] "J. A. Rittenhouse to Mr O. P. Powell," October 25 1927, Propaganda. Bills, Posters, Stickers, etc. Sent Out by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1926–1927 (Newberry Library: Records of the BSCP), Part 3: Records of the BSCP Relations with the Pullman Company, 1925–1968. Reel 9, Frame 0530, Memorandum with attachments. The clipping is without any contextual information to suggest which newspaper it came from, but the terms it used to describe porters, "Georges" and "dusky Chesterfields" indicate that the writer and intended audience were white.

[112] Ibid.

[113] "Porters of the Louisville District to Mr. L. S. Hungerford," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. April 22 1930.

place."[114] Although the Pullman Company discouraged this kind of improvised discipline, its widespread practice, particularly in the South, highlights how circumspect porters had to be in keeping their behaviour and emotional expression in line with the conductors' expectations, to avoid accusations of "insubordination." This petition gives context to the aforementioned threatening note sent to the Superintendent in 1927, raising the possibility that it was intended to turn the tables on the white company staff, rather than threaten a random act of violence. The petition also makes clear the extra pressures on porters to maintain their emotional performance at almost all times while at work, not only during interactions with passengers.

Wilkins' death became central to a new BSCP campaign against the company. In response, the company kept close surveillance on the workers' union activities after news of the death quickly spread throughout the nation on the rail network. Intelligence reports from porters working secretly as Pullman Company operatives demonstrate that his death had a great impact on porters, throwing them into fear and uncertainty about how best to protect themselves. Theories of how and why the train crew had lynched him abounded, and there was the suggestion that Wilkins would have been better protected had he been a member of the union. There were also rumours that the company insurance would not pay out to Wilkins family or any other porter because of their race. Some porters discussed refusing assignment to southern runs in the future; others "expressed the intention of carrying firearms on their person for protection when going South."[115] By May 16 1930, the BSCP began calling for contributions to the "Wilkins Lynching Investigation Defense Fund."

When Wilkins was killed in April 1930, the BSCP was in the middle of a crisis. Membership had been falling dramatically for two years across the country. Even in the New York branch, where the Brotherhood was particularly strong, membership dropped from 1100 members in 1928 to just 300 in 1930.[116] The Great Depression, which devastated the US economy in 1929, undoubtedly had an impact on the disposable income of porters, making it harder for them to pay their dues.

---

[114] H. R. Lary, "Subject: A Study of the Causes Related to the Removal of Porters from Trains En Route," December 22 1944, *Study - Causes Related to Removal of Porters from Train en Route, 1944* Employee and Labor Relations Department, Series 3, General Labor Files,1900-1970. Box 24. Folder 553. Report. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives.
[115] Unknown operative, "Re: B. Of S. C. P.- Kansas City," April 5 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Report; "Re: B. Of S. C. P.- Oakland, Cal.," April 18 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Report; "Re: B. Of S. C. P.- St. Louis," *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. April 9 1930.
[116] Calculated based on figures from Brazeal, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*, 221-22.

However, the fact that numbers fell significantly in 1929, and that it was not until October of that year that the stock market crashed, suggests that other factors were also at play. Just days before a planned strike in June 1928, some porters revealed themselves as members of the union to their Pullman superiors and handed in their train key—only for the strike to be called off. Once it became apparent that the strike was not going ahead, due to an apparent lack of support from the wider black community, many rushed back to their district superintendent to secure their jobs, but it was too late.[117] Those porters who had been exposed were "held out of service" for years before being dropped from the company entirely.[118] The Brotherhood had promised organisation and industrial action as a path from slavish dependence on the company's goodwill to manhood and dignity.[119] Instead, the aborted strike put porters in a humiliating position and left some out of work, unable to provide for their families. It is no wonder, then, that in 1930 the BSCP needed a new focus for its recruitment. As one operative put it, the Brotherhood leadership used Wilkins' death to put out a "rallying call to porters to join the union."[120]

The BSCP seized upon the anxiety created in the wake of the incident to convince the porters that they needed to support a strong union that would protect their interests. It issued a propaganda leaflet asking porters to contribute to their fund, featuring the photo of a lynched black man hanging by his neck from a telegraph pole, alongside accompanying text warning: "This May Happen to You; Who Knows?"[121] The image was not contextualised, and those who saw it might easily have assumed the photograph depicted Wilkins. The act of lynching was often intended by perpetrators to create a state of fear among African American communities, in order to limit social mobility and ensure that exploitation of their labour could continue. The BSCP recreated the spectacle of lynching by printing and distributing this image, but to an entirely different end: the BSCP wanted to harness the fear generated by the idea of lynching to motivate support for the union.

---

[117] Bates, Pullman Porters, 98-99.
[118] "Record of E. Hamilton, Record of Henry Hill, Record of C. H. Callaway, Record of G. L. Askew.," n.d., *1928 Strike (threatened) - Dismissed Employees* Employee and Labor Relations Department, Series 3, General Labor Files, 1900-1970. Box 18. Folder 496. Newberry Library: Pullman Company Archives.
[119] For examples of the Brotherhood's rhetoric, see "Propaganda. Bills, Posters, Stickers, Etc. Sent out by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1926–1927," 1927, Records of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters (Bethesda, MA: University Publications of America), Series A, Part 3. Reel 9, Frame 0530, Microfilm.
[120] Unknown operative, "#165 Special," April 8 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Report.
[121] "Wife of Lynched Pullman Porter Is Left Penniless," 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Printed flyer.

A BSCP meeting was held on April 12 in New York to discuss the situation. According to a Pullman Company operative, 600 people attended a protest meeting at St Luke's Hall in New York. The police watched over the proceedings, which included heckling by communists and brawling. The operative noted the speech A. Philip Randolph gave about the difficulties the union had been facing:

> …only a short time ago he was of the opinion that they would be forced to close their doors. Some unforeseen occurrence had given them a new lease on life and therefore he felt that the organization was here for some good purpose.[122]

According to the operative's report, Randolph did not specify what occurrence had revitalized the BSCP, but the number of people present at the meeting suggest that Wilkins' death was a unifying force. It brought to the surface the fears and frustrations of porters with their work and the Pullman Company: the risk that they could be abandoned anywhere in the country, at any time, for failing to meet individual conductors' emotional expectations; that they were vulnerable as black workers passing through the South and the company was not willing to put any support in place for them; the fear that if they were injured or killed on the job that the company could avoid paying out what they were due.

The BSCP withstood the Great Depression and in 1935 the National Labor Relations Act was signed into law, thereby invalidating the Pullman Company's own Employee Representation Plan. The BSCP finally received its international charter from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). It took a further two years, though, for the Pullman Company to formally recognise the BSCP and sign its first negotiated agreement. The BSCP was the first national black union to achieve these victories, and the benefits included the largest salary rise the porters had ever received, from $77. 50 to $89. 50 per month.[123] The increase made porters a little less reliant on tips, easing the necessity to grin and bear abuse from passengers.

Porters understood that they lived in "a climate of suspicion and fear," confronting the twin battles of "labor" and "color."[124] Reviewing the BSCP's achievements while celebrating 28 years of the organisation in 1953, Randolph recalled: "porters were unceremoniously fired upon the slightest pretext by management without redress. It was practically unknown for a porter, when once

---

[122] "Unknown Correspondant to Mr. J. T Ransom," April 12 1930, *Illness and death of J. H. Wilkins*. Memorandum.
[123] Tye, *Rising from the Rails*, 165.
[124] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, 94.

discharged for anything to be restored to his job without the said porter crawling upon his belly and with great humiliation begging his boss for another chance."[125] By the time Randolph made this speech, the BSCP had secured an agreement with the Pullman Company that in order for an employee to be discharged their guilt of the charge must be proven "beyond a reasonable doubt," perhaps therefore reducing the degree to which porters felt it necessary to present themselves as servile when visiting the Pullman offices to discuss employment matters.[126] Randolph also claimed that the BSCP had effected better, more even treatment for porters by their white colleagues across regions:

> …it is a fact in which the organisation takes great pride, that the old days of abuse have gone. The porter in Georgia, despite unfavorable local racial mores, receives the same treatment he would be accorded in a great northern or western metropolitan center such as New York or Chicago.[127]

Establishing more consistency in treatment across the country eased any strain that porters felt of having to readjust their emotional expression to meet shifting demands. In addition to allowing porters to address and reduce the emotional strains of their work through organising, the union offered them an opportunity to meet, communicate their grievances to each other, and create a framework in which they could express themselves productively to their employer. Organisation provided a space of relative emotional freedom.

National BSCP meeting minutes from the mid-1950s make clear that porters in the Brotherhood at that time felt themselves to be at the centre of black rights activism, a "progressive and militant force" for both labour organisation and civil rights.[128] The BSCP was heavily involved with the 1941 March on Washington Movement, headed by A. Philip Randolph, which demanded an end to discrimination in the wartime industries.[129] In 1955 the BSCP organised a rally in Harlem, New York to protest the murder of Emmett Till, and in 1956 it worked with the NAACP to organise a civil rights fundraising conference in Madison Square

---

[125] Ibid., 104. First person accounts, such as that of ex-porter Matthew Housch's, support Randolph's statement that porters had to "beg" for their jobs back after being dismissed on the whim of white employees, but that the BSCP improved the situation. Kuhn, Joye, and West, *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948*, 71.
[126] Milton P. Webster, "Legal Definitions of the Phrase 'Beyond a Reasonable Doubt'," November 11 1953, Records of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters (Bethesda, MA: University Publications of America), Series A, Part 3. Reel 2, Frame 0719, Microfilm.
[127] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, 106.
[128] Ibid., 94.
[129] Bates, *Pullman Porters*, 148-56.

Garden.[130] In 1954, Dr. Robert Brisbane of Morehouse College went so far as to suggest that the BSCP would be ranked alongside the NAACP and the Urban League "when the history of Negro civil rights in the twentieth century is written."[131] In fact, the BSCP's contribution to civil rights was obscured in the twentieth century by the prominence of nonviolent direct action campaigns that came afterwards in the 1950s and 1960s, executed by organisations such as CORE (Congress Of Racial Equality), SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) and SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee).

Porters mainly continued to suppress or hide feelings of dissatisfaction while working. They could not be activists, at least in the conventional sense, in front of their passengers. In fact, U. Simpson Tate of the NAACP accused them of being "instruments for furthering segregation in travel" because they continued to place black interstate travellers in Jim Crow coaches after *Morgan v. Virginia* had been decided.[132] Instead, they embraced the persona of the "Diplomat," overlooking the humiliations of segregation in order to keep their jobs, but subtly organising and arranging to meet their own needs. Involvement in community activist organisations provided an opportunity to channel frustrations built up on the job into working for change. At an early church gathering about the Montgomery Bus Boycott, E. D. Nixon called for attendees to stand up against potential criticism and retaliations from the white community in Montgomery, telling the church ministers "it's time to take the aprons off."[133] For Nixon, the apron he wore as a Pullman porter represented a side of him that was powerless to complain or react in anger. The emotional labour involved in his work was impetus for him to voice his grievances where he could but, ironically, it was because he was a porter that he was freer to take a publicly radical position; his employment was not tied to the white Montgomery economy, thereby protecting him from the local economic repercussions that others suffered. Over the years he was President of the local BSCP chapter, led the Alabama chapter of the National Association for the

---

[130] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, 175-76, 217-19; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, "Salute and Support the Heroes of the South," 1956, *Political and protest flyers, circa 1956-196*. Box 3. Folder 8. Amistad Research Center: Eric Steele Wells Papers.
[131] Wilson, *Tearing Down the Color Bar*, 152.
[132] "U. Simpson Tate to George Weaver," October 30 1950, *NAACP discrimination complaint files: transportation*. Part 15, Series A. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[133] Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 136; Virginia Foster Durr and Hollinger F. Barnard, *Outside the Magic Circle: The Autobiography of Virginia Foster Durr*. (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1990), 281.

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and helped to launch the Montgomery Bus Boycott movement which resulted in the desegregation of Montgomery's city buses.

* * * *

Nixon's story is just one example of why scholars should give attention to the racialised emotional control African Americans experienced during the Jim Crow era. Understanding the severe restrictions on porters' emotional expression provides a valuable new perspective on Nixon's outburst against the Montgomery ministers, and his motivations as an activist. The circumstances of Wilkins' death, too, are illuminated through consideration of the perilous and contradictory emotional expectations placed on the intertwined identities of porter and black man. Pullman porters were expected to conform to the emotional norms of the "Slave" persona that followed them from the days of slavery. To meet the required norms without violating their sense of selves they developed the "Diplomat" identity, a persona that could smile and be deferential, but was clever, proficient and circumspect. Finally, the "Union Man" persona: bold, dissatisfied and even angry, promoted by Randolph and the BSCP from 1925 onwards, provided another antidote to emotional regulation as exercised by the Pullman Company, its staff and its passengers.

Many questions remain unanswered: was Wilkins murdered, lynched, or the victim of an accident? Why was his body found so far from the tracks? Who tied him to the sapling with his Pullman jacket? The Pullman Company's inquiry, though extensive, never set out to bring a murderer to justice but to protect the legal interests of the company. Yet, the investigation has also highlighted the stakes involved for porters in performing the required emotional labour, and the associated risks found in the ever-changing intersections of race and place. Speculation around Wilkins' interactions with Edith Reynolds demonstrate that the porters' performance of emotional labour was a dangerous tightrope walk, navigating changing racial expectations and the blurred line between good service and overfamiliarity as the train travelled from state to state. Failing to perform emotional labour to a standard considered adequate by passengers or crew could have put Wilkins at risk of racial violence, or being removed from the train in a dangerous place. Alternatively, suspicions about black men as aggressive sexual predators could have prevented

Wilkins from seeking help when attacked by a white woman during the night. White attitudes and surveillance of porters brought to bear an extreme and sometimes contradictory pressure to maintain a friendly, but not too friendly, countenance with white passengers throughout the long journeys on which they worked.

Racialised emotional labour was not limited to the experience of railroad porters, but was a significant part of other service roles dominated by African Americans: waiting staff, maids, cooks, busboys, and elevator operators, for example. The Pullman car is, however, a site in which this phenomenon is particularly visible and intense. This is partly because racial interactions between porter and passenger were required, frequent, and contained within a relatively small space, and partly because the Pullman Company's records tell such a vivid story of which kinds of emotions and behaviours were expected of porters, and which the company was most determined to curtail.

The next chapter examines African American servicemen and women during the Second World War. Black Americans' roles in the military were, in some respects, similar to that of the Pullman porter: the work involved a great deal of travel on public transportation, and they too were governed by institutional emotional control based on race. However, as Chapter 3 demonstrates, black participation in the military in this period was bound up with social, cultural, and political contexts that led to many African Americans rejecting segregated transportation through acts of resistance, and feeling validated in expressing their frustration and outrage at their treatment.

Chapter 3
Freedom from fear: African Americans in the armed services and the war against segregated public transportation

Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye;
Four gigantic freedoms baked in a pie.
When the pie was opened, a bone was in the pan;
Wasn't that a measly thing to set before a man?
– The Afro-American, October 9 1943[1]

In 1945 Thomas W. Young of the black newspaper *The Norfolk Journal and Guide* gave a speech to the graduating black air force trainees of Class 45-D at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Although the war was winding down when the new class finished their training, Young based his speech on the controversial subject of African American participation in the war effort for which, as his presence on the occasion suggested, he strongly advocated. His argument was based on practical considerations: if they collectively refused to help the United States in its time of need, it would undermine future claims to citizenship rights, including the "Four Freedoms" promised by Roosevelt in his 1941 State of the Union address. If African Americans agreed to join the war effort but were happy to remain in the manual jobs to which they had been restricted, "second class soldiers in wartime would have to accept in peacetime the status of second class citizens."[2]

Young stressed that his words were not intended to disparage any of the black supply or construction workers in the armed forces, adding that "some of the most valuable and heroic work of this war has involved maintaining our lines of supply," but he also contended that there was "quite a difference between serving in

[1] From a satirical cartoon in *The Afro-American* depicting disappointed African American naval Captain Hugh Mulzac sitting in front of a gigantic pie labelled with Roosevelt's famous "Four Freedoms for Everybody." The pastry is peeled back, revealing that it contains only the steaming wishbone of segregation. "Insult to Captain Mulzac." *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, October 9 1943. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=JKljAAAAIBAJ&sjid=XysMAAAAIBAJ&pg=1486%2C7461534; Holloway, *Jim Crow Wisdom: Memory and Identity in Black America since 1940*, 46-47.
[2] "Mr Thomas W. Young in Speech to Class 45-D Tuskegee Airfield," 1945, *Black Eagles - Tuskegee Army Airfield*. Box 5. Folder 1. Transcript. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 2.

the Quartermaster or Engineering Corps, or in a Port Battalion and being forced to give that kind of service by being excluded from other branches."[3] To underline his point, he evoked the familiar image of the Jim Crow bus:

> There is no stigma attached to riding on the back seat of a bus as such. But when you are forced to ride on that rear seat, excluded from all others, it seems to become terribly uncomfortable and distasteful.[4]

The airmen to whom Young spoke were part of a new generation of African American servicemen who had broken into areas of the military that had previously been barred to them. For the US Army, the Tuskegee Airmen were an experiment, but a successful one.[5] The majority of African Americans in the armed forces were "the guys that drove the trucks, cleaned the latrines, washed the dishes, cooked in the Mess Halls and did the menial tasks," but the Tuskegee airmen no longer sat in the figurative back seat.[6] While listening to Young's speech, however, they must have been painfully aware that when they stepped off their base and onto public conveyances in the town of Tuskegee, Alabama, the rear of the bus still awaited them. Even Captain Hugh Mulzac, the first African American captain of the US Merchant Marine, was subject to the indignities of segregation; in 1943 police in Richmond, Virginia, forced him out of a bus station after he refused to move to the "colored" waiting room.[7]

The Jim Crow bus, streetcar and railroad car were powerful symbols of oppression for African Americans, a visible and quotidian part of a complex and insidious system enforcing white supremacy. Segregated public transportation was also uncomfortable and inconvenient for African Americans. As Chapter 1 demonstrated, black individuals and organisations devoted a great deal of time and resources to fighting transport segregation in the courts as soon as state laws were

---

[3] Ibid., 2-3.
[4] Ibid.
[5] According to a press release from the Office of Public Relations at Tuskegee Army Air Field, the 99th Fighter Squadron from Tuskegee, who were deployed in Italy, "erased many of the doubts about the ability of Negro pilots." In a 1974 oral history the white commanding officer of the unit, Noel Francis Parrish, gave a more nuanced account of their abilities, explaining that he did not want to "pretend that this was the greatest and most effective unit ever produced," but that, considering their unique challenges, "I thought they did better than anyone had a right to expect." Tukegee Army Air Field Office of Public Relations, "The Record of the Negro Airman an "Accomplished Fact"," N.D., *Black Eagles - Tuskegee Army Airfield*. Box 5. Folder 1. Transcript. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project. p. 2. "General Noel F. Parrish," 1974. CCOH: U.S. Air Force Academy Oral History Program, p. 27.
[6] "Brig. General Daniel James Jr.," 1973. CCOH: U.S. Air Force Academy Oral History Program, p. 20.
[7] "Insult to Captain Mulzac."; Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 8.

introduced in the late nineteenth century, and throughout the first half of the twentieth century they brought test cases to the Supreme Court. During and after the Second World War, African American members of the armed forces and war veterans were at the forefront of frequent and open resistance to segregation in public transportation, as noted by scholars including Robin Kelley, Catherine Barnes, and Margaret Burnham.[8] In July 1941, for example, a group of black officers resisted threats from train staff and stayed in their coach on a rail journey from New York City to Fort Eustis, Virginia.[9] During the war, African American photographer Gordon Parks was with a group of black soldiers in Virginia who refused to move to the back of the bus, and eventually won the argument with the bus driver.[10] In New Orleans, soldiers, black and white, threw Jim Crow signs out of a streetcar window.[11] In 1949, black airmen at Maxwell Airfield in Montgomery began testing state and segregation laws on Montgomery City Lines buses long before the more famous Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and 1956.[12] In 1955, Private Sarah Keys refused to move from her seat, eventually leading to a landmark test case argued by black attorney Dovey Johnson Roundtree, who had been an officer during the Second World War and had similarly defied segregation on a bus during her service. There is a wealth of documented cases in which individuals, across the breadth of the armed forces, defied segregation on local and interstate public transportation.

Black activist and conscientious objector Bayard Rustin noticed that when young African American men returned home many felt "they were not getting what they should have" and expressed this frustration by ignoring segregation signs on buses.[13] Scholars have repeatedly identified the causal link between military experience and civil rights activism. Political scientist Chris Parker argues that scholars take for granted that veterans' militancy derived from their time in service, without providing a "microlevel mechanism" to fully explain the change. Using

---

[8] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 40; Kelley, "Congested Terrain: Resistance on Public Transport," 64; Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 3.
[9] Walter White, "Re: Jim Crow Practices by Public Carriers against Negro Members of the United States Armed Forces and Defense Workers.," August 3 1942, *Soldier travel*. Memorandum. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, p. 4. ProQuest History Vault.
[10] Gordon Parks, *A Choice of Weapons*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 262-64. Parks does not specify the year but based on other described events it probably occurred in 1943.
[11] Louis C. Hennick. "Lifting the Screen." *Moving Monuments: Newsletter of the New Orleans Streetcar Museum Project* 2, no. 1 (1994). 5.
[12] "Pilots Testing Alabama Jim-Crow Bus Seating," Pittsburgh (PA) Courier, July 2 1949.
[13] Henry Hampton interview with Bayard Rustin, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (October 26 1979). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/vm40xt471.

interviews and statistical analysis, he identifies three components of black southerners' military experience that elucidates veterans' increased militancy and activism on their return home: a new "sense of entitlement," "experience of service overseas" and "military institutional experiences."[14] This chapter confirms the three components identified by Parker, but diverges from his study in three significant ways. First, it uses a range of first-person accounts to emphasise the emotional factors involved, including the bond between servicemen formed by shared military experience. Second, it situates resistance by black members of the armed forces in the historical context of the First World War, which is vital to understanding the attitude of African Americans towards the US and the military at the start of the Second World War. Third, this chapter examines the distinct conditions on buses and trains that influenced the surge in challenges to racial discrimination in this area, both during the Second World War and afterwards. Scholarship acknowledges that wartime and post-war challenges to Jim Crow are key to understanding the "Long Civil Rights Movement," a term used by Jacqueline Dowd Hall to argue for a longer periodization of the Movement beyond the "classical phase" of between 1954 and 1968.[15] Yet historians have so far neglected to draw out fully the reasons behind the particular surge in resistance to segregated public transportation that began in the war years.

Burnham ascribes the change, in part, to increased travel and the overcrowding of facilities in southern cities. She notes that the ways in which segregation was implemented on buses and streetcars varied considerably between southern cities, and that, as a result, only a small percentage of servicemen and women would have been familiar with the exact procedures required to obey local laws and customs.[16] Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia authorised drivers to carry guns or blackjacks in order to enforce the law.[17] Crowded buses, drivers with weapons, and intensified confusion around how to obey segregation laws were exacerbating factors that account for an increase in violence on

[14] Christopher S. Parker, "When Politics Becomes Protest: Black Veterans and Political Activism in the Postwar South.." *The Journal of Politics* 71, no. 1 (2009). 114. doi: 10. 1017/S0022381608090087.
[15] Richard M. Dalfiume. "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution." *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 1 (1968). doi: 10. 2307/1894253; Geoffrey Perret, *Days of Sadness, Years of Triumph: The American People, 1939-1945*. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 11; John Dittmer, "We Return Fighting," in *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past."
[16] Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 9.
[17] Ibid., 8.

public transportation, but do not necessarily explain increased resistance to segregation. An incident of arrest or violence against a black serviceman or woman was not always in response to an act of black resistance. Barnes argues that black servicemen from the North "were not used to Southern segregation" and therefore "found it difficult to accept Jim Crow carriers."[18] While this is undoubtedly the case, and is documented extensively in first-person accounts, it fails to explain the instances in which southerners refused to accede to local custom.

Time served with the armed services changed African Americans, and their emotional reactions to segregated transportation, in significant ways. Burnham argues that they were different from the general black population, noting that they did not "accept matter-of-factly the discourtesies and assaults Black riders had grown accustomed to," but she has no explanation for the difference, other than suggesting that they were "liberated, many for the first time in their lives, from White bosses," and had "straight backs, spiffy uniforms, and business to attend to."[19] Kelley, like Burnham, highlights the military uniform as an agent of transformation, and provides a fuller explanation of its influence:

> In a world where clothes carried a great deal of social meaning and were often signifiers of power (or lack thereof), black men in uniform saw themselves as representing a higher authority and, therefore, felt empowered to act on principle. More importantly, their uniforms signified a clear, active opposition to fascism and Aryan supremacy, which is precisely what African Americans experienced in the South as far as black soldiers were concerned.[20]

Aligning with Marxist theories that suggest "mass political impotence may as frequently stem from shared perceptions of powerlessness as from any objective inability to mobilize significant political leverage," Kelley suggests that military uniform created a sense of moral duty and power for black servicemen that encouraged them to dispute any discrimination they observed or experienced while

---

[18] Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 40.

[19] Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 9. It seems a stretch to suggest that African American servicemen and women were free from white authority when, though segregated into all-black units, commanding officers were almost always white. Off base, they were subject to the orders of white Military Police, who are often complained of in first-person accounts for racial discrimination and violence. See, for example, Wendell Bullock, "Race Relations - Situations in Army (Personal Experiences)," n.d., *Reference Material – Typescripts – Other Authors, 1942-1943, n.d.* Box 5. Folder 23. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 3; McGuire, *Taps for a Jim Crow Army*, 188; Lawrence P. Scott, *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1994), 164-65.

[20] Kelley, "Congested Terrain: Resistance on Public Transport," 64.

in public.[21] Alternatively, as Parker argues, they "felt entitled to do so."[22] From the perspective of James M. Jasper's theory of how activism is realised, the "badge of servitude" of being forced to occupy the rear of the bus conflicted with the new authority bestowed by the military uniform, thereby causing moral shocks that transformed quickly into resistance.[23] The status represented by the uniform legitimised the expression of their irritation, anger and indignation, just as the Pullman porters' uniform delegitimised the expression of the same emotions. Kelley's explanation is a critical one, but not the whole story: representing the armed forces in a time of war involves a range of complex transformations, of which the wearing of uniform is only one facet.

This chapter will capture a broader and more nuanced view of the changes and pressures that drove so many African Americans in the armed forces to ignore fear of retaliatory violence and execute a scattered campaign of resistance to segregated transportation during the Second World War and afterwards. Examining oral histories, memoirs, correspondence and other archival documents, it explores the emotional reactions of servicemen and women to wartime experiences of public transportation and considers the factors that allowed black Americans in the armed forces to break free of the usual emotional control that suppressed overt complaint and resistance. Finally, it will situate the actions of these servicemen and women in the context of a "long" civil rights movement, recognising that wartime resistance did not flare up and then disappear, but was closely connected with the nonviolent protest movements of the 1950s and 1960s. Nor did the increase in resistance come from nowhere – as the next section shows, the context of African American participation in the First World War lay the groundwork for dissent.

"AN UNEVEN BARGAIN": THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

The dilemma that Thomas Young referred to in his speech to the graduating Tuskegee Airmen was not new; the same questions arose when the US declared war on Germany in 1917 and African Americans were asked to sacrifice time and money

---

[21] Ibid. Quotation from Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 37-38.
[22] Parker, "When Politics Becomes Protest," 117.
[23] Justice Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* argued that "the arbitrary separation of citizens on the basis of race while they are on a public highway is a badge of servitude wholly inconsistent with the civil freedom and the equality before the law established by the Constitution." *Plessy V. Ferguson*.

as well as their lives to support a democracy that made little effort to represent their interests or protect them from racist violence.[24] Yet many volunteered themselves to the military, accepting what historian Adriane Danette Lentz-Smith refers to as an "uneven bargain with the nation-state," in the hope that they could "use World War I to forestall white supremacy's ascent and to fulfil their quest for racial justice."[25] George F. Nave exemplified this hopeful outlook in his 1917 pamphlet *The New Negro's Attitude Toward His Government at a Time Like This*, when he wrote that the New Negro "expects to make this country accept him, claim him, and be proud of him from the valuable service he will render it."[26] Nave's hope was not illogical or unreasonable. As historian Jane Dailey observed, since the founding of the nation there existed an "ancient and enduring" connection between defending the US and enjoying the full rights of a citizen; the 1857 *Dred Scott* decision that excluded African Americans from citizenship cited the fact that they did not serve in the state militia as evidence that they were not considered citizens.[27]

380,000 African Americans served in the military during the First World War, and many more worked in defence industries. Yet, Nave's anticipation of acceptance and pride was left unrealised during the war and afterwards. Black soldiers were held back within the military, as journalist and former soldier George Schuyler recalled when discussing promotion within the ranks:

> …even when I was soldiering back in the late teens, there was this very deep feeling among Negro enlisted personnel, that they were hampered; if they were smart enough to pass an examination, it would be unlikely that they could take it.[28]

Similarly, Urban League leader Lester B. Granger talks about his experiences of being trained for the artillery, but then not being allowed to serve within a "white man's

---

[24] For a detailed account of African American attitudes towards the First World War, and the US government's response see Theodore Kornweibel, *Investigate Everything: Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I.* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002); Mark Ellis, *Race, War, and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I.* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001)

[25] Adriane Danette Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 4-5.

[26] George F. Nave, *The New Negro's Attitude toward His Government at a Time Like This.* (Muskogee, OK: 1917), 5.

[27] Jane Dailey, "The Sexual Politics of Race in World War II America," in *Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Kevin Michael Kruse and Stephen G. N. Tuck (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 149.

[28] "The Reminiscences of George S. Schuyler," n.d. 1962, Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews.* p. 470.

branch of service."[29] African Americans were not permitted to join the Marine Corps, and were mostly employed in menial positions in other branches. Their regiments were seldom sent into the theatre of operations.[30] Facilities were segregated, both on and off base. Sometimes "segregated" meant that African Americans were given a separate, usually inferior space; sometimes it meant that they were forbidden from entering a space assigned to white staff, with no black alternative available. In the mess hall and recreational spaces black servicemen received consistently substandard treatment compared with their white counterparts.

Some African American soldiers refused to suppress their anger at the obvious inequality. The most extreme case of rebellion on the part of black soldiers in the military during the First World War was the Houston Riot of 1917, which was triggered by the arrest and beating of two black soldiers, Private Edwards and Corporal Baltimore. More than a hundred soldiers marched into town and opened fire on residents, apparently prompted by anger and fear at rumours that Corporal Baltimore had been killed by police and that a white mob was on their way to kill them too.[31] It was police violence that brought brewing racial tensions to a head, but it was noted that the soldiers had been demonstrating against their treatment on streetcars in Houston by sitting at the front and removing Jim Crow signs in the days leading up to the disturbance.[32]

At the end of the war, the few regiments of black servicemen who had been permitted to serve overseas returned to a nation in which the press and public exalted the armed forces for their heroism, organising parades, picnics and other celebrations to welcome back both black and white troops around the country.[33] However, even in the midst of grand celebrations in New York, the achievements of black servicemen were diminished. Lester B. Granger, who was an army officer

---

[29] "The Reminiscences of Lester B. Granger," n.d. 1963, Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews*. p. 158.

[30] For a summary of which branches permitted African Americans to enlist, and at what times, see Krewasky A. Salter I, *The Story of Black Military Officers, 1861-1948*. (Hoboken, NJ: Taylor and Francis, 2014), 318-25.

[31] See *United States Vs. Sergeant William C. Nesbit, Et Al.*, United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General (1917). In particular, the testimonies of Captain Haig Shekerjian and First-Class Private Frank Beebe. Charles E. Cobb gives a an account of the riot in a wider context of black armed self-defence in Charles E. Cobb, *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible*. (New York: Basic Books, 2014), 73-77.

[32] Edgar A. Schuler. "The Houston Race Riot, 1917." *The Journal of Negro History* 29, no. 3 (1944). 311-12. doi: 10. 2307/2714820.

[33] Vincent Mikkelsen. "Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era," Doctoral thesis., Florida State University, 2007, 73. https://fsu.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fsu:180643/datastream/PDF/view.

during the First World War, noticed the way that even the most eminent black troops were treated:

> As a matter of fact, the 369th of New York, which then was the old 15th Regiment, spent in the first year overseas more days at the front than any other American group, and received more decorations. But when they came back to this country, they were not allowed to march down in the Victory Parade on lower Fifth Avenue. The Fifth Avenue Parade was the great glory that all of the returning troops looked forward to. They were marched further up, but they never got down to the sacrosanct precincts of lower Fifth Avenue.[34]

African American veterans returned to their homes to find that their service had brought them no closer to full citizenship; rather, the "red summer" of 1919 saw race riots and a spate of lynchings across the nation as white supremacists violently protected the status quo from the challenge of black upward mobility.[35] The navy barred African Americans from enlisting as soon as the war ended, despite the fact that many black sailors had distinguished themselves; a few had even been promoted to Chief Petty Officer, a position in command of white seamen, including John Henry "Dick" Turpin, who was promoted to Chief Gunner's Mate in 1917.[36] Black naval recruits were restricted to "just washing dishes and washing and ironing for the white people," a circumstance that did not change until after US entry into the Second World War.[37] It was not only servicemen who received a severe post-war blow: nearly a million African Americans who had been recruited into the war industry, many of whom migrated north for the opportunity, were "dropped out again."[38]

In addition to these disappointments, those black veterans who had embarked on foreign travel in the First World War were changed by experiencing cultures with different racial mores. According to Granger, the French had found African American troops abroad "plus gentil [*sic.*]" and favoured them over white

---

[34] "The Reminiscences of Lester B. Granger," n.d. 1963. p, 158.
[35] Lynching of black Americans rose considerably, from 39 cases in 1917 when the US had joined the war, to 60 in 1918 and 76 in 1919. Linder, "Lynchings: By Year and Race". For accounts of the lynching and riots that took place after the First World War, see Mikkelsen, "Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era."; McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*.
[36] "The Negro in the United States Navy," *The Crisis*. July 1940, 200. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=LlsEAAAAMBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false; Edward J. Marolda, *The U.S. Navy in the Korean War*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2007), 254.
[37] "The Negro in the United States Navy," 200; "The Reminiscences of George S. Schuyler," n.d. 1962, p. 255.
[38] "The Reminiscences of Lester B. Granger," n.d. 1963, p. 143.

Americans.[39] In the December 1919 issue of *The Crisis*, Lieutenant William Colson argued that this experience in France was "the greatest benefit" they had received from the war, because fighting as American citizens against the Germans and being received by the French "on terms of absolute social equality" taught them that, "uncompromising equality is the key to a long closed door."[40] Military training, too, gave black soldiers new skills that Colson believed they could use in post-war society to secure their civil rights. He pointed to "a resolute determination in self defense" and a desire to "lose his life in a good cause," which empowered veterans not to accept the treatment they had been subject to before the war:

> …each black soldier, as he travels on jim-crow cars, if he has the desire, can act his disapproval. When he is insulted, he can perform a counter-action. When he is exploited economically, he can strike.[41]

Principal Robert Russa Moton of the Tuskegee Institute reportedly counselled black servicemen to return to the US "modestly and unassuming," leading Ralph Waldo Tyler, the only black newspaper correspondent commissioned to report in France during the First World War, to condemn the advice as "a gratuitous insult":

> The returning colored soldier, those 200,000 over-seas fighters, resent I find, Principal Moton's implied advice, to accept without complaint, and as a matter of course, jim crow cars, segregation and damnable discrimination.[42]

The implication of Tyler's argument was that black soldiers who had proven themselves on the battlefield no longer felt obliged to behave in an appeasing manner towards those white soldiers who discriminated against them: they had earned the right to display their anger and frustration. Two decades later when the US joined the Second World War, black servicemen and women began to express these emotions more and more openly, and to act on their disapproval of Jim Crow cars, buses, and streetcars in numbers never before seen.

"A HOBSON'S CHOICE": THE SECOND WORLD WAR BEGINS

[39] Ibid., 31.
[40] Lieutenant William N. Colson, "The Immediate Function of the Negro Veteran," *The Messenger*. December 1 1919, 20. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.
[41] Ibid., 19.
[42] Ralph Tyler. "Tyler Launches Fight on Moton," *Afro American (Baltimore, MD)*, March 14 1919, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/530460630. Professional background of Ralph Waldo Tyler from Nina Mjagkij, *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience in World War I*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011), 137.

It is in the context of the First World War and its disappointments that African Americans made the choice of whether to support the war effort once the US declared war on Japan on December 8, 1941. James Sparrow contends that the Second World War marked the start of a closer relationship between government and citizens, as Americans began to encounter the federal government in their daily lives with more frequency, due to the government's wartime demands on its citizenry. The contributions expected of every American, whether it was military service, buying war bonds or rationing certain goods, reinforced notions of citizenship and rights due to citizens. "Over the course of a generation," Sparrow argues, this development "would foster the 'rights revolution,' a political transformation that would underpin the African American civil rights movement.[43] African American citizens were asked to enter once again into a bargain with the nation state, this time offering their resources in exchange for the "four essential human freedoms" outlined by President Roosevelt in 1941: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear, which Roosevelt stipulated referred to the fear of attack from other nations.[44] Yet, upon the US entering the Second World War, patriotic enthusiasm was subdued compared with that seen during the previous war. Black Red Cross nurse Odette Harper Hines recalled that black soldiers did not have the same "spirit" they displayed previously: "They were there and they were going to fight for their country but many of them didn't feel they had a country."[45]

Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) issued a press release immediately after the declaration of war, which acknowledged the disagreeable aftertaste lingering from the previous conflict:

> Memories of all Negroes except those of the very young are bitter-green regarding the last World War. We were taken up to a mountain-top and promised that if we gave without stint of our lives and resources we would enjoy after the war democracy in full measure. Instead of that, some of our

[43] James T. Sparrow, "Freedom to Want: The Federal Government and Politicized Consumption in World War II," in *Fog of War: The Second World War and the Civil Rights Movement*, ed. Kevin Michael Kruse and Stephen G. N. Tuck (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15-16.
[44] For a fuller account of the speech and its impact see Robert Underhill, *The Rise and Fall of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2012), 74; Andrew Johnstone, *Against Immediate Evil: American Internationalists and the Four Freedoms on the Eve of World War II*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 8-12.
[45] Rollins and Hines, *All Is Never Said: The Narrative of Odette Harper Hines*, 109.

> soldiers were lynched for wearing the uniform which they had worn in France fighting to preserve democracy.[46]

He went on to encourage African Americans to "remember that the declarations of war do not lessen the obligation to preserve and extend civil liberties here while the fight is being made to restore freedom from dictatorship abroad," pre-empting the *Pittsburgh Courier*'s famous "Double V" campaign for victory over fascism at home and abroad.[47] Ultimately, White was in no doubt that African Americans should again embrace patriotic duty. He argued that although theirs was a "Hobson's choice," the possibility of making a choice and of advancing their rights would be lost if they allowed Hitler to win the war.[48] Not everyone agreed. George Schuyler suggested in a 1960 interview that at the start of the war "the average Negro just looked upon Hitler as another poor cracker who got into power," and opinion pieces appeared in the black press observing that there was scant difference between the racist policies of German Nazis and the white supremacy of the US.[49] A survey of black New Yorkers in 1942 showed that, when questioned by a black interviewer, 22% of respondents thought that their treatment would be the same under German rule, though only 1% suggested it would be better.[50] Revealingly, 31% thought that Japanese rule would result in the same treatment and 18% of respondents thought treatment would be better.[51]

---

[46] "Fight for Liberties Here While Fighting Dictators Abroad, NAACP Urges," *The Crisis*. January 1942, 36. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=JVsEAAAAMBAJ&.

[47] Ibid. For more on the Pittsburgh Courier's "Double V" campaign, see Kimberley L. Phillips, "Where Are the Negro Soldiers? The Double V Campaign and the Segregated Military," in *War! What Is It Good For?: Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 24-25; Charles A. Simmons, *The African American Press: A History of News Coverage During National Crises, with Special Reference to Four Black Newspapers, 1827-1965*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1998), 79-81. A letter to the *Courier* Editor sparked the campaign, coining the term "double victory:" James G. Thompson. "Should I Sacrifice to Live 'Half-American?," *Pittsburgh (PA) Courier*, January 31 1942, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/hnppittsburghcourier/docview/202132603/951C69FEE64C47CCPQ/1?

[48] "Fight for Liberties Here While Fighting Dictators Abroad, NAACP Urges," 36.

[49] "The Reminiscences of George S. Schuyler," n.d. 1962, p. 324. For example opinion pieces see Lucius C. Harper. "Dustin' − Off the − News," *Chicago Defender*, May 9 1942, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/492630069. J. A. Rogers. "Rogers Says," *Pittsburgh (PA) Courier*, December 27 1941, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/202072109.

[50] There was a significant difference in the answers when the respondent was faced with a white interviewer: only 12% owned believing that they would be treated the same.

[51] Gerald Horne, *Race War: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire*. (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 44. 8% suggested "better" and 30% suggested the "same" to white interviewers. Bureau of Intelligence Extensive Surveys Division, Office of Facts and Figures, "The Negro Looks at the War," 1942. Box 5. Folder 25. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project. p. 3.

This sample of opinions reflects a dynamic that had not been so palpable in the previous war. As many saw it, against a backdrop of increasing resistance to white rule in European colonies, the Second World War was the beginning of an inevitable global race war. Although imperialists themselves, in a US context the Japanese were considered "Colored," and yet they had developed a society considered advanced and powerful. Their challenge to the myth of white supremacy was enough to gain the admiration of many African Americans, especially since Japan's defeat of Russia in 1905.[52] Although the attack on Pearl Harbor certainly dampened the enthusiasm for an African American – Japanese alliance, the idea that the Japanese were brethren survived for some.[53] The Public Affairs Committee, for example, published a pamphlet explaining how the Japanese could use instances of lynching or race discrimination in the US to their own advantage:

> The Japanese are acutely aware that the problem of color in the Far East is one of the pivotal questions in the war. … They know that there are millions of colored people, yellow and brown, who have had all of the white man's rule they ever want to see. If the Japanese can convince these millions that no trust or faith can be put in the words of the leaders of the United Nations, then half the battle is won.[54]

Yet, while the oppression of African Americans could be used as enemy propaganda to crush the morale of black servicemen and citizens, there was anxiety among white Americans that allowing black recruits to advance in the military was a mistake for the nation in the long-term. Fear was seen as the key tool of white supremacy, and for black men to lose their fear of fighting white men through military training could result in a loss of power.

Noel F. Parrish, white commander of the Tuskegee airmen during the Second World War, recalled a conversation with a General Smith at the start of the war in which Smith confided his personal opinion on the Tuskegee program:

> There will be a world war between blacks and white, and you and I by getting this school going are probably contributing to the power of the blacks in this war, but -- he said -- that's something we can't foresee, we just do our job.[55]

---

[52] Marc S. Gallicchio, *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 93.
[53] For discussion of sympathy for the Japanese in the black press at the start of the Second World War, see Harper, "Dustin' − Off the − News."; Rogers, "Rogers Says."
[54] Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, *The Negro and the War*. Vol. 71, (New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1942), 1-2.
[55] "General Noel F. Parrish," 1974, p. 20.

The anticipated race war never emerged in the literal terms that General Smith feared. Instead, over the next two decades African Americans developed multiple successful strategies for breaking down segregation and securing their voting rights, culminating in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The actions of servicemen and women are increasingly being acknowledged by historians as an essential part of this story. African American servicemen and women mobilised against discrimination both inside and outside the confines of their bases, protesting segregation where they found it: in movie theatres, post exchanges, servicemen and officer's clubs.[56] It was on buses, trains and streetcars, however, where servicemen and women fought some of their most important battles in the fight against discrimination, battles with lasting repercussions on the black communities in which they lived. The next section examines the conditions created by segregated public transportation that helped to foster the culture of its resistance among black servicemen and women.

"EXCESS BAGGAGE": WARTIME TRAVEL CONDITIONS

The wartime conditions on public transportation were even less comfortable, efficient, and safe for African Americans than they had been in peacetime. The Jim Crow train cars required in the South were usually located behind the coal car, conditions soldier Wendell Bullock described as "dirty, old, unsanitary, fumes puffing from engine."[57] Another complained that because there was no air conditioning on these cars, the windows were opened and his uniform would be dirty by the time he reached his destination.[58] Cars were often overcrowded because there was only one assigned for black passengers. Black wartime nurse Odette Harper Hines recalled a journey in which African Americans were assigned three to every seat, though they were designed for two, on an oversold car between Louisiana and New York.[59] Food was another important consideration that was often overlooked for African American servicemen on long trips. Theodore Saunders remembered he and other

---

[56] "Brig. General Daniel James Jr.," 1973, p. 2, 6; Lt. Col. Marcus H. Ray, "Training History, 931st Fa Bn," June 12 1944, *Interviews, Servicemen, A-B, 1944-1947*. Box 1. Folder 9. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project.

[57] Bullock, "Race Relations - Situations in Army (Personal Experiences)," *Reference Material – Typescripts – Other Authors, 1942-1943, n.d.* n.d., p. 1.

[58] Melton Alonza McLaurin, *The Marines of Montford Point: America's First Black Marines.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 42.

[59] Rollins and Hines, *All Is Never Said: The Narrative of Odette Harper Hines*, 120.

black soldiers were always assigned the car farthest away from the "chow" car, meaning that they received food last and had to make do with whatever was left.[60] Joseph Carpenter recounted a journey in which he and his fellow marines were unable to receive any food whatsoever because the dining car was for white passengers only.[61]

Walter White, Executive Secretary of the NAACP, lobbied the Director of the Office of Defense Transportation Joseph B. Eastman in August 1942 to make segregation non-compulsory for black members of the armed forces and defence workers, outlining the particular issues on the railroad:

> The rear part of the baggage car is frequently used as the Negro day-coach. It also serves as his smoker and dining-car. Being placed almost immediately behind the tender it gets most of the smoke and cinders. The news vendor or the conductor may occupy two of the all too few seats for the arrangement of wares, or for clerical work. Although there be plenty of seats in the other coaches, Negroes, men in the uniform of the United States Army and Navy, must stand when there are no longer any seats available in the restricted quarters.[62]

Eastman replied that ordering public carriers to discontinue segregation for those groups would leave him open to accusations of "taking advantage of the war to accomplish a social reform having only slight relation to efficient transportation." Despite White's arguments that mistreatment on the railroad was one of the reasons that "Negro morale in support for the war [was] "tragically low," Eastman viewed his job in terms of transport efficiency, and low morale among African Americans and unnecessarily empty seats in white cars were not issues relevant or pressing enough for him to provoke the ire of southern politicians.[63]

In fact there were occasions on which segregating passengers on trains did compromise the efficiency of the wartime transportation system in concrete ways, and had a profound emotional impact on black servicemen and women. One letter sent to Eastman in December of 1942 by a black non-commissioned officer stationed in Oklahoma, Corporal Charles F. Harris, Jr., told of being refused transport while travelling back from furlough in Florida. Along with other black soldiers, Harris was forced to lay over in Memphis, Tennessee for 20 hours and given

---

[60] "Interview with Theodore F. Saunders," 1948, *Commission of Inquiry into the Effect of Segregation and Discrimination on the Morale and Development of the Negro Soldier*. Box 1. Folder 2. Transcript. SCRBC: Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training Records, p. 20.
[61] McLaurin, *The Marines of Montford Point*, 39-40.
[62] White, "Re: Jim Crow Practices," *Soldier travel*. August 3 1942, p. 76-80.
[63] Ibid., 79.

a note by the railway staff to give to his superior explaining that, "this section did not have a colored compartment car, therefore, this colored man was not permitted to board train."[64] Despite being from the South himself, Harris was very clear on how he felt on being refused travel because of his race: "I was so humiliated, and startled, I was breathless."[65]

Similarly, a conductor removed African American Sergeant G. Buster from a train at Little Rock, Arkansas, after he refused to give up his seat to a white civilian in the coloured coach. According to Buster, the conductor swore at him as he got up and left without a word. After five or ten minutes, the conductor told him to come back onto the train, and Buster was so overcome with emotion that he refused. He later wrote that he was "so full until I couldn't open my mouth because I was hurt."[66] His reaction to the abuse was intense enough to result in a physical response of speechlessness. After getting on another train home, he composed a letter to Mrs. Alexander, Director of the Neighbourhood House in Waterbury, Connecticut, telling her, "I just didn't feel like be [*sic.*] a soldier any more because there was I put off the train in the cold and alone for nothing … please excuse this writing I am so mad."[67] Buster's letter is a good example of how quickly moral shock could resolve into action: he was initially rendered speechless by disbelief and indignation, which later became anger. By the time he left Little Rock on a different train, he was motivated to write to the *Pittsburgh Courier* in protest because he felt "something should be done about it."[68]

The conditions of the Jim Crow cars and the experiences of Buster and Harris make clear that, despite their obvious service to the war effort, black soldiers were still considered the least valuable passengers on any train. Even within the military the same attitude could be found. At a hearing held in 1948 by the Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training to determine the extent of segregation and discrimination in the army, General Holdridge testified that an MP (Military Policeman) had forced him to jump off a moving train in Richmond, Virginia, because it was too crowded:

---

[64] "Cpl. Charles F. Harris to Joseph B. Eastman," December 21 1942, *Soldier travel.* Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, p. 123-24. ProQuest History Vault.
[65] Ibid., 123.
[66] "Sgt. G. Buster to Mrs Alexander," December 19 1942, *Soldier travel.* Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, p. 126. ProQuest History Vault. Mrs. Alexander's official role is found in the letter sent to Roy Wilkins along with Buster's, on page 127 of the same folder.
[67] Ibid., 127.
[68] Ibid.

> [the MP] decided somehow or other, that I was excess baggage … and he ordered me to get up and drew his gun (and the other M.P. drew his gun) and ordered me to jump off the train. I had to jump off the train or get shot, so I jumped.[69]

Holdridge's explanation for this incident was that he was thrown off to keep the "Jim Crow coach" from becoming too crowded, so that they would not have to add in another coach for black passengers in adherence to the law that accommodations be equal for both races.[70] Since the black soldiers were under military jurisdiction, they were the easiest to remove.

Buses and streetcars were just as objectionable, although not always for the same reasons. As with rail transport, black troops were considered low-priority, and although army policy required that army-operated transport be "equally available to all military personnel regardless of race," the reality was that local companies often operated the buses.[71] Accounts reveal that many had to wait for hours at a bus stop on base because the bus would accept only five black soldiers at once, or even none at all if there were any white passengers already aboard.[72] It was in the scale and purpose of the trip where the circumstances differed to rail travel: often the bus journeys taken by servicemen and women were local, from base into town and back. Unlike rail travel where there was a separate car, the soldiers occupied the same physical space as locals; their journey into town was sometimes a soldier's first encounter with the public after a period of time spent only with other recruits. Servicemen and women went into town to buy personal supplies or begin a longer journey home on furlough, but often they were going out on evening passes to seek entertainment in cinemas or bars. In groups and off-duty, African Americans leaving their base and looking for amusement did not always adjust their behaviour and

---

[69] "Interview with General Holdridge," 1948, *Commission of Inquiry into the Effect of Segregation and Discrimination on the Morale and Development of the Negro Soldier*. Box 1. Folder 2. Transcript. SCRBC: Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training Records, p. 11.
[70] Ibid., 12.
[71] "Army Talk 170," 1947, *Army Talk*. Box 1. Folder 1. SCRBC: Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training Records, p. 7; Chester Wardlow, *United States Army in World War II, the Technical Services, the Transportation Corps: Movements, Training and Supply*. (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2003), 33.
[72] For examples see McGuire, *Taps for a Jim Crow Army*, 13-14, 18; "Interview with Joseph Judkin," 1948, *Commission of Inquiry into the Effect of Segregation and Discrimination on the Morale and Development of the Negro Soldier*. Box 1. Folder 2. Transcript. SCRBC: Committee against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training records, p. 14-15. Leo Bogart, "Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army," 1951, *Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army -- advance draft copy*. Box 1A. Folder 1. SCRBC: Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army ("Project Clear") Collection, B-II, p. 27.

emotional expression rapidly enough to avoid trouble with the locals. Some soldiers refused to adjust at all.

Herman A. Bing Jr. wrote to his sister describing a fight he got involved in while travelling back to Camp Pickett, Virginia on a public bus:

> A peckerwood told a colored boy quote, "that where he comes from colored sit in the back." Well when he reached to pull this boy out of the seat I smacked him and the fight was on. However the worst we got out of it was a few split lips + some bruises on our faces. The boy I hit lost his front tooth. We were lucky though cause when the M.P.s came we faded away + nobody recognised any of us. I don't believe that this is the end of the argument but come what may we had just as soon die here in Virginia as over in Africa someplace.[73]

It is not clear whether the white man was a fellow soldier or civilian, or whether other white passengers joined in "the fight," but what is especially striking about Bing's account is the immediate solidarity of other black servicemen as soon as Bing struck the first blow. Bing does not register any surprise that others joined him in this extremely dangerous course of action, but emphasises his confidence that he and his companions were ready to die resisting segregation and discrimination.

Violence and arrests on the local buses and streetcars were flashpoints of a wider racial tension that built in towns around military bases. Where large numbers of black troops were stationed in small southern towns, trouble predictably ensued. The Alexandria riot in Louisiana occurred in January 1942 when black soldiers from the 367th Infantry Regiment and 758th Tank Battalion tried to prevent the arrest of their friend by a white MP outside of the Ritz Theater. 24 white state troopers and local policemen appeared and 30 African Americans were injured in the ensuing shoot-out.[74] As with the 1917 Houston riot, the violence spilled over from everyday racial tensions that had been building since the Army's arrival. Such a huge and sudden population increase made conflict almost inevitable: Alexandria was a town of 25,000 people in 1941, and from early that year 75,000 soldiers arrived at four camps nearby, 16,000 of whom were African Americans.[75] Many of these black soldiers were from the North; the group involved in the riot came primarily from Pennsylvania, Illinois and New York.[76]

---

[73] "Herman A. Bing Jr. To Elnora Bing Williams," May 31 1943, *Bing, Herman A. March-October 1943*. Box 1. Folder 3. SCRBC: World War II letters from African American soldiers, pp. 1-3.
[74] Brown and Leighton, *The Negro and the War*, 71, 7-8.
[75] Ibid.; William M. Simpson. "A Tale Untold? The Alexandria, Louisiana, Lee Street Riot (January 10, 1942)." *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 35, no. 2 (1994). 137. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4233092.
[76] "A Tale Untold? The Alexandria, Louisiana, Lee Street Riot (January 10, 1942)," 137.

The outraged and embittered attitude of northern servicemen and women towards being "Jim Crowed" in the South – where 80% of black servicemen were trained – might suggest that segregation customs were uncommon in the North and elsewhere.[77] In fact, there was plenty of evidence of segregation on and off army bases outside of the South.[78] An article written for *The Crisis* by an anonymous black soldier stationed in the Northwest revealed that immediately before the war in 1940 black soldiers were being asked to sit at the back of the bus, but they had increasingly disobeyed this rule. There was still a great deal of racial tension on the bus, he noted, "hardly a week passes without an altercation resulting from the word so many of the white race deem necessary to label us by." But these altercations lacked the characteristics of southern wartime bus incidents: immediate and often brutal punishments that could be issued from white passengers, drivers, police or a combination thereof, including arrests, beatings, or both.[79]

A closer reading of accounts by northern African Americans stationed in the South reveals that this more explicit and restrictive type of segregation caused culture shock: painted signs made visible the racial assignment of space that had been unspoken, and often more flexible, in the North. Rail journeys to southern training bases provided many African Americans their first glimpse of the physical evidence of segregation, and one black soldier named Parnell described this moment in a letter to Fredi Washington, actress and Entertainment Editor at *The People's Voice*: "When we hit Virginia, I was to see for the first time, officially, signs designating separate facilities for white & colored. There is no word that can express the feeling I had along with the other fellows. By the way we were all from New York."[80] For arriving African American servicemen and women, the signs made evident the rigidity of the local social-racial systems and served precisely the opposite function of signs welcoming visitors to town. Parnell was aware before his journey that segregation laws existed in the South, yet the sight of the signs "officially" dividing up areas according to race had an emotional effect on him that, like Sergeant Buster, he was

---

[77] Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 3.
[78] See, for example, "Roy Wilkins to Truman K. Gibson," March 22 1943, *Truman K. Gibson and discrimination cases, including police violence against black soldiers*. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, pp. 21-22. ProQuest History Vault; Bullock, "Race Relations - Situations in Army (Personal Experiences)," *Reference Material – Typescripts – Other Authors, 1942-1943, n.d.* n.d., p. 6; "Brig. General Daniel James Jr.," 1973, p. 2.
[79] A Negro Enlisted Man, "Jim Crow in the Army Camps," *The Crisis*. December 1940, 385. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=KFsEAAAAMBAJ&.
[80] "Parnell to Fredi Washington," March 8 1944, *Correspondence from U. S. Training Camps, H-Y, 1943-1944*. Box 3. Folder 17. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 1.

unable to put into words. Despite being unable to precisely pin down his own feelings, Parnell assumed a commonality of feeling among all of the soldiers from New York.

When northern servicemen arrived in the South they came not only with different customs but also with a different set of emotional expressions for use in public. In fact, not all of them reacted as strongly as Parnell, and instead adapted to the emotional expectations of them, taking a "calm view" and "accepting life as it is;" others "grinned and bore" bad treatment.[81] In analysing skirmishes arising from black servicemen's bus journeys, African Americans were punished as much for refusing to obey racialised emotional conventions as for occupying space assigned to white passengers. The account of Clarence O. Ward of the Forty First Engineers demonstrates how emotions functioned in interracial exchanges between black servicemen and local white drivers and policemen. Ward was arrested on a bus in Raleigh, North Carolina, after refusing to obey the driver's order to move back. When the police arrived and told him to move he submitted, but the driver then declined to drive the bus "with that smart 'nigger' on there," and so Ward was taken to the police station. Eventually, they released him without charge and returned him to the bus station where he found the same driver behind the wheel of the next scheduled bus. As the police officer handed him over he told the driver: "see that this nigger gets on the back seat and if he resents what we have said or done to him, take something and and [*sic*.] knock his brains out, we are with you."[82] The officer's comment was clearly intended as a threat to Ward as well as an expression of white solidarity with the driver. His concern was not only whether Ward was going to sit in the designated place, but with his demeanour towards the bus driver – any show of anger or bitterness was considered grounds for more punishment. Private First Class Charlie Mabrey, Jr. encountered a similar scenario at a rest stop in Atlanta, Georgia. He got back on the bus and returned to his seat, which was now in front of a white woman who had boarded during the stop. The bus driver ordered him off the bus: "I immediately got off and asked him what was wrong with my ticket. He again said for me to just get off. It was then about seven-thirty o'clock. The driver then said, 'For blowing your damn top you will leave at on-fifteen [*sic*.] o'clock in the

---

[81] Gene Doughty interview in McLaurin, *The Marines of Montford Point*, 41-42; "John C. Williams to Elnora Bing Williams ", May 17 1943. Box 1. Folder 13. Letter. SCRBC: World War II letters from African-American Soldiers, 1940-1945.

[82] "Clarence O. Ward to the NAACP," June 1 1941, *Soldier travel*. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, p. 3. ProQuest History Vault.

morning.'"[83] Again, the initial offence to the bus driver was caused by Mabrey's violation of segregation, but the reason the driver gave for making him wait nearly six hours for another bus was his emotional expression: Mabrey did not display the humility and fear the driver expected of a black man in the South, but challenged the bus driver's orders and became angry.

Northern recruits were more likely to encounter conflict with bus drivers over segregation, and fuelled a burgeoning resistance. Sometimes this resistance took the form of writing letters to the NAACP or other organisations, but those letters made clear that, if the situation continued, more confrontational methods would be used. Thomas W. McKay and his companion at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri were asked to move to the rear to give a white woman their seats. McKay complied, but clearly the incident angered him, because he wrote a letter to Walter White warning, "it will be necessary for me to ride this bus again and I'm liable to take matters into my own hands. This is the first time I've had this to happen and I intend to see that it doesn't happen again."[84] Sometimes letters came from whole groups of servicemen who wanted advice from the NAACP on how to tackle the injustice and adverse emotional effects of segregation, and the extreme reactions of southerners to their defiance. When the bus driver asked a staff sergeant to move to the back of the bus to make way for white soldiers during the last 8 miles of a 33 mile trip from Camp Breckenridge to Henderson, Kentucky, the non-commissioned officer refused, and all of the black soldiers were ordered off the bus. Sergeant Houston H. Johnson wrote to the President of the NAACP, Arthur B. Springarn, to request assistance:

> We find it not only humiliating to the individual himself, but an insult to the uniforn [*sic.*] and the better things in life it is suppose to represent. We therefore, as a small minority in this community ask you, what is to be done in such cases? There will be many more race men to accupy [*sic.*] this camp in the near future, and the numbers riding the busses will increase to a point that it will take more than just a *prejudice heart* and a *country cop* to make *him* do *anything* he doesn't deem as justified.[85]

Johnson's letter expressed concern that numbers of black soldiers in that community could reach a critical mass with justification and capacity to mobilise against local white law enforcement. The written emphasis hints at the extent of his frustration,

---

[83] McGuire, *Taps for a Jim Crow Army*, 194.
[84] "Thomas W. Mckay to Walter White," February 3 1942, *Soldier travel*. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9. ProQuest History Vault.
[85] "Sgt. Houston H. Johnson to Arthur B. Springarn," October 27 1942, *Soldier travel*. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9, p. 120. ProQuest History Vault. Italicisation was underlined in the original document.

serving as a warning to the NAACP that unless the organisation was able to bring serious change to this unpleasant part of their daily life, that more confrontational and possibly violent resistance would follow.

"A SHOW OF UNITY": THE EFFECTS OF MILITARY LIFE

An unintended side effect of US military branches rigidly maintaining segregation was the opportunity to develop black solidarity and political consciousness. African Americans from all parts of the country assembled in the armed forces and talked, swapped stories and identified with one another's experiences. Dr Samuel Curtis, who served as a pilot at Tuskegee, emphasised the closeness of the relationships formed: "you fight together, you live together, and you are dependent upon one another. It's as intimate as you can get in that sense."[86] Famous calypso singer and civil rights activist Harry Belafonte pinpointed his time in the Navy during the Second World War as a time he realised "that southern poverty and prejudice affected me as a black man in America and simply as an American":

> What astonished me was the sheer range of American blacks around me. I met rural southerners, farmers mostly, who spoke in such a deep, dense drawl that at times I needed a translator. A group of northern intellectuals seemed no less exotic to me. But I felt more drawn to them. … When I dared to ask questions, though, I showed how naïve I was. 'Where did this Chihuahua come from?' one of the intellectuals asked. As if throwing bones to a dog, they tossed me political pamphlets, and I began to read.[87]

In their spare time the men had opportunity to read, think and discuss the place of African Americans in society with one another; first person accounts like Belafonte's and collected correspondence from servicemen show that many took the time to do so. A letter to New York Public Library in April 1944 from Sergeant L. S. Gibbons requested "a list of the latest Negro literature" on behalf of himself and the rest of his unit to help them build a small library. Gibbons mentioned that the men were particularly interested in books "that deal with after the war."[88]

Adolph W. Newton, another Navy recruit from New Jersey, also experienced a political awakening during his service, after talking for long periods with the

---

[86] "The Reminiscences of Dr. Samuel Curtis," 1979. CCOH: U.S. Air Force Academy Oral History Program. 14.
[87] Harry Belafonte, *My Song: A Memoir.* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2012), 47-48.
[88] "Sgt. L. S. Gibbons to New York Public Library," June 12 1944, *Letters from Servicemen During and After World War II – Includes Correspondence with Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1944-1947*. Box 1. Folder 6. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 1.

stewards and stewards' mates, who were black and mostly from the South. They related to him disturbing stories of abuse and "animal acts" at the hands of southern white men:

> Lynchings that never were recorded in police records and about the raping of Negro women … These things hurt me deeply, and I felt very sorry for my people in the South. But what could be done to end this sort of thing? The integration of the Navy might be the first step, but it was only one step, and we didn't even have any guidelines for it.[89]

The segregated armed services effectively united groups of African Americans who would never have met under other circumstances. The Women's Army Corps (WACs) had many more female black officers leading female black recruits than the servicemen had black male officers, and so were able to live and operate with relatively little interference from white officers.[90]

News of success by African Americans in the armed forces also encouraged a wider pride and camaraderie. Dr. Samuel Curtis remembered sitting in high school history classes and wondering where the "colored people" were during the "magnificent events" he learned about. It was joining the armed forces that helped to change the way he felt about his place in history as a black man:

> For me to go down to Tuskegee and meet these fantastic black people and to see some of the things that they had done, brilliant guys, good looking guys and gals, people who had been flying already and people who were geniuses at math, some of our instructors in the ground school were practically geniuses with two stripes, you know. … My feeling of pride in Afro-Americans just went up by leaps and bounds.[91]

African Americans who became successful and prominent in the war effort, whether through science, combat or some other form of heroism, chipped away at the concept of white supremacy by publicly embodying the potential talent, usefulness, and exemplary citizenship of African Americans.

One consequence of this new political consciousness and unity was the confidence to openly complain about discrimination and take practical steps towards societal changes, as a letter written in 1944 to the *Amsterdam News* shows. A group of

---

[89] Adolph W. Newton and Winston Eldridge, *Better Than Good: A Black Sailor's War, 1943-1945*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999), 72.
[90] Lawrence D. Reddick, "Answers from Capt. Kearney," 1947, *Black WACS And WAVES*. Box 5. Folder 7. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 2. African American women were able to attend the first WAAC Officer Candidate School, so at the start of the war there were more black female officers than recruits. See Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, to Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American Wacs Stationed Overseas During World War II*. (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 63-64.
[91] "The Reminiscences of Dr. Samuel Curtis," 1979, p. 34-35.

African American soldiers stationed abroad had read about the mistreatment of a black woman named Barbara Lewis on a bus, and had collected $133 for her legal aid. Private First Class Robert Davis wrote to the editor, "it's needless to say how we feel about such demonstrations of Fascism and when we return we will do all in our power to help abolish it there as we are helping here."[92] Davis assumes that his feelings on the matter will be shared and understood by the black editor and readers of the newspaper, just as Parnell and Herman A. Bing Jr. held similar expectations of the African American men around them. Davis went on to clarify that members of the Battalion were, "natives from various sections of the United States and not just natives of the Northern States" and announced: "when we return such a show of unity as is demonstrated here will continue to be an asset to us."[93]

At no point in the letter does Davis explicitly threaten an armed resistance to the type of racism Barbara Lewis experienced, yet the comparisons between the situation fighting overseas and the "Fascism" at home are a seemingly deliberate reminder that the group has the training and weapons with which to wage war in the US if required. Echoing Bing Jr.'s letter to his sister, Sergeant Barry Gerand wrote to Fredi Washington highlighting how his identity as part of the war machine influenced his attitude towards obtaining his rights:

> My suggestion for combating discrimination can be covered in two words- Blood and sweat. No, not tears this time. We've been crying long enough. We are ready for a change, a radical change. As a soldier, I believe in fighting for what I want, since I must fight anyway.[94]

Gerand's call to arms is indicative of a broader emotional adjustment expressed by African American servicemen and women, from sadness, distress, and resignation in the face of racial discrimination, to anger.

Although it was the segregated military and its training that placed African Americans together in a setting conducive to forming resistance, other aspects of military culture suppressed defiance of segregation customs or laws. Sergeant William E. Toney came up against the military's conservative racial policies after he was arrested in Fairfax, Virginia for refusing a driver's orders to move to the back of an almost empty bus. Toney had not broken the Virginia segregation law, which did not

---

[92] "Pfc Robert Davis to the Editor of Amsterdam News," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: Greyhound Bus Lines*. n.d. 1944, p. 105.
[93] Ibid.
[94] "Sgt. Barry Gerand to Fredi Washington," May 19 1943, *Correspondence from U. S. Training Camps, B-G, 1943-1944*. Box 3. Folder 16. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project.

require that black passengers seat from the rear but merely that "the races do not occupy contiguous seats," and the county declined to prosecute him when the case came to trial.[95] That he was not convicted did not prevent the military from punishing Toney, who had been considered officer material but after the arrest his application for officer training was rejected and he was reduced in rank.[96] He was also transferred further south; an occurrence many servicemen noted was used both as a way for commanding officers to rid themselves of black recruits they considered troublesome, as well as a form of punishment.[97] Daniel James Jr. remembered that when he and other black soldiers refused to stop protesting segregated facilities at Selfridge Field, Michigan, they were loaded onto trains and sent on a journey to the South that lasted days, routed up through Canada, without telling them where they were headed.[98]

According to Charles H. Houston, special legal counsel for the NAACP, Toney's application for officer training was rejected on the grounds of "improper attitude," a clue that the military, too, had emotional standards to which black recruits were required to adhere.[99] In a similar case, Lieutenant W. Langford, who had resisted segregation on his army base, was deemed "unsuitable for any duty in the Army of the United States" for the official reason of failing to display the correct level of "morale."[100] Cases likes these reveal the tension in segregated armed forces for black servicemen and women who, on the one hand, were united by the military and resolved to fight against discrimination and, on the other, closely monitored and restricted while they remained within the military. When the war ended in August 1945, one million African American servicemen began to return to their hometowns, many of whom were emboldened by their uniform and experiences, frustrated by military discrimination, and determined to fight for change.

---

[95] Charles H. Houston, "Memorandum for Judge William H. Hastie," December 4 1941, *Soldier travel.* LOC: Papers of the NAACP, Part 9. p. 6. ProQuest History Vault.
[96] Ibid., 5.
[97] See "Interview with Theodore F. Saunders," *Commission of Inquiry into the Effect of Segregation and Discrimination on the Morale and Development of the Negro Soldier.* 1948, p. 27-28; Bullock, "Race Relations - Situations in Army (Personal Experiences)," *Reference Material – Typescripts – Other Authors, 1942-1943, n.d.* n.d., p. 2.
[98] "Brig. General Daniel James Jr.," 1973, p. 5.
[99] Houston, "Memorandum for Judge William H. Hastie," *Soldier travel.* December 4 1941, p. 5.
[100] Major Edward D. Wimp, "Statement," November 11 1943, *Lawrance Willie Langford – Confidential File on World War II.* Box 5. Folder 13. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project; Lt. Col. Marcus H. Ray, "Statement," November 11 1943, *Lawrance Willie Langford – Confidential File on World War II.* Box 5. Folder 13. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project.

"BACK IN THEIR PLACES": POSTWAR STRUGGLES

Although African American servicemen and women were plagued by assaults on public transportation since the US joined the war, 1946 was an especially bloody year for African American servicemen returning home from their bases across the country and abroad.[101] Records in newspapers show there were at least six incidents that year involving brutal violence towards veterans pursuing travel on southern public transportation; four of these resulted in the veteran's death.[102] At first glance the majority of these confrontations do not appear to be connected to any deliberate act of resistance on the part of the veterans. In one case a veteran named Timothy Hood was not so much defying segregation as exercising control over it by moving a sign forward. The streetcar conductor, W. R. Week, shot him five times.[103]

Nonetheless, the incidents occurred in the wider context of increasing African American mobility, in both economic and geographical terms, which caused alarm and anger in those fiercely protecting white supremacy. 1 million of the 10 million African Americans living in the South in 1940 had moved North or West by the end of the war for work, raising their average annual earnings from $400 to over $1000, and their earnings from a third to around half the earnings of white men.[104] A

---

[101] See Andrew J. Huebner, *The Warrior Image: Soldiers in American Culture from the Second World War to the Vietnam Era*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 52-53.

[102] The men involved in the six incidents were Madison Harris, Walter Lee Johnson, John R. Owens, Isaac Woodard, Timothy Hood and Willie Henry. Madison Harris: "Vet Shot in Street Car; Atlantans Storm Court." *People's Voice (New York, NY)*, April 27 1946, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com. Walter Lee Johnson: "Another Veteran Shot by Georgia Power Motorman." *Atlanta (GA) Daily World*, September 29 1946. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/another-veteran-shot-by-georgia-power-motorman.pdf. John R. Owens: "Same Old Story: Streetcar Conductor Freed for Shooting," *Atlanta Daily World,* May 15 1946. In Alex Cherup "Servicemen Slain on Streetcars by Motormen with Guns: A Legal History and Analysis of the Killings of Veterans Walter Lee Johnson and Madison Harris,"Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic Summer 2014. Northeastern University School of Law, 2014. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/servicemen-slain-on-atlanta-streetcarsby-motormen-with-guns-a-legal-history-and-analysis-of-the-killings-of-veterans-walter-lee-johnson-and-madison-harris.pdf. Isaac Woodard: "Negro Vet Blinded by Dixie Cop." *Arkansas State Press*, July 19 1946, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com. Timothy Hood: "Veteran Is Shot Down Like a Rat for Moving Sign." *Plaindealer (Kansas City, KS)*, February 22 1946, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com. Willie Henry: "Disabled Vet Slain in Dixie: Show by Cop after Bus Depot Argument." *Chicago Defender*, August 17 1946, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com.i.ezproxy.nypl.org/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492723504/6A7E4658BAA34AC6PQ/14?

[103] "Ex-Marine Slain for Moving Jim Crow Sign." *Chicago Defender*, February 23 1946, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com.i.ezproxy.nypl.org/hnpchicagodefender/docview/492726721/2DB14D478879438DPQ/1?

[104] Sparrow, "Freedom to Want: The Federal Government and Politicized Consumption in World War II," 19.

higher income allowed for greater financial support of civil rights organisations like the NAACP, whose membership rocketed from 50,000 in 1940 to 400,000 by the war's end. 1946 also saw the first election season in which the effects of the 1944 *Smith v. Allwright* decision, outlawing all-white primaries, would be properly applied.[105] There was a sense that African Americans were beginning to enjoy some of the advantages of full citizenship, and where they were prevented from participating, ex-servicemen were the first to voice their anger. Veterans constituted a significant proportion of the two hundred black men who volunteered to testify at the investigative hearing concerning black Mississippians being prevented from voting in the primary, despite the fact that speaking out left them vulnerable to recrimination from white supremacists.[106] After returning home and struggling to find work, ex-servicemen in the South began to organise and make demands that were considered radical even by the NAACP.[107] In Atlanta, Georgia, where three of the six incidents occurred, black veterans lobbied to be integrated into new hospitals, marched on City Hall to demand that the police force hire African Americans, and began registering voters.[108]

Timothy Hood was murdered in his hometown of Bessemer on the outskirts of Birmingham a month after veterans had launched a voter registration drive there.[109] Hood had been stationed overseas and as he moved the streetcar sign he told his fellow passengers, "where I just came from, us colored had all the seat room we wanted. We sat anywhere we wanted to."[110] African Americans serving abroad reported feeling "freer" from Jim Crow, and rumours circulated of African Americans preferring to settle in Australia, which they considered racially tolerant,

---

[105] Sullivan, "Movement Building During the World War II Era: The NAACP's Legal Insurgency in the South," 71.
[106] Ibid., 78-79.
[107] Adolph W. Newton recalls being told at the employment office that he would never get a job as a diesel mechanic, which had been his job in the Navy. His experience was typical: the Urban League's Industrial Relations Newsletter in January 1946 noted that: "Negro veterans are not getting available jobs for which they are qualified. "The National Urban League Industrial Relations Newsletter Vol. II No. 1," January 1946, *African – American World War II Veterans – Printed Material, 1945-1946*. Box 5. Folder 21. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p. 3; Cherup, "Servicemen Slain on Streetcars by Motormen with Guns: A Legal History and Analysis of the Killings of Veterans Walter Lee Johnson and Madison Harris," 8.
[108] Ibid. The march on City Hall began from Ebenezer Church and was led by Martin Luther King Sr. Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education. "Phase One - Gradualism and Negotiation." http://www.atlantahighered.org/civilrights/timeline_detail.asp?year=1945 (Accessed July 5).
[109] Erik S. Gellman, *Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 230.
[110] Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 18.

than return to the US – some married white Australian women.[111] In particular, southern veterans' greater experiences of the world and race relations, whether they had travelled abroad or only within the US borders, gave them pause when conforming to the same indignities they had previously been used to. The expression of new confidence, dignity, and activist tendencies in returning African American veterans threatened white supremacists across the South, and the violent reaction was particularly noticeable in interactions with bus and streetcar drivers, with whom they came into regular contact.

Even more specific a threat to white southern bus and streetcar drivers, in 1944 the FEPC demanded the Philadelphia Transportation Company stop discriminating against African Americans in promotion, allowing black workers to become drivers. When white drivers mounted a strike in retaliation the federal government brought troops in and threatened to revoke their draft deferment – a transport strike in Philadelphia was an unacceptable hampering of war industries, preventing employees from getting to work.[112] Although Philadelphia was not the South, news that the federal government had intervened decisively on the part of black workers against white bus and streetcar drivers must have been troubling to southern motormen. Through claims to white unionised jobs and military service, African American men challenged historical notions of what it meant to be a black man: as Riché Richardson concludes in her study of black masculinity in the South, African American men were consistently portrayed as "cowardly, counterrevolutionary, infantile, and emasculated."[113] Engagement with what Jean Bethke Elshtain calls "armed civic virtue," regarded a defining male duty, may have particularly challenged the white manhood of drivers who did not serve in the war.[114]

---

[111] Lawrence D. Reddick, "Interview with Capt. Kearney," April 11 1946, *Black WACS And WAVES*. Box 5. Folder 7. Summary. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project; Enoch P. Waters, "Untitled," n.d., *Reference material - Other Author - 1945-1956 and n.d.* Box 5. Folder 24. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project, p.7. Australia's immigration laws did not permit black GIs to stay in the country after the war and the difficulties of living in the US as an interracial couple meant that the approximately 50 marriages that took place were destined to fail. John McKerrow, *The American Occupation of Australia, 1941-45: A Marriage of Necessity*. (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 75-77.

[112] James Wolfinger. ""We Are in the Front Lines in the Battle for Democracy": Carolyn Moore and Black Activism in World War II Philadelphia." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 72, no. 1 (2005). 13-16. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27778656.

[113] Riché Richardson, *Black Masculinity and the U.S. South: From Uncle Tom to Gangsta*. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2007), 6.

[114] For more on the connections between masculinity and military service, see Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War*. (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 49-50; Harvey C. Mansfield, *Manliness*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 75.

Against a background of newly visible black protest, failures to display the correct racialised emotions, meekness and fear, became more disturbing to drivers, who literally shot down challenges in a kneejerk reaction to black boldness. Five of the six violent incidents on public transportation in 1946 were initiated when a veteran verbally challenged a white authority working for the bus or streetcar line. Black veteran Walter Lee Johnson was killed September 29, 1946 after shouting the phrase: "straighten up and fly right," at a friend on a streetcar. The phrase was derived from the title of the popular Nat King Cole song of the time. The motorman later claimed he thought the exclamation was a curse levelled at him and disembarked in order to shoot Johnson.[115] In one of the incidents the challenge was non-verbal; a motorman spotted veteran Madison Harris carrying a gun as he left the streetcar by the back door. As he walked by the front door the driver shouted, "Boy, give me that gun." According to witnesses, Harris said not a word but lifted his hands into the air, whereupon the motorman shot him.[116]

When the national press reported on the incidents, there were reactions of disgust and horror from many white Americans.[117] Judge Waties Waring tried a case against Lynwood Shull, the Chief of Police in Batesburg, South Carolina, for beating and blinding Isaac Woodard, a black veteran in uniform who had been discharged from the Army that day. The police were called because Woodard had asked to go to the bathroom and when the driver cursed him, he cursed back.[118] Waring recalled the outcry after the incident:

> There was enormous resentment, particularly here among the N.A.A.C.P. people, and in a good many organizations around the country, at this outrage, as they thought, occurring to a discharged soldier. I am told that great pressure was brought on the Department of Justice to do something about it.[119]

Justice for Woodard became a celebrity cause: Orson Welles brought the case to public attention on his radio show, and a benefit concert was held in New York, at which 20,000 attendees heard Woody Guthrie perform his song, 'The Blinding of

---

[115] Cherup, "Servicemen Slain on Streetcars by Motormen with Guns: A Legal History and Analysis of the Killings of Veterans Walter Lee Johnson and Madison Harris," 3.
[116] "Vet Shot in Street Car; Atlantans Storm Court."
[117] "20,000 Raise a Fund for Blinded Veteran." *New York Times*, August 19 1946, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.
http://ezproxy.nottingham.ac.uk/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/107757723.
[118] W. Jack Walker. "Southern Cops Gouge War Veteran's Eyes Out," *People's Voice (New York, NY)*, July 20 1946, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.
[119] "The Reminiscences of J. Waties Waring," 1957, Oral history transcript. CCOH: *Biographical interviews*. p. 216.

Isaac Woodard."[120] Walter White and the Veterans Committee of Greater New York CIO Council were among those to call for a thorough investigation and compare this violent act to those of the Nazis, a comparison particularly piercing at a time when the Nuremberg trials were on going and the full extent of Nazi war crimes was becoming apparent to a horrified American public.[121]

According to Waring, the Woodard case was neither investigated nor prosecuted properly in the rush to get the trial over with, and a South Carolina jury found Shull not guilty with little to no discussion.[122] Nonetheless, Woodard received a great deal more attention in the national press compared with other veterans who had been beaten, shot or killed while travelling that year. Woodard's survival and his insistence on telling his story to the press contributed to the public response, as well as the fact that his service to his country and his country's treatment of him was contrasted particularly sharply by the detail that he had been discharged only 3 hours previously and was still in uniform. *The People's Voice* published his account summarising the story of, "how the joy and mingled pride that comes with an honourable discharge from the U.S. Army can be changed to bitterness and hatred when southern cops start 'putting niggers back in their places.'"[123] On August 1, 1946 an NAACP press release quoted "an angry Negro soldier," who had written to them:

> Millions of men just like myself have just won a war. May I ask did we win this war so that the white people of Monroe, Georgia, could get their mobs together and kill returning Negro veterans? … For thirteen months in the ETO I fought like hell and I'm not going to see my people shoved around like dogs.[124]

That even the NAACP, a fairly cautious and moderate civil rights organisation, thought the moment right to draw attention to the anger of black servicemen, and an implied threat of violent resistance, demonstrates that the tone of black dissent had noticeably changed since the start of the war. African Americans felt their contributions to the war effort solidified their claims to citizenship, and therefore felt

---

[120] Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Discovering Orson Welles*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 9-10. Welles read Woodard's affidavit on air, in which he mistakenly identified Aiken, South Carolina as the place in which the incident occurred, causing further controversy. "Aiken Is Angered at Welles Charge." *New York Times*, August 9 1946, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/107626725.

[121] "Negro Vet Blinded by Dixie Cop."; "CIO Vets Demand Probe of Cop Who Blinded Gi." *Arkansas State Press*, August 2 1946, America's Historical Newspapers. http://infoweb.newsbank.com.

[122] "The Reminiscences of J. Waties Waring," 1957, p. 216-23.

[123] Walker, "Southern Cops Gouge War Veteran's Eyes Out."

[124] NAACP, "Press Release," August 1 1946, *Letters from Servicemen Written After World War II Ended, 1945-1946*. Box 1. Folder 8. SCRBC: Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project.

freer to express their dissatisfaction at their treatment. The next section traces how the anger and frustration of veterans can be traced in the roots of the "classical" phase of the civil rights movement.

A LEGACY OF RESISTANCE: VETERANS AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Many prominent rights leaders began their activism after returning from war, such as brothers Medgar and Charles Evers, who both served as field secretary of the NAACP in Mississippi, Charles taking over the post after the assassination of his brother in 1963. Other examples of veteran activists include Hosea Williams, organiser for Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Aaron Henry, Clarksdale President of the NAACP, and Amzie Moore, who worked with both the NAACP and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) after returning to the US from overseas.[125] Their military service and subsequent civil rights involvement could be seen as purely coincidental or perhaps inevitable, considering their age and gender, but according to figures reported by the Negro Political Participation Study of 1961-1962, veterans were significantly more likely to take part in the political process in southern states than non-veterans, and the difference between the two groups taking part in high-risk activism was particularly evident.[126] Strong connections can be traced between the resistance of black servicemen and women and later protests, and scholars have widened the black rights struggle narrative to include these wartime contributions.[127]

Forms of nonviolent resistance, not thought of as such at the time, were being trialled within the armed forces. In retrospect, Daniel James Jr. recognises that he took part in the kinds of interracial tests that later became "sit-ins:"

> We would start by going into the club at Selfridge and ordering a drink and the bartender would say, "I can't serve you here." We just can't serve you here, this is the Supervisory Officer's Club." We would reply, "Well then, we'll sit here until you serve us." They then would close the bar. We would leave and later one of our White friends would call us and say, "Hey, they just opened the bar,

[125] For more information on these veterans, see Christopher S. Parker, *Fighting for Democracy: Black Veterans and the Struggle against White Supremacy in the Postwar South*. (Princeton University Press, 2009)
[126] Parker, "When Politics Becomes Protest," 123-27.
[127] See, for example, Sparrow, "Freedom to Want: The Federal Government and Politicized Consumption in World War II," 16; Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," 1247; Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 4.

> come on back." We would dash back up, and as soon as we walked in again they said the bar was closed.[128]

Burnham observes that veterans of Montgomery, Alabama resisted segregation on buses long before Rosa Parks and contends that, "black soldiers and veterans spawned the culture of resistance upon which the later movement was built."[129]

Black and white passengers observed African Americans in the armed forces performing acts of defiance against segregated transportation during and after the Second World War. The overall impact on those who witnessed servicemen defying segregation or in clashes with white authority is difficult to evaluate, but there are specific examples that begin to reveal the historical significance of these experiences. Jerome Smith, a black activist who took part in the 1961 Freedom Rides, recalled that his stand against segregated transport began in the 1940s when, as a child, he took down the "Colored" screen on a bus in New Orleans because he had seen his father, a seaman, do the same previously.[130] SNCC leader James Forman described an incident he witnessed at the age of 15, a black man protesting segregation by sitting next to a white man on a bus in Memphis, Tennessee in 1944. The black passenger remained calm and defiant when challenged by the white passenger, and Foreman recalls that he decided he would help the protester if it came to a fight, despite being aware of the likely consequences. Fortunately for Forman, no violence resulted. Although nothing clearly marked the protester as a serviceman or veteran, in his recollection Forman was enthused by the changing racial dynamic brought on by the war, sensing that "freedom was in the air" and remarking that in the aftermath of seeing the challenge he "felt good."[131] James Hicks, an African American journalist who served for three years overseas, attested that the training veterans received during the war, and their "resentment" of racial discrimination, was influential on the wider black community, drawing in civilians to their activism.[132]

Witnessing incidents in which black servicemen were belittled on public transportation also influenced white activists to join the black grassroots struggle. Ed

---

[128] "Brig. General Daniel James Jr.," 1973, p. 6.
[129] Burnham, "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard," 3.
[130] Jerome Smith, "The Jump-Off Point," in *My Soul Looks Back in Wonder: Voices of the Civil Rights Experience*, ed. Juan Williams (New York, N.Y.: AARP/Sterling, 2004), 60.
[131] James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 35-36.
[132] Llewellyn Smith interview with James L. Hicks, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965).* Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 2 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/41687k48t.

Blankenheim, a former marine, took a bus with a black friend from their military base in 1954, to go for some drinks in a nearby North Carolina town:

> When we got to the main gate, the driver of the bus pulled over to the bus turnaround area and said, "Okay, all you niggers get to the back of the bus." I couldn't believe it, and neither could my friend. He was mortified. … The driver came up and put his finger right in his chest and said "I'm talking to you nigger, get in the back of the bus." I was livid, I don't know what I woulda done.[133]

The memory of his friend being publicly threatened and humiliated stayed with Blankenheim for seven years until 1961 when he "was offered a chance to do something."[134] He boarded a bus with other freedom riders en route to Anniston, Alabama, as part of the Freedom Rides. This nonviolent campaign had seismic effects on the struggle to end segregation, the subject of the next chapter.

* * * *

Segregated transportation was a continually present and particular frustration for those who trained to fight in the US and returned home after the Second World War. Segregated train cars left African Americans in the armed forces unrested, undernourished and late in arrival at bases, while segregated buses from bases to local towns often excluded African Americans and, when they were allowed to board, proved to be sites of confrontation and violence. As first-person accounts demonstrate, the contrast between the patriotic status usually conferred on those serving the US in the armed forces, and reality of the treatment of African American servicemen and women, had a powerful and profound impact on the course of black resistance. Many began to express their frustration more openly than they had before the Second World War. The resulting resistance to segregation on buses, streetcars, and trains also reflected a broader trend of black servicemen, servicewomen and veterans fighting discrimination.

The more open expression of frustration and anger by black Americans, and servicemen and women in particular, derived from the particular circumstances created by the Second World War. From the start, African Americans were more wary of promises of full citizenship than they had been before the First World War.

---

[133] Clayborne Carson interview with Ed Blankenheim, *Freedom Rides*. King Research and Education Center, Stanford University. (November 14 2002). http://www.crmvet.org/nars/blaken02.htm.
[134] Ibid.

The government's wartime rhetoric and closer interaction between African Americans and the federal government resulted in greater visibility of the gap between theoretical and actual rights. As the war progressed, it became clear to many African Americans that fighting for their country could not in itself secure their citizenship, but could be used as leverage in their protests. The segregated military compounded this change in perspective, and contact with militant young African Americans contributed to a politicised culture within all-black units. The experience of alternative racial customs while serving both within the US and abroad also awakened black servicemen and women to possibilities of racial interaction on different, or more equal, terms. Although leaders of the armed forces worked hard to stamp out radical tendencies in their black recruits, military training and service empowered African Americans to express their anger about the obvious inequalities in their opportunity and treatment in more forceful terms. Freer expression of outrage and resentment was the first step towards fighting against racism at home, using the organisation and discipline they had developed in their training to begin organising for change.

Many African Americans who served in the armed forces played a crucial role in the "classical" civil rights movement that emerged in the mid-1950s, and those who organised famous civil rights campaigns often used militaristic language to characterise their work as "the job of the true soldier."[135] Yet, as the next chapter will demonstrate, the approach that made the civil rights movement successful originated in a tradition of protest that sharply departed from that which emerged during and immediately after the Second World War. While the approach of servicemen, servicewomen, and veterans emphasised strength, anger, and black unity against white oppression, successful campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s embraced a nonviolent method rooted in pacifist and Gandhian traditions. Nonviolent direct action necessitated the suppression of anger and aggression, and instead adopted a practice in which protesters "tried to be open and honest and loving with [their] opposition."[136] The nonviolent approach took the emotional management necessary to survive in white supremacist society to new levels and directed it back at oppressors as an effective form of resistance.

---

[135] Bayard Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," September 12 1985, CCOH: *Biographical Interviews*, p. 12.
[136] Orlando Bagwell interview with Diane Nash, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 12 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/qf85nd261.

Chapter 4
"The Movement on Wheels:"[1] Emotions in Nonviolent Challenges to Segregated Public Transportation

Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.
What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.
— Elisha A. Hoffman, "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms," 1887 [2]

In the summer of 1961, recently graduated from the University of Chicago and living in New York City, Carol Ruth Silver set off for Jackson, Mississippi, taking cheap pens and paper and the bare minimum of cash.[3] Like Homer Plessy almost 70 years earlier, the journey's sole purpose was her arrest. As a white Jewish woman in the North, she had been entirely unaffected by the routine indignity of segregated travel, just as light-skinned Homer Plessy could have travelled as he wished based on the assumption that he was white. Silver's story differs revealingly from Plessy's in what she did once arrested. Plessy waited to be bailed by the civil rights group that supported him, whereas Silver intended to remain in jail, for at least a month. Plessy's arrest was designed to launch a legal case, whereas Silver's arrest was an end in itself. Along with the hundreds of other "Freedom Riders," black and white, Silver made a commitment to help "fill the jails" of Mississippi.

While being a litigant in a civil rights test case was undoubtedly a protracted and arduous experience, Silver knew that being imprisoned would be uncomfortable,

[1] James Farmer talks of the Freedom Rides as "putting the movement on wheels." Raines, *My Soul Is Rested*, 110.
[2] Reportedly the first song sung at the first Montgomery Bus Boycott mass meeting at Martin Luther King's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in December 1955. Callie Crossely interview with Rev. Ralph Abernathy, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. Digital transcript, (November 6 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/ht24wm39b.
[3] Carol Ruth Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary: Smuggled Notes from Parchman Prison*. (Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 14.

dangerous, and could jeopardise her law career.[4] This begs the question: what moved her and hundreds of others like her to leave a place of relative safety to submit themselves to an unknown period of incarceration over the summer of 1961?

Although Silver had not even heard of the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE) until the beginning of the sit-in movement, she admitted to being "impressed" by their nonviolent direct action programme.[5] She, like the rest of the country, had been made familiar with nonviolent direct action during the Montgomery Bus Boycott five years previously, when it became front-page news nationally for over a year.[6] She thought it fortunate for white Americans that African Americans were choosing nonviolence over "Black Muslim-type of movements," which, in her view, openly expressed the "resentment of second-class citizenship" at the root of the sit-ins and the Freedom Rides.[7] Although not herself committed to the philosophy of nonviolence, she believed it was the most effective method of civil rights protest.[8] She marvelled at the black southern students she met who had faced attack and responded without anger or bitterness: "One of them, I think it was William Barbee, related his experiences in Alabama, where he had been beaten badly and then, lying on the ground at the feet of his assailant, held out his hand and said, "Brother, I love you."[9] Silver reflected that the story "sounded unbelievable but I am sure it is quite true," and professed herself "immensely impressed" by Barbee and the other black students she met, especially for their "religious feeling" and "complete acceptance of the Gandhian principles of nonviolence."[10] Silver's diary makes clear that particular emotional expressions attendant to nonviolence attracted her to the Freedom Rides: calm, courage, trust, and love for humankind. Although she acknowledged that African Americans were justified in feeling anger, frustration, resentment, and outrage at their treatment, she was repelled by a movement that refused to contain and suppress those feelings.

---

[4] Ibid., 3, 8.
[5] Ibid., 10.
[6] "Negroes Order 'Total Walking Day' in Arrest of Bus Boycott Leaders." *Washington Post*, February 24 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148839258/.
[7] *Freedom Rider Diary*, 9-10. The Nation of Islam, a black religious organisation, was becoming increasingly prominent and feared by white Americans at around this time, especially after the broadcast of the 1959 documentary *The Hate That Hate Produced. Louis E. Lomax and Mike Wallace, The Hate That Hate Produced, (New York: WNTA-TV, 1959).* Malcolm X, one of the documentary's subjects, describes the reaction in his autobiography. Malcolm X and Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. (New York: Ballentine Books, 1964), 238.
[8] Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary*, 11.
[9] Ibid., 21.
[10] Ibid.

Sociologists Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta suggest in *Passionate Politics* that nonviolent movements based on 'negative' emotions like anger and indignation, though they spurred activism, were "doomed to failure."[11] Instead, they observe, "calm resolution" and "serene determination" won over opponents.[12] Indeed, the goals of nonviolent protests during the 1950s and early 1960s were achieved through the expression of a specific set of emotions connected with nonviolence. These emotions were modelled on the organised nonviolent resistance of Mohandas Gandhi and his followers, or at least explanations of their theories as translated by social philosophers such as Krishnalal Shridharani and Richard Bartlett Gregg.[13] Gregg, an American Quaker who moved to India for four years to study Gandhi's campaigns of nonviolence, was the first to explain the basic strategies of dealing with conflict non-violently for a US audience in 1938. In Gregg's model, nonviolent practice was inseparable from emotions:

> The attitude of this new opponent is fearless, calm, steady; because of a different belief, training or experience he has much self-control. He does not respond to the attacker's violence with counter-violence. Instead, he accepts the blows good-temperedly, stating his belief as to the truth of the matter in dispute, asking for an examination of both sides of the dispute, and stating his readiness to abide by the truth. … He accepts blow after blow, showing no signs of fear or resentment, keeping steadily good-humored and kindly in look of eye, tone of voice, and posture of body and arms.[14]

Gregg argued that the demonstrator's choice of emotions, as well as what he or she chooses not to express, is a form of "moral jiu-jitsu," designed to throw the opponent off-balance.[15] In this analysis, witnesses to the conflict create a "mirror" for the opponent in which he or she realises that the onlooker perceives their actions to be "a little excessive and undignified – even a little ineffective," resulting in embarrassment and a sense of inferiority.[16] Witnesses gain sympathy and admiration for the nonviolent demonstrator. Finally, according to Gregg, the nonviolent

---

[11] Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper, and Francesca Polletta, *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 3-4.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Richard Bartlett Gregg, *The Psychology and Strategy of Gandhi's Nonviolent Resistance.* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1972); *The Power of Nonviolence.* (London, UK: James Clarke, 1960); Krishnalala Sridharani, *War without Violence; a Study of Gandhi's Method and Its Accomplishments*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939) On Richard Gregg's work more generally see Joseph Kip Kosek. "Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence." *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005). doi: 10. 2307/3660175.
[14] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 43-44.
[15] Ibid., 44-45.
[16] Ibid., 45.

demonstrator gains the respect of the opponent.[17]

Through examination of three nonviolent challenges to segregated transport as case studies: the Journey of Reconciliation, the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Freedom Rides, this chapter will evaluate how the emotions inherent in Gregg's nonviolent model were applied by demonstrators who sought to further African American civil rights through nonviolent direct action involving buses and trains. This chapter has two objectives: to analyse what part emotions played within the established sequence of events and to locate the nonviolent movement in the context of the everyday segregated travel examined in earlier chapters. It uncovers some of the complexities of the emotions involved in nonviolent protests, and evaluates whether a gulf existed between feeling and emotional expression.

The chapter also considers how closely emotions in nonviolent demonstrations adhered to the teachings of Gandhi and the model laid out by Gregg. Gandhian thought distinguishes between "power-oriented" nonviolence, sometimes referred to as passive resistance, and "truth-oriented" nonviolence, or *satyagraha*.[18] A truth-oriented approach follows Gregg's model. It does not seek victory over the opponent, but instead looks for a resolution that will be "a real benefit to both sides."[19] Love, humility and courage is felt as well as expressed. Power-oriented nonviolence, however, uses coercion to achieve its ends. Power-oriented passive resisters are "not concerned with truth; they know, or think they know, that truth is on their side."[20] This chapter argues that between the nonviolent protests of 1947 and 1961, challenges to segregated transportation underwent a subtle but significant shift as they grew in scope and recognition. Protesters moved away from truth-oriented nonviolence and towards a power-oriented form of nonviolence, a strategy that resulted in greater gains in the struggle against segregation. The final aim was no longer, as Gregg put it, to remove from ideological opponents the emotions that motivated opposition, "fear, anger and any foreboding or dread of loss or sense of

---

[17] Ibid., 48.
[18] Gandhi initially used the term "passive resistance" as an English translation of *satyagraha*, but then later became dissatisfied with this interpretation and instead applied "passive resistance" to forms of nonviolent resistance he disagreed with. See M. K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*. (Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1972), 102. Cited in Anthony J. Parel, *Pax Gandhiana: The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 196-97.
[19] Geoffrey Ostergaard, "Gandhian Nonviolence and Passive Resistance," (Satyagraha Foundation for Nonviolence Studies: Speech given at Muirhead Society, University of Birmingham, 1974) Speech. http://www.satyagrahafoundation.org/gandhian-nonviolence-and-passive-resistance/ (Accessed November 30 2016).
[20] Ibid.

separateness" and replace these feelings with those of "security, unity, sympathy and good-will."[21] Instead, participants sought to capture the admiration and sympathy of onlookers through the media, forcing the federal government to protect those rights in practice that African Americans had already won in the courts, and recruit observers to the cause.

Carol Ruth Silver was one of those recruited to the Freedom Rides, a link in the chain reaction of moral shock and action that perpetuated and sustained itself during 1961. Reacting to the emotions of Freedom Riders as well as the challenges they faced, Silver decided to become one of them and adopt the emotional expressions of nonviolence. Possibly because she, like many other Americans, was introduced to nonviolent resistance through the pastor-led Montgomery Bus Boycott, she associated the emotions of nonviolent protest specifically with the southern movement, perceiving that their acceptance of Gandhian principles sprang naturally from the "religious feeling" inherent in their southern Christian upbringing.[22] Silver's impressions, however, did not take into account that CORE's nonviolence had its roots in a specifically northern tradition of pacifism. Two decades before Silver made the decision to join with the Freedom Rides, black and white members of CORE in Chicago were debating Gandhian philosophy and in 1942 executed the "first organised civil rights sit-in in American history."[23] Five years later, they applied nonviolent direct action techniques to public transport, a campaign they named the Journey of Reconciliation but which is often referred to as "the first Freedom Ride."[24]

"AGGRESSIVE GOODWILL" AND THE JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION

Far removed from the black southern freedom movement, nonviolent resistance to racial discrimination in the US emerged from the Chicago regional offices of a primarily white religious and pacifist organisation: the Fellowship of Reconciliation

---

[21] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 48.
[22] Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary*, 21. That pastors, especially Martin Luther King Jr., were the driving force of the Montgomery Bus Boycott was the popular conception, actively encouraged to some extent by Montgomery Improvement Association. However, examinations of the contributions of others such as E. D. Nixon and Jo Ann Robinson reveal that groups and individuals outside of the church laid much of the groundwork.
[23] James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement*. (New York: New American Library, 1985), 106.
[24] Conrad J. Lynn, *There Is a Fountain: The Autobiography of a Civil Rights Lawyer*. (Westport, CT: L. Hill, 1979), 103; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 55.

(FOR). FOR was led by A. J. Muste and founded in 1915 in opposition to US involvement in the First World War. Although it was not strictly within the remit of FOR, the organisation agreed to pay black pacifist James Farmer's salary while he worked alongside FOR colleagues to desegregate ice skating rinks and diners and challenge residential race segregation.[25] Farmer and two white FOR members, George Houser and Bernice Fisher, founded CORE in 1942. Farmer remembered that, in those early years, the organisation struggled to recruit black members interested in applying nonviolent philosophy to resisting racial discrimination.[26] In 1943 CORE became a separate organisation; it had become apparent that, just as CORE's militant nonviolent activities could potentially be an embarrassment to FOR, FOR's pacifism was something that some black members of CORE were reluctant to be associated with in wartime.[27] Despite the split, FOR continued to ally itself with CORE.

In 1944 members of CORE debated whether to "invade" the South in order to draw attention to nonviolence as a way to resist segregation, but decided that such an attempt at that moment would be "suicidal."[28] By 1947 the circumstances had changed dramatically in the US, and conditions created by the end of the Second World War were deemed right for a demonstration of national scope. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, the foreign and domestic contributions of African Americans to the war strengthened their claim to equal citizenship. Segregated army bases in the South had helped to awaken African Americans in the North to the reality of southern segregation; the all-black units cultivated racial education and radicalisation of those previously apolitical. African Americans in the Armed Forces began resisting segregation on buses during the war, sometimes successfully, and by 1947 those stationed abroad had returned home.[29] Revelations of the full extent of persecution suffered by Jews and other social groups by Germany's Nazi government had also brought discrimination into focus in the US and helped to sway public opinion against the oppression of religious and racial groups. Finally, *Morgan vs. Virginia*

[25] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 90-101.
[26] Ibid., 76, 94.
[27] Ibid., 110. Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," 126.
[28] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 154.
[29] Hampton interview with Bayard Rustin. October 26, 1979; Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 40. A first-person account of a successful challenge to bus segregation can be found in Parks, *A Choice of Weapons*, 262-63.

established that segregation laws within interstate travel were a burden on interstate commerce and therefore unconstitutional.[30]

The *Morgan* decision might have negated the need for a protest like the one CORE was planning except for the fact that little changed in practical terms after segregation laws were ruled invalid in interstate transport. Carriers and railroad companies maintained the southern status quo either by officially instituting their own segregation policies or by continuing to enforce state segregation laws in opposition to the decision.[31] The NAACP decided that, after *Morgan*, its efforts were better spent on the legal battle over segregated education, but CORE was in a good position to begin a nonviolent strategy to take on transportation.[32] During the Second World War conscientious objectors associated with FOR were imprisoned for refusing both military and civilian service and executed plans of nonviolent direct action within prisons.[33] Black FOR activist and Quaker Bayard Rustin was sent to Ashland Federal Correctional Institution, Kentucky, where he led a group of conscientious objectors in attempting to desegregate the prisoner's living, eating and entertainment spaces.[34] The Second World War, perceived generally as a morally warranted war for freedom and democracy, made the position of pacifism more difficult to justify than it had been during the First World War.[35] Rustin and white CORE member Igal Roodenko both acknowledged that public sentiment against pacifism in the 1940s motivated CORE to take up some moral action as a substitute for enlisting:

> … here we were refusing to participate in the war against Hitler, and we had to find ways to rationalize and so the World War II period, those of us who were in CO camps and in prison—I'm not saying very many of us were involved in

[30] *Irene Morgan V. Commonwealth of Virginia*
[31] Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law*, 75.
[32] "William H. Hastie to Robert L. Carter," *William H. Hastie legal issues file, 1946-1949*. December 16 1946.
[33] 6,000 men and 500 women served time in prison during the Second World War for refusing to take part in the war. Ann Kramer, *Conscientious Objectors of the Second World War: Refusing to Fight.* (Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, 2013), 139.
[34] Marian Mollin. "The Limits of Egalitarianism: Radical Pacifism, Civil Rights, and the Journey of Reconciliation." *Radical History Review* 88, no. 1 (2004). 117-18. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/50932/pdf. A. J. Muste, "Memo, on Visit to Ashland, Kentucky, Federal Correctional Institution," July 27 1944, *Fellowship of Reconciliation race relations activities*. Part 18, Series C. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[35] Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest.* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 8-9.

> this— but quite a number were involved in the soul-searching. We found that we had to find positive alternatives, that pacifism was not simply nay-saying.[36]

As Gregg observed, nonviolent resistance uses the military "virtues" of "enterprise, courage, strenuous action, and endurance; sincerity, devotion and a sense of unity with one's own kind; order, training and discipline."[37] Nonviolent action provided the blueprint for how pacifism could be perceived as the job of a "true soldier" who, far from exhibiting cowardice in avoiding war, is willing to put himself in danger to fight inequality.[38] Nearly twenty years before southern black nonviolent protesters impressed Carol Ruth Silver with displays of courage, discipline and devotion, the pacifists who went on to build CORE were "impressed by some of the dramatic acts of civil disobedience that Gandhi engaged in against the British government."[39] Roodenko and his fellow pacifists realised that "the area in American life which most called for the Gandhian approach was the area of racism."[40] Once released from prison, radical pacifists used the example of Gandhi and the experience of sacrificing freedom for principles, and started to put nonviolent resistance into practice on the outside.

By 1947, the activist base was ready and the legal situation favourable for a test of buses and trains across the South. The *Morgan* decision meant that an interracial demonstration against segregation that crossed state lines would now be legal under federal law but still highly disruptive of southern customs, particularly in the states further south. After listening to the advice of other civil rights leaders, the original route from Washington D. C. to New Orleans was curtailed in favour of one that went only as far as Kentucky or Tennessee, avoiding the Deep South altogether.[41] There were further compromises made in the interests of safety. The organisers selected an interracial group of sixteen men; women of CORE, black or white, were not permitted to take part in the Journey, despite many being willing and eager to do so.[42] This decision marginalised the women who made up nearly half of the CORE charter members, but the Journey was considered an experiment, and

---

[36] Charlotte Adams, Jacquelyn Hall, and Jerry Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko, *Southern Oral History Program*. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. no. B-0010 (April 11 1974). http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/B-0010/menu.html 4.
[37] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 95.
[38] Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," *Biographical Interviews*, p. 12.
[39] Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 4.
[40] Ibid.
[41] James Peck, *Freedom Ride*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962), 13. Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 35.
[42] Mollin, "The Limits of Egalitarianism," 114-15.

some organisers clearly felt that gender was a variable too far.[43] It is possible that a sense of masculine duty to protect female CORE members also played a part in the decision, but it was judged that bringing women into the demonstration would be an "intolerable provocation" of segregationists' fear of miscegenation, potentially leading to violence and certainly distracting from the aims of the Journey.[44]

In a plan sent out to the NAACP and other civil rights organisations, George Houser outlined the aims of the Journey as follows:

> 1) giving obedience to the Supreme Court decision,
>
> 2) experimenting with techniques to encourage passengers to accept the law, and
>
> 3) reporting the effect of their action at mass meetings in southern cities on their return trip and calling upon masses of people, Negro and white, in the South, to renounce Jim Crow traveling in accordance with the decision of our highest Court.[45]

Writing once it was over, white participant Homer Jack was more specific about the aims. For him, the primary objective of the Journey was "to ascertain whether an unpopular court decision could be enforced by using the spirit of aggressive goodwill or, more accurately, non-violent direct action."[46] The cautious arrangements described in CORE's planning documents attest that stirring up the wrath of southern segregationists and grabbing headlines were not objectives of the trip. As well as excluding female riders because of potential controversy, the plan did not include the intention to seat black and white riders together on buses. Instead, they would break segregated seating patterns by seating white riders towards the back, and black riders towards the front.[47] During the Journey the participants did occasionally experiment with sitting in interracial pairs, but this was not part of the original proposal.[48]

---

[43] Ibid., 125.
[44] Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 35. Quotation from Lynn, *There Is a Fountain*, 109.
[45] George Houser and Bayard Rustin, "Memo on Bus Travel in the South," 1942, *Fellowship of Reconciliation race relations activities*. Part 18, Series C. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 55-57. ProQuest History Vault.
[46] Homer A. Jack. "Journey of Reconciliation." *Common Ground*, no. 3, Autumn (1947). 21. http://www.unz.org/Pub/CommonGround-1947q3-00021.
[47] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 12-13. Houser and Rustin, "Memo on Bus Travel in the South," *Fellowship of Reconciliation race relations activities*. 1942 53.
[48] George Houser and Bayard Rustin, "We Challenged Jim Crow!," 1947. Folder 35. Pamphlet. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina: Charles M. Jones Papers.4-5. http://blogs.lib.unc.edu/shc/index.php/2009/03/02/the-first-freedom-rides-part-1-of-3/.

The Journey was designed with the safety of its participants in mind. Houser undertook a preliminary journey along the planned route, accompanied most of the way by Bayard Rustin. The aim was to scope out sympathetic NAACP chapters and black churches in which to hold public meetings, and consult with those who could provide accommodation for the night or legal assistance should they be arrested during the Journey.[49] Even having taken these precautions, Houser was frightened at the outset of the demonstration, describing it as a "nerve-racking experience because you were confronted with the possibility of not just an arrest, but of mob action. You couldn't control it."[50] Volunteers and organisers alike had no sense of what the reaction might be; this was the first mobile demonstration of its kind.[51]

All that CORE could do was prepare for a wide variety of potential situations. Immediately before the group departed from Washington D.C. members gathered for a rigorous two-day workshop on nonviolence in which they performed "sociodramas," possible scenarios and responses to abuse from police officers, bus drivers and segregationists.[52] Role-playing enabled participants to practise their responses in the face of harassment and violence, both in terms of action and emotional expression. As white participant James Peck recalled, the volunteers were coached to cultivate a resolute but respectful manner toward anyone attempting to move them from their seats: "you were supposed to remain nonviolent but stand firm."[53] Remaining calm and resolved was easier said than done for many participants, including Roodenko, who admitted to being "apprehensive" at first. Although they had rehearsed situations and held discussions among themselves, Roodenko knew that it would be more difficult to replicate the practised responses when on board buses and trains full of strangers.[54]

It was the resolve displayed by the seasoned African American demonstrators, among them Bayard Rustin, activist Wally Nelson, and lawyer Conrad

---

[49] C. Arthur Bradley interview with George Houser, *WWII Conscientious Objectors Project*. University of Illinois, Springfield. no. H817G 1988). http://www.idaillinois.org/cdm/ref/collection/uis/id/249237.

[50] Ibid.

[51] One of the participants, Conrad Lynn, was involved in an interracial journey by foot from Harlem to Washington D.C. down the Lincoln Highway in 1942, organised by pacifists as a response to the lack of economic opportunity for African Americans during the Second World War. It was similar to the Journey of Reconciliation in that the participants pledged themselves to nonviolence, but although they travelled together and received violent threats, there was no attempt to desegregate public facilities. Lynn, *There Is a Fountain*, 87-91.

[52] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 12.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 9.

Lynn, that helped less experienced volunteers like Roodenko to gain their courage during the course of the Journey.[55] The feeling of being part of a group working towards a solution to a problem also helped to alleviate anxiety among the volunteers. Even in 1946, before the Journey, Houser had recognised that:

> One of the real advantages of the [nonviolent] direct action approach is that it gets a high degree of group participation in group activities. It also gives real enthusiasm to members of an organization working on a specific problem. We have found this particularly true in our CORE groups; when we have been involved in a direct action activity membership morale has been extremely high and we have had large group participation.[56]

In his letter to Director of Branches of the NAACP Ella Baker, recommending that she consider the nonviolent approach, Houser equates nonviolent direct action activities with a greater degree of participation, and group participation with increased morale and enthusiasm for taking action. He could not have anticipated at this time the extent to which the enthusiasm generated by group action could sustain nonviolent campaigns on the scale seen in the mid-1950s and early 1960s.

Roodenko cites one particularly revealing moment when Rustin took control after Joseph Felmet, white, and Andrew Johnson, black, had been arrested at Chapel Hill, North Carolina for sitting together near the front of the bus. The bus driver was at the police station, leaving the passengers to sit and wait for his return. In the meantime, Rustin and Roodenko caught each other's eye and moved themselves to the seat Felmet and Johnson had just vacated. As passengers began to respond to the turn of events, some positively and some negatively, Rustin began a dramatic dialogue with Roodenko, deliberately speaking calmly but loud enough for everyone to hear. This conversation encouraged a public forum to develop on the bus, whereby activists had some meaningful exchanges with those passengers who felt inconvenienced by the arrests. Passengers who voiced their opinions generally agreed that segregation on the buses was wrong, but that "to shake up the thing was to make things worse."[57] In their report after the Journey, Rustin and Houser noted that whenever passengers did discuss the issues before them, "those who seemed certain of their facts and who spoke clearly and assuredly set the tone. Attitudes were greatly accelerated in the right direction whenever a person of liberal sentiments spoke up

---

[55] Ibid., 6, 9.
[56] "George Houser to Ella Baker," February 4 1946, *Congress of Racial Equality files, 1945-1948*. Part 18, Series B. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP.8. ProQuest History Vault.
[57] Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with April 11, 1974. 10.

first."[58] In the enclosed space of the Greyhound and Trailways buses, civilised composure spread not only to the other participants, but also to other passengers.

Rustin and Houser noted that African American passengers generally followed "the dominant reaction of the bus … first fear, followed by caution."[59] Participants heard black passengers make comments like: "He should know his place," and "when in Rome, I believe in doing as the Romans do."[60] On more than one occasion, African American passengers attempted to persuade the participants to obey the bus driver and adhere to segregated seating patterns, advocating in effect that "you can't change the world, so be good and don't cause trouble."[61] One black bus station porter came onto the bus and tried to have the participants thrown off.[62] Ollie Stewart, a black journalist who accompanied the participants for the first half of the journey, lamented the attitude displayed by African Americans in the South towards the Journey in an article for the *Richmond Afro-American*, declaring, "on at least a dozen occasions, I was so ashamed of things I heard I wanted to weep in shame."[63] When considering the history of violence on buses and trains, within which white Americans rigidly policed the emotions and behaviour of African Americans, it is no surprise that such a blatant challenge to established customs would inspire fear and sometimes opposition in African Americans in the South. As previous chapters have indicated, the variability in treatment by bus drivers, police, and passengers depending on the place and time was one of the factors that made travel on segregated public transport stressful and dangerous for African Americans. For black passengers, an interruption to the normal seating patterns on southern interstate buses contributed more stress and uncertainty, regardless of CORE's intention to break down an oppressive system.

There were 12 arrests of participants during the course of the Journey and trials resulted in Petersburg, Amherst and Culpepper in Virginia, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Asheville, Tennessee.[64] In every case the police were "polite and calm," which Rustin and Houser put down to the attitude of the participants:

---

[58] Houser and Rustin, "We Challenged Jim Crow!," 1947, p. 12.
[59] Ibid., 10.
[60] Ollie Stewart. "Journey of Reconciliation Knocks Props from under Weak J.C. System," *Afro American (Richmond, VA)* April 26 1947. https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=hHc6AAAAIBAJ&sjid=PyoMAAAAIBAJ&pg=1489%2C1969540; Houser and Rustin, "We Challenged Jim Crow!," 1947, p. 7.
[61] Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974.
[62] Houser and Rustin, "We Challenged Jim Crow!," 1947, p. 4.
[63] Stewart, "Journey of Reconciliation Knocks Props from under Weak J.C. System."
[64] Houser and Rustin, "We Challenged Jim Crow!," 1947, pp. 2, 7-9.

> They acted without fear, spoke quietly and firmly, showing great consideration for the police and bus drivers, and repeatedly pointed to the fact that they expected the police to do their duty as they saw it. … It is our belief that the reason the police behaved politely stems from the fact that there was not the slightest provocation in the attitude of the resisters. On the contrary, we tried at all times to understand their attitude and position first.[65]

Their statement, which appears naïve in light of how the Freedom Riders were treated later, nonetheless indicates that the participants entered into every situation of conflict with the sincere aim of understanding their opponents' position. The bus drivers, train conductors and passengers, too, were rarely aggressive when faced with CORE's deliberate flouting of segregation, and the passengers in particular were described in Houser and Rustin's report as generally "apathetic," refusing to share their feelings with the group "even in situations where it was apparent from facial expressions that they were for or against the action which the group was taking."[66]

Where violence was threatened or, in one case, inflicted, it came from external parties: taxi drivers or other locals who happened to be at the bus station when the bus arrived. The passengers on the buses witnessing these tests came from around the US and consequently had less investment in the local segregation customs. Although some white southerners made comments such as "in my state he would either move or be killed," or in the case of one train conductor, "if we were in Alabama, we would throw you out of the window," the people on public transport were often merely passing through whereas, as Conrad Lynn observed, the locals viewed the demonstrators as "intruders who were disturbing a way of life."[67] When Lynn was arrested in the bus station at Petersberg, Virginia, a large group of locals gathered outside the bus and began making violent threats. Lynn was bailed out and put immediately on a train to Raleigh by police, to avoid mob violence at the hands of the "ugly" crowd that had formed.[68]

James Peck observed that the arrival of the Journey participants in southern towns could be a trigger for racial unrest that had been simmering locally long before their appearance.[69] Peck suffered the only instance of physical violence during the Journey in Chapel Hill, which was thought of as "the most liberal point in the

---

[65] Ibid., 11.
[66] Ibid., 4, 10.
[67] Ibid., 6-7; Lynn, *There Is a Fountain*, 111.
[68] Lynn had originally joined the Journey as the group's lawyer, but had stepped in as a last-minute replacement for Wally Nelson, who had been scheduled to be part of the test at Petersberg. Nelson had looked "unusually tense" that morning and disclosed to the others that he was not confident he could remain nonviolent if attacked. *There Is a Fountain*, 110-11.
[69] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 16.

South."[70] The racial tolerance developing there had resulted in high-profile challenges to segregation that increased tensions in the lead up to CORE's visit. Black singer Dorothy Mayer had controversially performed before an integrated audience earlier in the year, and a local white minister named Charles Jones had allowed an interracial Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) meeting in his church just weeks before the Journey passed through.[71] When Peck disembarked from the bus in order to put up bail for four participants who had been arrested, five taxi drivers surrounded him:

> "Coming down here to stir up the niggers," snarled a big one with steel-cold gray eyes. With that he slugged me on the side of the head. I stepped back, looked at him, and asked, "What's the matter?" He gave me a perplexed look and started to walk away awkwardly. My failure to retaliate with violence had taken him by surprise. I have found that use of nonviolence in such situations often has this effect.[72]

Peck's account of this exchange conforms closely to the techniques and outcomes of nonviolent action laid out by Gregg: the lack of fear or aggression in response to the attack interrupts the anticipated social script of violent confrontation, and throws the opponent off-balance. In this case, Peck created enough uncertainty and self-doubt in the driver that he decided not to pursue the exchange any further. However, Peck was well aware of the techniques and expected outcomes of nonviolence, and those ideas may have played a part in shaping his interpretation of events as he wrote about the Journey retrospectively in 1962.

Displaying the type of good humour required of the volunteers in the face of hostility became harder as the gruelling travel schedule took its toll. Ollie Stewart noted that the tests were putting the participants under "a terrific strain," and that after three days, "every member of the group on approaching the bus station, [the] scene of the test was tight-lipped and grim. Two or three confided to me that they hadn't slept well at all after leaving Washington."[73] Homer Jack explained that as well as the burden of having to attend and speak at mass meetings at every stop, there was also the "constant tenseness" of the travel itself that wore them down.[74] He also remarked that the stress of making these tests and risking arrest or violence helped

---

[70] Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," p. 297-98.
[71] Dallas A. Blanchard interview with Nelle Morton, *Southern Oral History Program*. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. no. F-0034 (June 29 1983). http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/F-0034/excerpts/excerpt_6793.html; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 45-46; Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 15-16.
[72] *Freedom Ride*, 16.
[73] Stewart, "Journey of Reconciliation Knocks Props from under Weak J.C. System," 19.
[74] Jack, "Journey of Reconciliation," 23.

the white participants to realise "the terror that many Negroes have to live with all the days of their lives."[75]

Roodenko professed that his views of the South were forever altered by the experience. He reflected that in 1947 when they began the Journey he and the other CORE members held a "very simplistic Yankee attitude" to race relations, imagining that discrimination and racial hatred were concentrated primarily in the South and the North, while not perfect, was "pretty good. … It was the old missionary attitude, my soul is alright, it is those poor heathen African souls which need saving."[76] Interactions with passengers and his observations of them made him aware that some of the emotions he had cultivated as a part of his nonviolent activism were proving ineffective:

> …when one gets involved in programs in [*sic*.] political change, which requires a certain amount of courage and self-righteousness, it is very easy to fall into the trap of saying that all the others, the masses, are brain-washed and stupid and negative, but the experience of those two weeks on the bus trip were a real gut learning for me, that you have to find ways of saying what you have to say without rubbing peoples' faces in the dirt.[77]

Roodenko's reflections suggest that certain emotions he expressed as part of the Journey became a barrier to achieving its aims. In this case, the "courage" and "self-righteousness," which he implies is felt as well as shown, did not always elicit sympathy and admiration from observers or opponents but could instead be misunderstood as arrogance and hypocrisy, especially when conveyed by a white northerner. In testing their emotional expressions on real people, Roodenko learned that expressing humility was also essential if a connection was to be made between the activists and the travellers they were attempting to engage.

The Journey planned and executed by CORE members was less of a demonstration or protest than an experiment or investigation; there is evidence of a genuine desire to talk to and understand the people travelling on southern buses and trains, including opponents of desegregation. The changes that the participants tried to enact were small-scale, reaching groups of local NAACP members or black congregations, or sometimes on a one-to-one basis on the buses and trains where they spoke to fellow passengers. In taking the Journey they committed to

---

[75] Ibid.
[76] Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 5.
[77] Ibid.

confronting each potential opponent individually, and with respect. Homer Jack wrote of his fellow participants:

> Thus the participants in the Journey took with them a technique as old as Jesus and as contemporary as Gandhi, one of which is much more concerned with transforming the wrongdoer than inflicting retribution. The participants were more concerned with justice than with pride or even personal safety, and they tried to avoid bitterness and to maintain a spirit of self-giving love.[78]

This dedication to "transforming the wrongdoer" on such an intimate scale severely limited the range and impact of the Journey, however. Although there was local and national press coverage, particularly in black newspapers such as the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Baltimore Afro-American*, the Journey did not gain sustained nationwide attention.[79] According to Roodenko, CORE deliberately played down even the trials of the participants, which could have gained media coverage for the struggle against segregation: "At that time, we were pretty scared. In contrast to movement trials in the sixties where we tried to get as much attention as we could, we tried, we wanted this thing to go over as smoothly and as quietly [as possible]."[80] The consequence of this approach was that, despite their willingness to make so daring an experiment across state lines, the Journey did not generate significant income or volunteers for CORE. In fact, the organisation experienced some of its leanest and most difficult years between 1948 and 1956 when nonviolent direct action was again embraced during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.[81]

James Farmer confessed in his autobiography that, upon learning of the boycott's success, he had mixed feelings: "The nonviolent movement in America is airborne. Why am I not more exuberant? Is it because it is not I who leads it? Is there a green-eyed monster peering through my eyes?"[82] It was frustrating for Farmer that having worked for over a decade on using nonviolent techniques to fight segregation, CORE was not the organisation to bring those techniques to prominence in the United States. Nevertheless, CORE passed a resolution to support the boycott and sent a representative to meet with Martin Luther King, Jr.[83] Jim

---

[78] Jack, "Journey of Reconciliation," 21.
[79] Bradley interview with George Houser. 1988. 39; Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 16.
[80] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 315; Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 16.
[81] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 176; Adams, Hall, and Wingate interview with Igal Roodenko. April 11, 1974. 32.
[82] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 187.
[83] Jim Peck, "Core-Lator, No. 68," Spring 1956, *Congress of Racial Equality, including publications...* Part 21. Newsletter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 14. ProQuest History Vault.

Peck, who edited CORE's newsletter the *CORE-lator*, clearly saw the benefit of associating CORE with the Montgomery protest and published an issue featuring a photograph of the boycott's leaders with the headline, "Leaders of the CORE-type protest in Montgomery."[84] Nevertheless, while the Montgomery Bus Boycott brought nonviolent techniques to the fore of black rights, the protest did not embrace truth-oriented nonviolence in the same way as CORE had during the Journey. The scale and conditions of the Montgomery movement were entirely different, and required a different approach, as the next section considers.

THE STRUGGLE FOR "CALM DIGNITY": THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT

Although the Montgomery Bus Boycott is the most famous example of a transport boycott as a means of protesting segregation, it was far from an unprecedented strategy. There were a series of failed streetcar boycotts protesting the new Jim Crow laws across the South at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, including in Montgomery.[85] There was also a bus boycott in Baton Rouge in the summer of 1953, which ended in a compromise.[86] Neither was Montgomery's 1955 protest as "spontaneous" as some boycott leaders and news sources suggested: there had been serious discussion about a boycott in Montgomery for more than eighteen months prior to Parks' arrest, the event that is regarded as the catalyst for the protest.[87] Jo Ann Robinson, President of black rights group the Women's Political Council, had warned Mayor Gayle in a letter of May 1954 that at least

---

[84] Ibid.

[85] See Meier and Rudwick, "The Boycott Movement against Jim Crow Streetcars in the South, 1900-1906," 756-75; Kelley, *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy V. Ferguson*, 111.

[86] The original policy in Baton Rouge required African Americans to leave ten rows for white passengers at the front, despite the fact that African Americans constituted the majority of bus patrons. The agreement that settled the boycott stipulated that the front two rows only would be reserved for white passengers, and that the back seat was reserved for black passengers. Black passengers could sit anywhere on the bus other than in the first two rows, providing it was not in front of a white passenger. For a fuller account of the Baton Rouge Bus Boycott see Adam Fairclough, *Race & Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972*. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 159-63.

[87] For sources that suggest the boycott was spontaneous, see "Montgomery Line Ends Seating Bias." *New York Times*, April 24 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/113895688/. Jeanne Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013), 94.

twenty-five local organisations were engaged in talks about a citywide bus boycott.[88] In the spring of that year Robinson discovered that her own students at Alabama State College had already started an aggressive boycott campaign against the buses, throwing bricks and bottles and physically removing black passengers from buses.[89]

Robinson's letter to the Mayor reveals that the two primary grievances of the African American population in Montgomery revolved around the way that segregation was implemented on the City Lines buses. The seating policy reserved a section at the front of the bus for white passengers; in a city where around three quarters of the passengers were black this frequently led to African Americans being closely packed in the aisles after a day of physically demanding work, standing over empty seats.[90] Or, because black passengers were required to sit behind white passengers and white passengers were given priority in seating, up to nine black passengers could be made to move or stand to allow one white passenger to sit.[91] Such a request from the driver with the authority of state and city was a clear message of the different values attached to white and black citizenship within Montgomery. That this message was played out publicly, and in close quarters, caused embarrassment and consternation for some white passengers, and anger and humiliation among many black passengers. In some cases segregation undermined other accepted social customs: prioritising seating for women, pregnant women in particular, the elderly and the disabled. That black "mothers with babes in their arms," as well as the "sick," and "pregnant women" were required to give up their seats to white schoolchildren was the second listed grievance addressed to the Montgomery public by the MIA on Christmas Day 1955.[92] Mary Kinney, a black employment bureau worker in Montgomery, recalled a time when she saw two white airmen object to a black woman having to stand so that they could sit; they refused to take the unoccupied seats.[93]

---

[88] "Jo Ann Robinson to W. A. Gayle," May 21 1954. Montgomery County Courthouse: Montgomery County District Attorney's Files. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, Stanford University. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/letter-wa-gayle.
[89] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 57.
[90] "Jo Ann Robinson to W. A. Gayle," May 21 1954. The bus company's lawyer Jack Crenshaw confirmed that the majority of the company's bus passengers were black. Jack Crenshaw, "Interview," February 8 1956. Box 2. Folder 6. Transcript. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection, p. 1.
[91] Negro Ministers of Montgomery and their Congregations, "To the Montgomery Public," December 25 1955. National Archives Library, Washington, D.C.: United States National Archives and Records Service. 2. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/montgomery-public
[92] Ibid.
[93] For examples of white emotional reactions to segregated bus seating in Montgomery, see I. B. Rutledge, "Carrying Segregation Too Far," January 1 1956. Box 6. Folder 38. Howard Gotlieb

Black passengers were required to pay their money at the front of the bus and then step off to board again at the back door. This arrangement, as well as being inconvenient and humiliating, allowed impatient or malicious drivers to drive away before the passenger had reboarded.[94] When interviewed, black passengers revealed other incidents that were common, varying from having transfer tickets refused by drivers to verbal abuse and violence.[95]

Most figures at the centre of the boycott had their own tale of mistreatment on the buses. Jo Ann Robinson, newly appointed to the English faculty at Alabama State College in 1949, had been sitting on the fifth row from the front on an almost empty bus when the driver stopped the vehicle and stood over her, shouting at her to get up. Robinson described being frightened, and running to get off the bus while crying in humiliation.[96] Even six years later when the boycott began she regularly thought about the incident with shame and "deep hurt."[97] As an eleventh-grader, Martin Luther King Jr. was told to relinquish his seat to white passengers while travelling home at night from an oratorical contest in Georgia. When he refused, the driver called him "a black son-of-a-bitch." King conceded defeat at his teacher's urging and stood uncomfortably in the aisle for the rest of the journey home. Of the incident King is quoted as saying: "That night will never leave my mind. It was the angriest I have ever been in my life."[98] While in college, MIA attorney Fred Gray rode the buses in Montgomery six times a day, giving him plenty of opportunity to witness that "discourteous treatment of African American riders was more the rule than the exception," leading to his privately-held professional mission statement: "to destroy everything segregated I could find."[99] Rosa Parks recalled an incident in 1943 with bus driver James Blake, who had her arrested in 1955, in which he evicted her

---

Archival Research Center, Boston University: Martin Luther King Jr., Papers 1954-1968, p. 1. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/carrying-segregation-too-far ; Mrs. Mary Kinney, "Interview," January 19 1956. Box 3. Folder 2. Transcript. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection, p. 1.

[94] Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 31.

[95] Kinney, "Interview," January 19 1956 1; Mrs. Beatrice Charles, "Interview," January 20 1956. Box 3. Folder 2. Transcript. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection, p. 1; Judith Vecchione interview with Virginia Durr, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (February 21 1986). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/tm70mw785.

[96] Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 16.

[97] Ibid., 26.

[98] Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: A Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1994), 16.

[99] Fred D. Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice: Changing the System by the System the Life and Works of Fred Gray, Preacher, Attorney, Politician*. Rev. ed. (Montgomery, AL: New South Books, 2013), 5.

from the bus. According to Parks, her interaction with Blake was so hostile that she "never wanted to be on that man's bus again."[100]

The humiliation, fear and anger felt by African Americans on the city buses was enough by itself to warrant action. However, their treatment by drivers was not the whole story but a focal point for broader discontent with discrimination and racially motivated violence. The protests and legal gains made by African Americans after the Second World War, notably *Brown v. Board of Education*, allowed for this discontent to become more vocal and visible, but also prompted the beginning of a white backlash and organised opposition to integration across the South that became known as "massive resistance." Part of the backlash was an increase in violence against African Americans, a resurgence in the Ku Klux Klan and the emergence of supposedly more respectable anti-integration groups, known as White Citizens' Councils.[101] An interviewer for the television documentary *Eyes on the Prize* asked Parks how she had felt about the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in August 1955 while he was visiting relatives in Mississippi from Chicago, which made headlines all around the US and internationally. Parks recalled her devastation on hearing about the killing at a local NAACP meeting, but also responded with a similar, lesser known, story:

> …this was a young minister who had a singing group and my husband knew him and his mother. And he was supposed to have done something, I don't know what it was, but I think some white woman had made a request that—he had a radio program, a group of singers and seemed that she had made a request … for his group to sing a song and this is supposed to have led to him being in church with this person. And some men took him out to the Alabama River on a bridge and he supposedly jumped over into the river and they told his mother she had better keep quiet about it which she did.[102]

Parks pointed out that stories like this were not reported in newspapers because the African Americans involved were too frightened to make them public.[103] Claudette Colvin, the fifteen-year-old black teenager who had been arrested nine months

---

[100] Callie Crossley interview with Rosa Parks, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 14 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/5d86p1921. Rosa Parks and James Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story*. (New York: Dial Books, 1992), 79.
[101] See, for example, Bem Price. "Vigilantes Reviving 'Southern Heritage'," *Washington Post*, November 21 1954, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148578145/; A. Lahey Edwin. "Most of Dixie Adopting Integration Slowdown," *Washington Post*, August 10 1955, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148707931/; Orval Hopkins. "Magazine Rack," *Washington Post*, March 13 1955, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/148674239.
[102] Crossley interview with Rosa Parks. November 14, 1985.
[103] Ibid.

before Parks for refusing to give up her bus seat, had also been affected by violent punishment carried out in the name of protecting white womanhood: a friend of hers, sixteen-year-old Jeremiah Reeves, was jailed after being accused of raping a white woman. Colvin was convinced of Reeve's innocence and left with a debilitating sense of injustice when she discovered that the authorities intended to electrocute him as soon as he came of age. It was through the fundraising effort for Reeves' legal defence that she learned of the NAACP, and cites the event as a source of deep anger and rebellion.[104]

Colvin's arrest on March 2 1955 was not the "trigger" for the boycott because her situation, behaviour, and emotional expression were incompatible with the respectable protest that black community leaders envisioned. Her arrest provoked outrage within the black community, and was the cause for Robinson's initial threat of a boycott. After Colvin was convicted, large numbers of black Montgomerians refused to ride the buses for days out of anger and sympathy.[105] However, the black leadership in Montgomery became increasingly hesitant to put her forward.[106] One of the key black leaders in the city at that time was E. D. Nixon, who used the experience he had built up over the years helping to lead the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the local chapter of the NAACP to assess Colvin and her case, as well as those of other women who had been arrested on the buses:

> I had to be sure that I had somebody that I could win with. And either these other three I couldn't have had won [*sic.*]. And to be able to ask people to give us a half a million dollars to fight discrimination on the Montgomery bus line, I ought to be able to say to them, we got a good litigant.[107]

Many viewed Colvin as too "feisty," "emotional," even "profane," and although the organisers of the boycott were not necessarily thinking in terms of nonviolence and its associated emotional containment at that point, it would have been clear to them on seeing Colvin sobbing in court after her conviction that she was not suitable as

---

[104] Hoose, *Claudette Colvin*, 26-29; Ellen Levine, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott," in *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories* (New York: Putnam, 1993), 22.
[105] Fred D. Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice: Changing the System by the System: The Life and Works of Fred D. Gray, Preacher, Attorney, Politician*. (Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1997), 35; Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 42.
[106] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 26.
[107] Blackside Inc. interview with E. D. Nixon, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965).* Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (n.d. 1979). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/v405sc21t.

the face of the protest.[108] Finally, Colvin's arrest was useless as a test case once the charges for violating segregation and disturbing the peace were dropped on appeal, affirming only the assault charge.[109] Eventually, though, Colvin would become one of five plaintiffs in the MIA's case against the city, *Browder v. Gayle*, the case that went to the Supreme Court and legally desegregated Montgomery's buses.

The 2012 edition of Fred Gray's autobiography, *Bus Ride to Justice,* featured some substantial additions to his previous account of the events surrounding the boycott. Seven years after Parks had passed away and with "her role in history secure," Gray explained how the boycott organisers, with Parks' complicity, cultivated a particular narrative and image. Her portrayal as a "non-threatening mother figure" garnered public sympathy for the boycott and later the nonviolent civil rights movement as a whole.[110] Instead of an intelligent, angry woman who executed a thoroughly considered plan to be arrested on the buses, she became a "retiring, quiet lady who simply took a courageous stand when she accidentally arrived at a critical moment."[111] Parks and Gray could not choose an exact time and place of her arrest in advance, but they discussed in detail the mechanics of her stand, down to which bus line she would take and the appropriate emotional expressions. They agreed "it was important that [she] should keep her temper, not get into an altercation with the driver or anyone else on the bus, yet firmly refuse to give up the seat."[112] Consciously or not, they approximated the "sociodrama" training given by CORE before the participants left for the Journey of Reconciliation, and recognised that containment of anger and indignation was paramount to the protest's success.

Although the boycott had been the product of a great deal of planning and work over years, the level of immediate participation was unprecedented in the history of black civil rights. For those who rode the buses or knew people who had

---

[108] Hoose, *Claudette Colvin*, 52; Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 42. For more on Colvin and the other potential plaintiffs, see Chappell, Hutchinson, and Ward, ""Dress Modestly, Neatly ... As If You Were Going to Church"," 85-86; Paul Hendrickson. "The Ladies before Rosa: Let Us Now Praise Unfamous Women." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8, no. 2 (2005). doi: 10. 1353/rap. 2005.0076.

[109] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 35; Hoose, *Claudette Colvin*, 53, 64. Some historians, such as Taylor Branch in *Parting the Waters*, factor Colvin's pregnancy into the decision not to build the protest around her, but Colvin's own account in Philip Hoose's book contradicts this, stating that she only became pregnant later, keeping the pregnancy a secret that only became apparent in the "Fall" of 1955. Her appeal failed in May of 1955. Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 123.

[110] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 46; Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, 93.

[111] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 33.

[112] Ibid., 47.

suffered abuse on them, it seemed like the positive action they had been waiting for. Boycotter Mary Kinney told interviewer Willie Lee Mae in January 1956 how "pleased" she was when she learned there was to be a boycott, and how she had said: "At last it has come."[113] Another interviewee, Beatrice Charles, described her reaction on hearing about the boycott: "I felt good. I said this is what we should do."[114] Gathering together for the first meeting at the Holt Street Baptist Church brought the enthusiasm that George Houser had described nonviolent collective action could generate in his letter to Ella Baker nearly ten years previously. Parks remembered the meeting as a "jubilant" occasion: "Every inch was taken up with people there and the street was full of people. People were laughing and talking and it seemed like they were quite happy."[115] The Reverend Fred Shuttleworth was at the meeting that night and recalled it was "like an electrifying revival."[116] He explained that this joy was a reaction to the psychological toll of segregation:

> See, segregation had sort of painted walls like a prison you can't get out. There's no help, there's no hope, and you [*sic.*] just in forever. But here was something we could do, we could stay off the buses, you know, and we could hit the system, we could challenge what was killing us.[117]

It was an emotional release for black Montgomerians to publicly acknowledge the feelings they had repressed for years on buses, though within the relative safety of a black church. According to the Reverend Ralph Abernathy, the joy that the boycott participants felt came with sudden confidence: "The fear left. The fear that had shackled us across the years all left suddenly when we were in that church together."[118]

The unity on display at the Holt Street Baptist Church meeting bolstered attendees' courage to take action yet there was some evidence of fear at the meeting. There are different accounts of the exchange between Nixon and the other community leaders at the meeting on the 5 December, previously mentioned in Chapter 2, but they agree that Nixon denounced a plan to keep the names of the boycott leaders secret from white Montgomerians as both impractical and cowardly: "Well, I was sitting there boiling over, so mad I didn't know what to do, so I jumped

---

[113] Kinney, "Interview," January 19 1956 2.
[114] Charles, "Interview," January 20 1956 1.
[115] Crossley interview with Rosa Parks. November 14, 1985.
[116] Callie Crossley interview with Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 7 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/hd76s1729.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Crossely interview with Rev. Ralph Abernathy. November 6, 1985.

up, and forgot about we was up in the balcony of the church. I said "What the hell you people talkin' 'bout?" Just like that, see, and I cussed…"[119] Nixon aimed his angry tirade at the ministers in particular, who he argued had "lived off these wash-women for the last hundred years and ain't never done nothing for them," and were now allowing the women of the city to resist segregation openly while the ministers hid their faces.[120] The concern that when women were arrested they were vulnerable to sexual violence at the hands of policemen made Nixon's rebuke more powerful.[121]

That evening the leadership roles for the MIA were decided. Whilst Nixon was widely regarded as "fearless," a natural leader who had played a vital part in putting that first day of the boycott in motion, his speech demonstrated that courage was not enough to win him leadership of the protest.[122] It was as Nixon berated the ministers that Martin Luther King walked late into the meeting and managed to quickly soothe the situation, being able to speak in a way that "both challenged Nixon and agreed with him."[123] Nixon may have exhibited a placatory countenance for white passengers as part of his work aboard Pullman cars but he did not, or could not, put on that mask in Holt Street Church. Meanwhile, King became the diplomat of the situation. The contrast between the ways that the two men presented themselves as leaders was never more apparent than in that moment; King was chosen as leader of the boycott.[124] Just as Nixon had dismissed the idea of "fiery" Colvin becoming the boycott's figurehead, his outburst at the meeting precluded the possibility of his becoming the MIA's leader. Robinson suggested that the President of the MIA would need to be "the epitome of self-control, of sympathetic understanding of people's problems and of government policies."[125] Although the boycott was a protest, an undeniable expression of discontent, black leaders in

---

[119] Raines, *My Soul Is Rested*, 48-49. See also Blackside Inc. interview with E. D. Nixon. n.d., 1979.
[120] Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 136.
[121] Both Rosa Parks and Colette Colvin recall that their families expressed relief when they returned home from jail without having suffered sexual or other violence. Garrow, *The Walking City*, 561; Hoose, *Claudette Colvin*, 40.
[122] Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2010), 25; Llew Smith and Judy Richardson interview with Jo Ann Robinson, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (August 27 1979). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/37720f54k. Jo Ann Robinson also said of Nixon that he was "was one of the few black men who was not afraid in Montgomery."
[123] Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 137.
[124] Ibid., 136-37.
[125] Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 69. For a more detailed examination of how Nixon's character and emotional expression made him unsuitable for the leadership of a movement that placed respectability at its centre, see Chappell, Hutchinson, and Ward, ""Dress Modestly, Neatly ... As If You Were Going to Church"," 91-92.

Montgomery shied away from public expression of negative emotions such as anger or outrage, which, from their daily interactions with white Montgomerians, they knew would repel potential white allies and could be used against them by opponents.

As well as the required level of emotional control, King also displayed other desirable leadership qualities, such as being new to the activist scene in Montgomery and therefore not known in the community like Nixon and Rufus Lewis, another local leader.[126] He had achieved a high level of formal education that acquainted him with the work of social theorists and philosophers. At the point that King found himself spokesperson of a peaceful protest, he was able to draw upon his education and understanding of past nonviolent movements. At Morehouse College in Atlanta, then Crozer Theological Seminary in Upland, Pennsylvania, King had been exposed to the ideas of thinkers such as Henry David Thoreau and A. J. Muste, and introduced to the teachings of Gandhi at a lecture by the president of Howard University, Dr. Mordecai Johnson.[127] Gandhi's approach to fighting social injustice fascinated King, and it led him to further reading and discussion of nonviolence when he took up his doctoral studies at Boston University.[128]

Many of the boycotters walked miles to work each day, a huge and visible effort on a city-wide scale that recalled Gandhi's famous 1930 Salt March, a march of 240 miles with 78 volunteers to protest the salt tax imposed by the British.[129] In spite of the inconvenience and immense exertion involved in the boycott, and despite obstacles and violent opposition they encountered, the participants maintained their protest for over a year. Considered in the context of the emotional strain wrought by segregated public transport, it becomes apparent that one of reasons the boycotters were able to keep walking for so long was that many participants chose the physical exhaustion of walking over the emotional exhaustion created by conditions on the buses, an idea echoed in a phrase King often repeated in speeches: "we decided to substitute tired feet for tired souls."[130]

---

[126] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 38.
[127] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*. (Boston, M.A.: Beacon Press, 2010), 83.
[128] Ibid., 84, 87-88.
[129] Bidyut Chakrabarty, *Confluence of Thought: Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 144.
[130] King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 161.

After the MIA filed *Browder v. Gayle* in February 1956, city commissioners responded with a mass indictment of almost one hundred boycott leaders. The protest was already gaining national press attention, but the indictment succeeded in making their efforts front-page news.[131] The growing nationwide interest in the protest caused other civil rights activists and leaders to pay attention, including A. Philip Randolph, James Farmer and Bayard Rustin. In the years in between the Journey of Reconciliation and the boycott, Rustin had travelled to India to study the nonviolent movement more closely, as well as taking a tour of Africa to meet independence leaders fighting colonial rule.[132] He was now "as accomplished a proponent of nonviolence as anyone in the United States," and it seemed that Montgomery desperately needed some guidance: word was coming through to Randolph from his Brotherhood connections that weapons were being "smuggled" into Montgomery.[133]

Rustin described the situation he walked into on February 21 as "tense:" Mayor Gayle's "get-tough" policy, announced on January 18, included a police crack-down on boycotters using the MIA's carpool and encouraging businessmen to terminate the employment of black boycotters.[134] King's house had been bombed on the 30 January, only four days after his arrest and jailing for speeding, and Nixon's home was bombed on February 1 1956. The NAACP's Director of Branches, Gloster Current, reported that the "get-tough" policy had "created an atmosphere of violence and riotous disorder," which was "steadily growing."[135] On the day after Rustin arrived in Montgomery, indictments of more than 100 boycott "leaders" were announced.[136] Realising how disastrous an outbreak of retaliatory violence would be to the boycott, Rustin suggested that instead of waiting to be rounded up by police,

---

[131] In January *The Washington Post and Times Herald* reported on the white pastor Rev. Robert S. Graetz's role in the protest, printing the story on page 12, and in February the bombing of King's home made page 3, but the "total walking day" in response to the mass indictments made it to the newspaper's front page. "White Pastor Spurs Negroes' Bus Boycott." *Washington Post*, January 12 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148843405/; "Reward up in Bombing of Home in Bus Boycott." *Washington Post*, February 1 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148843405/; "Negroes Order 'Total Walking Day' in Arrest of Bus Boycott Leaders."

[132] John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 165, 83.

[133] Ibid., 227.

[134] Robinson and Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It*, 116-17.

[135] Gloster B. Current, "Gloster B. Current to Mr. Wilkins, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Carter, Re: Bombing of Rev. King's Home," January 31 1956, *Martin Luther King Jr. correspondence, including bus boycotts, bombing of King's home...* Part 21. Memorandum. LOC: Papers of the NAACP ProQuest History Vault.

[136] Bayard Rustin, "Montgomery Diary," April 1956, *Montgomery Bus Boycott, Alabama*. Part 20. Magazine article. LOC: Papers of the NAACP, p. 8. ProQuest History Vault.

the leaders dress in their best clothes and present themselves at the police station.[137] Signs of fear from the leaders being arrested would likely have generated anger and panic among the boycotters. The leaders followed Rustin's advice and became "symbols of courage" for the black community; he noted that the hundreds of African Americans who gathered around the police station looked "thrilled to see their leaders surrender without being hunted down," and applauded each leader as he or she entered.[138] When Martin Luther King, in Nashville when he heard of the indictments, arrived back in Montgomery the next day to hand himself in, he noted an "almost holiday atmosphere" and a lack of fear among the participants assembled that steeled his courage to face the police that desperately wanted him jailed or deported: "With this feeling of solidarity around me, I walked with firm steps to the rear of the jail."[139] As in the Journey of Reconciliation, those taking the lead could soothe the other participants through expressing calm and resolve, thereby maintaining the correct nonviolent emotional expression. If anything, this technique was even more important during the boycott, in which there were around 50,000 participants.

King understood that "calm and serene determination" was at the heart of successful protest, and therefore emphasised peace and denounced violence at every opportunity in his speeches. Nonetheless, Rustin claimed that King was not entirely clear on how nonviolence worked in practice. It was Rustin who pointed out to King the difficulty in keeping the protest truly nonviolent while the leadership kept guns in their homes and were protected by armed guards: "…because the followers will seldom, in the mass, be dedicated to nonviolence in principle, that the leadership must be dedicated to it in principle, to keep those who believe in it as a tactic operating correctly."[140] It was only once he was the famous leader of a nonviolent protest that King became motivated to broaden his knowledge of its practical applications and, according to Rustin, "came to a profoundly deep understanding of nonviolence through the struggle itself."[141] King began researching nonviolence, writing to Richard Gregg on May 1 1956 to let him know that he had been reading

[137] D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet*, 229.
[138] Rustin, "Montgomery Diary," *Liberation.* April 1956, 8.
[139] King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 133-38.
[140] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 169-70.
[141] Ibid., 169.

The Power of Nonviolence and had found it useful.[142] Though King had not been sure about the practical applications of nonviolence to their situation at first, some board members of the MIA were even less convinced. Fred Gray's brother Tom was one of those on the board who, having read an article in which King emphasised the importance of Gandhian techniques and Christian love in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, told King he approved of his "ploy for the news media."[143]

There were indications that some of the boycott participants, too, were not fully embracing nonviolent philosophy. Willie Mae Lee, who conducted interviews and field research in Montgomery during the boycott, spoke to and overheard more than one African American domestic worker with overtly violent feelings as a result of King's arrest on the 24 January: "I'm so mad I don't know what to do. … They think they bad 'cause they got guns, but I sho hope they know how to use 'em, cause if they don't, I'll eat 'em up wid my razor."[144] Mae recorded conversations at a car pool stop, at which another maid professed, "Des white folks gona mess right 'round here and git killed. I don't mind dying but I sho take one of dem with me."[145] Perhaps this was just talk: Parks later reflected that African Americans in Montgomery expressed themselves "violently" as a method of self-defence, and professed that she was raised to stand up "aggressively" for herself against racism.[146] It may be impossible to separate empty threat from genuinely violent intentions, but Rustin's diary makes clear that King thought black Montgomerians might retaliate against their opponents' attacks.[147] The anger some African Americans felt during the course of the protest indicate that, far from being a wholly nonviolent movement, the Montgomery Bus Boycott was at times perilously close to a violent eruption that would have been, in King's words, "catastrophic," leading to the loss of sympathy and financial support from liberal observers and the whole initiative being roundly condemned.[148]

---

[142] "Richard Gregg to Martin Luther King, Jr.," May 20 1956. Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston MA: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/richard-bartlett-gregg-1
[143] Gray, *Bus Ride to Justice*, 49.
[144] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 125.
[145] Ibid., 127.
[146] Parks and Haskins, *Rosa Parks: My Story*, 174.
[147] Rustin, "Montgomery Diary," *Liberation*. April 1956, 10.
[148] Ibid. King made clear in a letter to Rustin that the organisation was in need of as much financial aid as possible. "Martin Luther King Jr. To Bayard Rustin," September 20 1956. Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston MA: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers, 1954-1968. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/bayard-rustin-2

Keeping the protest free of bloodshed was difficult enough under the circumstances but the leaders had to go further than this to gain white public support. They encouraged participants to exhibit a set of emotions associated with both Christian values and nonviolence: calm, love, trust, courage and dignity. The wrong emotional expression allowed the protest to be more easily dismissed, as a letter to the *Montgomery Advertiser* by white housewife Mrs. George L. Foster demonstrates:

> Noticing since the boycott how most of the Negroes have become sullen and indolent I feel perhaps the bus drivers dealing with these people collectively have seen a side of them that we dealing with them singly have not seen and evidently the patience of the most tactful drivers has been tried.[149]

Any perception that the black protesters were bad tempered, or anything other than serene and disciplined, allowed opponents to undermine their cause and suggest that the drivers' mistreatment of black passengers was justified.

King conflated the nonviolent approach with Christianity in his speeches, telling a mass meeting, "our methods and techniques have been rooted in the deep soils of the Christian faith."[150] Compassion and love of all mankind were principles common to the two approaches, and for those who were sceptical about nonviolence it was easier to accept instructions on behaviour and emotional expression conveyed in terms of religious practice, a familiar part of daily life for black Montgomerians. Boycott participant Mrs. Beatrice Charles acknowledged that her behaviour was governed by the Christian leadership: "You know our pastors tells [*sic.*] us what to do. They lead us in a Christian way. We just act nice and quiet."[151] Charles' account highlights that, far from being the spontaneous outpouring of emotion the press often liked to suggest, the protest was another exercise in emotional self-regulation, guided by the community as a whole.

It is not certain that everyone joined the boycott for the same reasons. While many certainly joined in reaction to the outrage and anger they felt about bus mistreatment, there was immense pressure on African Americans to take part. Social pressure, even fear, played a part for some. Mrs. Edna King, an African American music teacher who disapproved of the boycott and how it was being run, revealed

---

[149] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 118.
[150] Martin Luther King Jr., "Address to MIA Mass Meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church," November 4 1956. Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Atlanta, GA: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers, Series I-IV. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/address-mia-mass-meeting-holt-street-baptist-church
[151] Charles, "Interview," January 20 1956, p. 3.

the attitude towards dissent in some quarters of the black community to Willie Lee Mae:

> They first day they struck, my boy was fixing to get on a bus and a lady dared him to get on, she said that she would cut him if he did. Way out on the outskirts of town, I have heard that quite a few folks have been beaten up, but I don't know how true that is. I just don't believe in telling people what to do. … You know I'm a member of Rev. King's church. I play the organ. One of my friends told me that if I went to a meeting and told them how I felt, that they would throw me out.[152]

Whether or not there is truth to the rumours of black bus passengers being beaten, the rumours themselves may have been influential for many African Americans deciding whether or not to engage with the protest.

There were also rumours of violence against the ministers who were reportedly fooled into meeting with the city commissioners on January 21 and "settling" the end of the boycott. The ministers were later identified by Fred Gray as the Reverend Mosely, Bishop Rice and the Reverend Kynes, and, according to Donald T. Ferron's notes on the MIA meeting two days later, King expressed concern that "there are some violent Negroes (smiling) who would like nothing better than to get their hands on those ministers" but that they "must be sane and unemotional" and "must not be accused of intimidation."[153] Evidently, not everyone did remain unemotional, as the testimony of one unnamed boycotter revealed:

> I heard dat dey beat Rev. Smith up and dat dar weren't but two members at his church Sunday. Dey told him, dat they didn't need 'em and I heard dat dey beat him up. Dem young boys said dey wuz going to beat Rev. Brown up too. If day said it, dey'll do it.[154]

This testimony suggests that confusion around which ministers attended the meeting resulted in some participants turning against the wrong individuals. It also reveals an "emotional climate" of anger but also fear of violent reprisals from within the black community and of social exclusion if they criticised or undermined the protest.[155]

---

[152] Mrs. Edna King, "Interview," January 23 1956. Box 4. Folder 3. Transcript. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection. p. 2.
[153] Donald T. Ferron, "Notes on MIA Executive Board Meeting," January 23 1956, *Field Notes (Montgomery, Alabama)*. Box 2. Folder 1. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection, p. 1.
[154] Preston Valien, "The Montgomery Bus Boycott as a Social Movement," in *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott,1955-1956*, ed. David J. Garrow (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1989), 96.
[155] The term "emotional climate," is taken from Bayard Rustin's diary of his time in Montgomery and refers to the situation of racial hatred in the city. However, it is worth noting that it is a term also used in psychology to refer to "predominant collective emotions perceived as shared by members of social groups." See "Emotional Climate: How Is It Shaped, Fostered, and Changed?," in *Changing Emotions*, ed. Dirk Hermans, Bernard Rimé, and Batja Mesquita (Hove, East Sussex: Psychology Press, 2013), 113; Rustin, "Montgomery Diary," *Liberation*. April 1956, 9.

Boycotters were also vulnerable to threat and attack from white Montgomerians. In addition to the bombings of leaders' houses, rank and file participants experienced overt intimidation tactics. Jo Ann Robinson was singled out as a target:

> I reached a point where I was scared. … that particular night, about two weeks after they had broken my picture window, I heard a noise on the side where my car was, and I went and looked out the window in the dark, and there were two policemen scattering something on the top of my car, on the hood of the car. I didn't know what it was. I saw them when they went back and got in their car and drove away. The next morning my car was eaten up with acid.[156]

Other forms of pressure included a leaflet being handed out at a White Citizens Council meeting that detailed the correct weapons with which to "abolish the Negro race," and a mock hanging ceremony held in Court Square one Saturday in August 1956.[157] Sponsored by the Committee on the Preservation of Segregation, the makeshift gallows featured one hanging effigy of a black man labelled with a sash reading "NAACP" and another, representing a white man, labelled "I Talked Integration."[158] One of the ceremony participants was Eugene Hall, director of the Montgomery White Citizens Council, a detail that must have been particularly unsettling to boycott participants and supporters considering that Police Commissioner Sellers, Mayor W. A. Gayle and Commissioner Frank Parks had publicly joined the Council in January.[159]

Despite the threats coming from within both the black community and the boycott opponents, it was vitally important that boycotters avoided expressing fear in the public eye. City leaders seized on opportunities to suggest that the majority of African Americans wanted to ride the buses, but feared repercussions from the MIA. City Police Commissioner Clyde Sellars insisted in an interview in February that, "ninety per cent of the Nigras want to ride the buses, but they are afraid."[160] King again led by example. When journalist Joe Azbell asked him in March whether he was afraid after his recent "personal trying experiences," King replied:

---

[156] Smith and Richardson interview with Jo Ann Robinson. August 27, 1979.
[157] Rustin, "Montgomery Diary," *Liberation*. April 1956, 9; "Integration Opponents Hang 2 Effigies in Court Square," 1956, *Racial violence and civil rights issues in Montgomery, Alabama*. Part 20. Newspaper clipping. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[158] "Integration Opponents Hang 2 Effigies in Court Square," *Racial violence and civil rights issues in Montgomery, Alabama*. 1956.
[159] Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 42.
[160] Clyde C. Sellers, "Interview," February 10 1956. Box 2. Folder 6. Transcript. Amistad Research Center, Tulane University: Preston Valien Collection. p. 5.

> No I'm not. My attitude is that this is a great cause, it is a great issue we are confronted with and that the consequences for my personal life are not particularly important. It is the triumph of the cause that I am concerned about. And I have always felt that ultimately along the way of life an individual must stand up and be counted and be willing to face the consequences whatever they are. And if he is filled with fear he cannot do it.[161]

For Jo Ann Robinson, looking back at the end of the 1970s, participants in the boycott succeeded in their efforts to appear unafraid. She also claimed that it was boycotters' fearlessness in particular that put pressure on the Supreme Court to find in their favour when deciding *Browder v. Gayle*: "You get 52,000 people in the streets and nobody's showing any fear, something had to give. And so the Supreme, Supreme Court had to rule that the segregation was not the, the way of life."[162] This account of the situation leaves much out, of course, including the legal merits of the Supreme Court case. However, evidence supports the notion that interested observers around the country were encouraged to support the boycott by the set of emotions presented by the boycott leaders and participants. The mass meetings in particular provided an emotionally charged atmosphere that journalists relished the opportunity to capture. When the boycott leaders called upon all participants to eschew automobiles and walk for a day, reporter Wayne Philips described the meeting in a tone that betrayed his admiration of its intensity and scale:

> More than 2,000 Negroes filled the church from basement to balcony and overflowed into the street. They chanted and sang; they shouted and prayed; they collapsed in the aisles and they sweltered in an 85-degree heat. They pledged themselves again and again to "passive resistance."[163]

Early on in the boycott a white woman named Juliette Morgan wrote to the *Montgomery Advertiser* to profess the effect that the MIA's strategy had on her personally:

> It is hard to imagine a soul so dead, a heart so hard, a vision so blinded and provincial as not to be moved with admiration at the quiet dignity, discipline, and dedication with which the Negroes have conducted their boycott. … Their cause and their conduct have filled me with great sympathy, pride, humility and envy.[164]

---

[161] King and Carson, *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.: Birth of a New Age, December 1955 - December 1956*, 202.
[162] Smith and Richardson interview with Jo Ann Robinson. August 27, 1979.
[163] Wayne Phillips. "Negroes Pledge to Keep Boycott," *New York Times*, February 24 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/113509076/.
[164] Juliette Morgan, "Lesson from Gandhi," December 12 1955. Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston MA: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers, 1954 - 1968. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, Stanford University. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/lesson-gandhi

In February 1956 one journalist writing for *The Washington Post and Times Herald* was not fooled by the words of the Montgomery grand jury indicting the boycott leaders, who proclaimed: "Dislike, distrust and hatred are being taught in a community which for more than a generation has enjoyed exemplary race relations."[165] The reporter pointed out that, far from preaching hate, what was truly frustrating the white opponents of the boycott was "that it is impeccably lawful, orderly, dignified–and effective."[166] *Browder v. Gayle* was decided in the MIA's favour by the Montgomery federal court in June, and then upheld by the Supreme Court in November.

When three members of the Ku Klux Klan marched through the black neighbourhoods in protest at the decision, the *New York Times* reported the black Montgomerians' reaction to seeing the hooded figures: "A moment of suspended movement, a moment of puzzlement and disbelief. Then all of them looked unflinchingly at the robed men—and began to smile, then to laugh."[167] It is possible that the reporter, George Barratt, was imagining the look of disbelief; boycott participants had received a thorough briefing by Abernathy, Shuttleworth and King on the Klan's plans to march, and what the response from the black community should be:

> "We're going to have the marshals blow a whistle. You come out on the steps with your family, dressed in your best clothes, smiling. Those of you who have some American flags, wave them--we're going to try to get some more by tomorrow morning for you to wave. When the Ku Klux Klan comes in, silently smiling, wave your flags," Abernathy said, "and I'll bet you my bottom dollar they won't march three blocks."[168]

The MIA orchestrated the community's carefree emotional reaction to disturb the Klan's march, but the inclusion of costume and props suggests that they also composed the scene for the benefit of the press. As Gregg noted, a narrative of successful nonviolent resistance is "unusual and dramatic" and "makes wonderful news" for reporters "scenting a 'story.'"[169] Gregg further acknowledged the power of media in swaying mainstream thought, and argued that coverage generates respect and admiration for nonviolent protesters and censure from within the country and

---

[165] "Exemplary Race Relations." *Washington Post*, February 24 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/148839886/.
[166] Ibid., 20.
[167] George Barrett. "Montgomery: Testing Ground," *New York Times*, December 16 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/113636947.
[168] Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," p. 522.
[169] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 79.

abroad for the governments who allow "ruthless deeds." The pressure created by criticism of the government can "compel it to alter its tactics."[170]

Clearly not all of the boycotters adhered to nonviolent principles all of the time, but created enough of an impression of nonviolence that the boycott became known as the first successful major nonviolent protest in the cause of civil rights. The boycott itself ended on December 20, 1956, and the participants were to return to the buses the following day.[171] The threat of violence continued to linger, however, and so while the announcement brought boycotters "the happiness of thirteen weary months coming to light again," as described by Robinson, there was yet a need for MIA leaders to curb or control the emotions of the victorious black community.[172] In fact, black and white Montgomerians were about to meet in public again in the confined space of the bus after a long period apart, a fact that pointed to an even greater need for guidance in nonviolence.

The MIA was aware of the urgent situation and before boycotters re-entered sites of past humiliations on new terms, King worked with Glenn Smiley of FOR to set up an "Institute on Non-Violence and Social Change." It was first held in December 1956, encouraging participants to embrace the same nonviolent emotions and behaviour that CORE volunteers were trained to display during the Journey of Reconciliation: encouraging open discussion on the bus when verbally challenged, reasoning and staying calm when struck or pushed, and going to jail peacefully if arrested.[173] On December 19 King and Smiley distributed a set of guidelines for bus integration that stressed the appropriate emotions, asking all protesters to maintain "a calm and loving dignity," before making eight general suggestions:

> 1. Not all white people are opposed to integrated buses. Accept goodwill on the part of many.
> 2. The whole bus is now for the use of all people. Take a vacant seat.
> 3. Pray for guidance and commit yourself to complete non-violence in word and action as you enter the bus.
> 4. Demonstrate the calm dignity of our Montgomery people in your actions.
> 5. In all things observe ordinary rules of courtesy and good behavior.
> 6. Remember that this is not a victory for Negroes alone, but for all Montgomery and the South. Do not boast! Do not brag!
> 7. Be quiet but friendly; proud, but not arrogant; joyous, but not boistrous.

---

[170] Ibid., 78-79.
[171] Dates taken from Burns, *Daybreak of Freedom*, 47-49.
[172] Smith and Richardson interview with Jo Ann Robinson. August 27, 1979.
[173] "Negroes Get Bus Classes: Montgomery Ministers and Others Give Instructions Regarding Integration. Chattanooga Times, December 15 1956," in *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*, ed. Stewart Burns (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 325-26.

> 8. Be loving enough to absorb evil and understanding enough to turn an enemy into a friend.[174]

King reiterated these points in a prepared speech announcing the end of the boycott on the 20 December at mass meetings in Holt Street and First Baptist churches.

King's plea that they "must act in such a way as to make possible a coming together of white people and colored people on the basis of a real harmony of interests and understanding," echoed Gregg's assertion that "the tendency of nonviolent resistance is to remove fear, anger and any foreboding or dread of loss or sense of separateness … and to replace those with feelings of security, unity, sympathy and good will."[175] King's engagement with nonviolent philosophy developed substantially between the end of the boycott and the beginning, when he had talked mainly of justice and the American right to protest, rather than racial accord and understanding.[176] King reacted to needs as they arose; with the buses desegregated, focussing on healing the rift between many white Montgomerians and the boycott participants was important to prevent bloodshed. Events following the Supreme Court decision suggest that the effort was not wholly successful. By January 16 1957 the buses had been shot at six times, and one black female passenger hit in both legs, resulting in the buses being stopped altogether for six days.[177] Four black churches and participants' homes had been targeted with dynamite, which led to King feeling "a personal sense of guilt for everything that was happening," and suffering a breakdown during a mass prayer meeting.[178] Despite the MIA's attention to building bridges with white Montgomerians, the brutal beating freedom riders received when they reached Montgomery 4 years later is testament to the continuing racial animosity within the community.[179]

---

[174] Martin Luther King and W. J. Powell, "Integrated Bus Suggestions," December 19 1956. Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston, M.A.: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/integrated-bus-suggestions.
[175] Martin Luther King Jr., "Statement on Ending of Bus Boycott," December 20 1956. Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston MA: Martin Luther King Jr. Papers. https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/statement-ending-bus-boycott ; Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 48.
[176] Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 141.
[177] "Alabama Bus Line Resumes under Guard." *Washington Post*, January 16 1957, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/148888836.
[178] "Negro Churches Dynamited in Bus Integration Fight." *Washington Post*, January 11 1957, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/148912722; King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 169.
[179] For a detailed account of the events in Montgomery in 1961, see Derek Charles Catsam. "Mister, This Is Not Your Fight!: The 1961 Montgomery Freedom Ride Riots." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 40, no. 2 (2007). 93-109.

Historiography around the boycott has tended to emphasise how Montgomery's sudden protest ignited the nonviolent, "classic" phase of the Civil Rights Movement in the South. While that may be true, examination of testimony from the boycotters themselves shows that this impression of a calm, loving, joyful, courageous, and dignified protest was not immediate, and was hard won. King's words and actions did not conform closely to Gandhian nonviolent principles from the outset, but outsiders such as Bayard Rustin and Glenn Smiley, representatives of external pacifist organisations, helped to shape and frame the protest in nonviolent terms after it began. Not all participants adhered to the principles or even appearance of nonviolence and the evidence suggests that, especially at times of crisis, the emotions that boycotters were asked to display were not in line with what they felt. However, sources also indicate that the protest did not only elicit negative feelings that needed to be contained: the elation and confidence reported by those participants who attended the mass meetings suggests a genuine display of collective determination and, indeed, joy that worked in the protest's favour. A few years later a new generation of protesters, influenced by the events in Montgomery, began to use nonviolent behaviour and its accompanying emotions to replicate the boycott's success in their own towns and cities. These efforts prompted the national campaign known as the Freedom Rides, which echoed the concept of the Journey of Reconciliation, but in fact replicated more closely the scale and use of nonviolence seen during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

FROM MORAL SHOCK TO SHOCK TROOPS: THE FREEDOM RIDES

Although closely related projects run by the same organisation, the name chosen for each protest indicates the distinction between them: while the "Journey of Reconciliation" suggested the nonviolent aims of coming to an understanding with one's opponent, these connotations of white northern pacifism did not suit a black rights campaign of the early 1960s. As James Farmer noted: "Such a name would be out of touch with the scrappy nonviolent movement that had emerged. The cry, I said, was not for 'reconciliation' but for "*freedom*." It would be called the Freedom Ride."[180] The "scrappy nonviolent movement" that Farmer referred to was the

[180] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 199.

lunch-counter sit-in protests that were gaining national publicity in February 1960 after a group of black students refused to leave the lunch counter of a Woolworths in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Stokely Carmichael, a black activist who would become chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1966, dismissed the first Greensboro protest as a stunt, "inconsequential and fleeting," when he read about it in the newspaper, but changed his mind when he saw television coverage of the protesters "calmly sitting at a counter while racist abuse, blows, and the contents of ketchup bottles, full ashtrays, and coffee cups were dumped on their heads."[181] He recalled that seeing images of nonviolent direct action pitting black courage and composure against white malice, rather than imagining the scene from a written description, "instantly" transformed him into an advocate for nonviolent techniques.[182] Robert Parris Moses, another former SNCC leader, had a similar reaction to photographs of the Greensboro sit-ins in the newspaper, feeling so "mesmerised" by the "young, committed Black faces" of the southern protesters that it sparked his first trip to Mississippi, leaving his teaching position at an elite school for a long career as an activist and community organiser.[183]

The increasing popularity of documentary photography and photojournalism in the 1930s and 1940s, followed by television in the 1950s, made the emotional expression of nonviolent protesters more visible to more Americans, vastly increasing the number of observers to the act of resistance. Television especially changed the way that the public interacted with the issues of racial discrimination and violence, as Bayard Rustin later reflected:

> …if we had had television fifty years earlier, we would have got rid of lynching fifty years earlier. People read about brutalities to blacks, and they shrugged their shoulders. When they saw the dogs, when they saw the fire hoses, when they saw in their living room a church destroyed, when they saw the mutilated bodies of those kids, when they saw the funeral, that was a deeply visceral experience that made them say, "We have had enough racism."[184]

Rustin mentions the 1963 Birmingham protest campaign and the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing of the same year as examples of powerful civil rights imagery that

---

[181] Stokely Carmichael and Michael Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*. (New York: Scribner, 2003), 139.
[182] Ibid. Later Carmichael was highly critical of nonviolence as anything other than an effective protest tactic.
[183] Moses and Cobb, *Radical Equations: Math Literacy and Civil Rights*, 3-4.
[184] Rustin, "The Reminiscences of Bayard Rustin," *Biographical Interviews*, p. 95.

elicited moral shocks through television but, as Carmichael's recollection demonstrates, television was already broadcasting images of black freedom protest by the start of the 1960s. When CORE started its 1947 Journey it was estimated that 90 per cent of Americans had never seen a television programme.[185] By the mid-1950s 78. 6 per cent of the population had access to television and by the early 1960s 92 per cent of households owned at least one.[186] CORE was adapting to an entirely new media landscape that emphasised the visual when it began planning the Freedom Ride in 1960.

As well as renaming the Journey, CORE set about rebranding itself to increase its relevance to the sit-ins. A key part of this was the replacement of the white Jimmy Robinson as Executive Secretary with James Farmer, who had been working at the NAACP since 1959 but was called back to CORE in the wake of the new black student-led resistance.[187] The Montgomery Bus Boycott was at least partially responsible for the rise of southern black protest in the early 1960s. Its success had been inspiring for many young southern African Americans; it offered a new and potentially viable form of resistance. A young John Lewis read everything he could access on the boycott, and remembered: "…it was really one of the most exciting, one of the most moving things to me to see just a few miles away the black folks of Montgomery stickin' together, refusing to ride segregated buses, walking the streets. It was a moving movement."[188] By 1961 Lewis and other southern black men and women had left home for college where there was more time and opportunity to organise protests. At the same time, some African Americans in the North went south for college where they felt the jolt of cultural and moral shock on finding segregation so blatantly practised. Diane Nash began at Fisk University, Nashville, that year and recalled her feelings on arrival:

> I had—I understood the facts, and the stories, but there was not an emotional relationship. When I actually went south, and actually saw signs that said "white" and "colored" and I actually could not drink out of that water fountain, or go to that ladies' room, I had a real emotional reaction.[189]

---

[185] "Television! Boom!," *Fortune*, May 1948, 79, quoted in Peter Lev, *Transforming the Screen, 1950-1959*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003), 9.
[186] Bernard Timberg, *Television Talk: A History of the Tv Talk Show*. (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002), 20-21; Aniko Bodroghkozy, *Equal Time: Television and the Civil Rights Movement*. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 2-3.
[187] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 193-94.
[188] Raines, *My Soul Is Rested*, 73.
[189] Orlando Bagwell interview with Diane Nash, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 12 1985).

Nash and Lewis were among those who began attending the workshops of Jim Lawson, a black conscientious objector who, like Rustin, had been to India to study Gandhian nonviolent resistance techniques and taught how to apply them in Nashville, a few streets away from Fisk.[190] They practised nonviolent role-playing, in the same vein as CORE's "socio-dramas," in which they learned to not strike back when provoked or attacked and also to protect their fellow protesters with their own bodies.[191] Lawson's method of training went beyond behaviour, and emphasised feelings. He told participants:

> You have to do more than just not hit back. You have to have no *desire* to hit back. You have to *love* that person who's hitting you. You're *going* to love him.[192]

Nash recalled learning "the practical and real power of truth and love" in these sessions, and Bernard Lafayette, another of the participants, claimed he was taught not be afraid of physical violence: "you can't practice nonviolence being afraid to die, and the training frees you from that fear."[193]

At the end of 1959, just before the Greensboro sit-ins, the Nashville group began interracial tests, in which they would request service at department store lunch counters, anticipating refusal, and would then talk with the manager about the moral implications of the policy.[194] After the Greensboro sit-in, however, they adopted the more militant practice of refusing to move when asked to leave. Lewis recalled the "great feeling" of openly defying segregation for the first time:

> …it was my first real act of protesting against this system of segregation. I sort of had this feeling for some time that you just wanted to strike a blow for freedom and this was a great sense of pride to be able to sit down and at the same time become part of an organized effort.[195]

Like the protesters of the Montgomery Bus Boycott that had so moved him, Lewis was elated to now be part of a united group effort. Robert Moses, reflecting on the

---

http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/qf85nd261. Stokely Carmichael describes a similarly formative experience at Howard University, Washington D.C., arriving from New York. See Carmichael and Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*, 132-33.

[190] Bagwell interview with Diane Nash. November 12, 1985.

[191] Ibid.

[192] John Lewis and Michael D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 93.

[193] Jeff Kisseloff, "Bernard Lafayette," in *Generation on Fire: Voices of Protest from the 1960s: An Oral History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 10.

[194] Jack Bass and Walter DeVries interview with John Lewis, *Southern Oral History Program Collection*. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library. no. A-0073 (November 20 1973). http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/A-0073/excerpts/excerpt_7336.html; Bagwell interview with Diane Nash. November 12, 1985.

[195] Bass and DeVries interview with John Lewis. November 20, 1973.

Greensboro sit-ins, suggested that this overt confrontation of discrimination worked as an antidote to the harm of emotional "self-repression" characteristic of African American participation in white society, describing a feeling of "great release."[196] Nash, on the other hand, admitted to being "wall-to-wall terrified" before each demonstration she was involved with, but also acknowledged that "it was a real experience, to be among a group of people who would put their bodies between you and danger," an experience that brought out her "courage" and "love for people."[197]

Student group protests developed all over the South. Martin Luther King's organisation, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), held a conference in April 1960 at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina to connect with the new movement. The students decided that they would find their own path and, rather than joining King, they formed an organisation that embraced the more immediate and confrontational tactics that they had been experimenting with during the sit-ins. This new organisation quickly became known as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).[198] The group from Nashville, including Lewis and Nash, began working with other student groups across the South as part of SNCC, as well as continuing the effort to desegregate public spaces in downtown Nashville. After success with department store lunch counters they focused their efforts on a movie theatre and a hamburger chain, facing arrest, abuse and, in one instance, fumigation.[199]

In December of that year another landmark civil rights case, *Boynton v. Virginia*, brought segregated transportation to the fore of civil rights activism again. The decision extended the rulings of *Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* and *NAACP v. St. Louis-Santa Fe Railway Company* to apply to terminal facilities, giving CORE a reason to organise a new test of the law. CORE's plan was to send interracial groups of demonstrators into the South, as the Journey of Reconciliation had done, to challenge segregation and encourage others to "ride in a desegregated manner" on both Greyhound and Trailways buses.[200] The Freedom Ride would go further than the Journey in many respects: participants would venture into states of

---

[196] Seth Cagin and Philip Dray, *We Are Not Afraid: The Story of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney, and the Civil Rights Campaign for Mississippi.* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), 105.
[197] Bagwell interview with Diane Nash. November 12, 1985.
[198] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 114-15; Wesley C. Hogan, *Many Minds, One Heart: Sncc's Dream for a New America.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 34-35.
[199] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 127-29.
[200] CORE, "Freedom Ride, 1961," April 24 1961, *Congress of Racial Equality, including publications...* Part 21. Prospectus. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.

the Deep South, what Lewis called the "belly of the segregated beast," and they would make tests of the bus terminal facilities as well as bus seating.[201] CORE made the decision to allow women to take part in this test, and rather than shying away from the controversy this would cause, emphasised the fact in its preliminary letter to President Kennedy and the Attorney General Robert Kennedy.[202] The Kennedy administration either never received the letter, or decided that the situation did not require action.[203]

The Kennedy administration was dedicated to battling racial discrimination, but only so far as it affected visiting African diplomats at a tense time for international relations when the US and the Soviet Union were competing for influence over newly independent African nations.[204] The Freedom Ride needed to be international news to gain anything more than superficial attention from the President and Attorney General. Farmer knew that overtly associating the Freedom Ride with the sit-ins would catch press attention, so he called a news conference just before the group set off and "indicated the project would be a sit-in on wheels."[205] As though to promise the press that there would be action worth reporting on, Farmer added, "If there is arrest we will accept that arrest. If there is violence we are willing to accept that violence without responding in kind."[206]

When a friend of Lewis' showed him CORE's announcement of the "Freedom Ride 1961" in SNCC's newsletter, *The Student Voice*, he immediately applied. He knew from his efforts in Nashville that it would be dangerous, but he notes in his autobiography that, far from frightened, he felt "elated" and "eager."[207] He and Lafayette had previously resisted segregation on a bus from Nashville in December 1959, sitting right behind the driver. After the driver's demands for them

---

[201] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 133; CORE, "Freedom Ride, 1961," *Congress of Racial Equality, including publications...* April 24 1961 66.
[202] "James Farmer to President Kennedy," April 26 1961, *White House Central File, Subject File*. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, MA: Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers. http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Wpuc196b20Cx2t5bttg5UQ.aspx.
[203] For more detail on the Kennedy administration's response to the Freedom Rides see Catsam, *Freedom's Main Line*, 73; Judith Vecchione interview with Burke Marshall, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 4 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/s1784n35d.
[204] C. B. Holder. "Racism toward Black African Diplomats During the Kennedy Administration." *Journal of Black Studies* 14, no. 1 (1983). 33. doi: 10. 1177/002193478301400103; Romano, "No Diplomatic Immunity: African Diplomats, the State Department, and Civil Rights, 1961-1964," 561.
[205] "Sit-in Backers Start Test Bus Trip to South." *New York Times*, May 5 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/115225681.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 133.

to move were met with silence, the driver moved his seat back to remove their legroom. Lewis claimed that, at the end of their journey: "Our legs were sore, but our spirits were sky-high," echoing Martin Luther King's sentiments: "we decided to substitute tired feet for tired souls."[208] For Lewis, as with the Montgomery boycotters, refusing to accept discrimination involved the willing exchange of physical endurance for emotional or spiritual freedom.

The sixteen participants undertook extensive training upon arriving in Washington D.C. in April 1961. Sessions on the legal status of segregated transport and the sociology of the South accompanied the sociodramas that many of the participants were by now familiar with. James Farmer called these role-playing sessions "intense" and "all too realistic:" the group took it in turns to be the riders and the opponents who would be "thrown out of bus seats and clubbed, knocked off lunch counter stools and stomped."[209] There was a physical as well as psychological need for creating these violent scenes; they allowed the participants to learn the positions that would best protect their bodies from beatings.[210] On the evening before they departed, Farmer took the participants out for a meal at a Chinese restaurant, and made a serious speech letting the group know that there was still time to bow out of the journey, an occasion he remembers being "frought [*sic.*] with emotion."[211] One of the participants joked that it was their "last supper."[212] Lewis, in contrast, remembered the meal being "pleasant and relaxed," and thoroughly enjoyed his first ever meal dining out, despite being aware that several members of the group had written out their wills.[213]

James Peck, who had been a participant in the Journey of 1947, was the only veteran of that demonstration also to take part in the Freedom Rides. As such, he was uniquely qualified to assess what precisely had changed in segregated transport in the intervening fourteen years. He noted that on the Greyhound and Trailways buses themselves, "desegregation had become a reality," but within the waiting rooms the riders were the only ones who did not self-segregate, even where the signs had been removed.[214] The terminals were therefore the new targets of their campaign, and

---

[208] Ibid., 97; King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 161.
[209] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 198; Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 138.
[210] Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 198.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 140; Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 198.
[213] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 140.
[214] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 89.

more dangerous than the bus had been: as CORE had learned during the Journey, white passengers, even those from the South, did not react aggressively to their test on the buses, but the cab drivers outside did, feeling that the riders were "intruders."[215] The terminal was not a transient space like the bus, but part of the town itself.

Although they had been given training in non-violence and were briefed on the situation they were entering, participants admitted to feeling fear when encountering violent mobs in terminal buildings. Charles Person, one of the black participants of the first 1961 Freedom Ride, reflected:

> I think the most frightening thing for me was when we entered the [white] waiting room in Birmingham. When all the people that were in the waiting room came toward us, James Peck and I, they surrounded us and just began to punch us with their fists. They had pipes.[216]

The terminals were not the only space in which they encountered violence, but when they were assaulted on the bus it was externally organised: the Greyhound bus was attacked just outside of Anniston after a mob slashed the bus tyres. The windows were smashed, the bus set on fire and the crowd beat the escaping participants.[217] The image of the burning bus that decorated the front page of the *New York Times* the next day quickly became iconic of the Freedom Rides, provoking shock and anger across the nation, and internationally.[218] Barbara Kay, a black woman from New Jersey, described her reaction on seeing the image: "I had to do something when I saw that picture. That was as immediate as anything could be, and I said: 'If there's anything in me at all, I cannot live with this.'"[219] For Kay, the image was powerful enough to provoke a moral shock that set her in motion – shortly afterwards she left for Mississippi to join the rides. An hour after the Greyhound bus was attacked, the Trailways bus containing the other Freedom riders also reached Anniston, where a mob of white men boarded, beat them savagely and forced all participants to the back of the bus.[220] After multiple attacks at bus terminals in

---

[215] Lynn, *There Is a Fountain*, 111.
[216] Tre Lemmer, Dustin Koppa, and Victoria Lemke interview with Charles Person, *D.C. Everest Oral History Project*. D.C. Everest Area Schools, (n.d. 2012). http://www.crmvet.org/nars/person12.htm.
[217] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 96.
[218] "Bi-Racial Group Cancels Bus Trip." *New York Times*, May 16 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/115383091. "Rough Ride to Freedom in the Deep South." *Observer (London, UK)*, May 28 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/475559889.
[219] Barbara Kay, "The Reminiscences of Barbara Kay," February 5 1979, CCOH: *Biographical Interviews*, p. 21.
[220] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 97.

Alabama, and the refusal of bus drivers to take them further than Birmingham, the Freedom Riders decided to fly to their next destination, New Orleans.[221]

The press coverage of the proceedings ensured violent opponents followed the riders to the airport terminal, and their first flight was cancelled due to a bomb threat.[222] Genevieve Hughes Houghton, one of the white participants, still remembered her fear of an airport terminal bathroom fifty years later:

> I wasn't too happy when I was in the airport and I noticed that the restrooms, which of course were separate, four separate restrooms, were hidden behind a wall. And you had to open the door and go down into a place where there were no other people. And it was a very, very vulnerable situation. That was where anybody who didn't like you could just take care of you in no time, just like that.[223]

If the nonviolent training had not truly freed the participants from fear of violence, they avoided showing it during the Ride. An extreme example of this is when Hank Thomas, a 19 year-old black student at Howard University, was released from police custody in Winnsboro, South Carolina after he and Peck had been arrested at a lunch counter in the terminal. They chose to release the two riders separately: Thomas late at night when there were no more buses, and Peck in the morning. Thomas went back to the bus station, where white segregationists told him to "go in the nigger waiting room."[224] Peck described what happened next: "Thomas entered the white waiting room, bought a candy bar and walked out past the gaping segregationists. Such is his boldness. Some call it foolhardiness."[225] Thomas' display of fearlessness despite his vulnerability appeared to create the "curiosity" and "wonder" that Gregg described a nonviolent demonstration should provoke in its opponent.[226] The segregationists held back on attacking Thomas long enough for him to escape in the car of a local black minister.[227] Peck's account of the Freedom Rides records displays of fearlessness like Thomas' but is, as one reviewer noted in 1963, "not so successful

---

[221] Carson interview with Ed Blankenheim. November 14, 2002.
[222] Simeon Booker, "Jet Team Braves Mob Action," *Jet*. 1 Jun 1961, 20. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=KrQDAAAAMBAJ.
[223] Tom Putnam and Cassie Crossley interview with Genevieve Hughes, Bernard LaFayette Jr., and Ernest "Rip" Patton, JFK Presidential Library and Museum, MA, (April 20 2011). http://www.jfklibrary.org/~/media/assets/Education%20and%20Public%20Programs/Forum%20Transcripts/2011/2011%2004%2020%2050th%20Anniversary%20of%20the%20Freedom%20Rides.pdf 11.
[224] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 94. For a more detailed account of this incident, see Catsam, *Freedom's Main Line*, 131-32.
[225] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 94.
[226] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 44.
[227] Peck, *Freedom Ride*, 94; Catsam, *Freedom's Main Line*, 132.

at conveying the emotional content of the experience."[228] Peck was a journalist, which perhaps helps to explain why his account distances itself from the subjective experience of protest. However, he was also a proponent of nonviolence and, accordingly, may have extended containment of fear and anger to his writing, refusing to acknowledge the emotions he or other riders experienced at critical moments.

Other accounts make clear that the journey did have significant emotional effects on participants. CORE's original group abandoned the ride in Birmingham because they could not find drivers willing to take them further. Their journey and the extreme violence perpetrated against them put them in a fragile condition, physically and psychologically, which could have ended the ride even if they were able to eventually board another bus. *Jet* journalist Simeon Booker noted that at the airport, after two flight cancellations, the riders began to display anxiety and distress: "The long wait took a heavy toll - three members became panicky. One whispered: 'This is a trap. We'll all be killed.'"[229] Booker also noted that, once in New Orleans, many of the riders could not face the big rally that had been planned: "…only eight of the original 18 'Freedom Riders' were on hand - the others were recuperating from shock and nervousness of the harrowing journey."[230] Booker's account of the original ride and Ollie Stewart's account of the Journey of Reconciliation, noting the "terrific strain" the participants were under, together reveal a weakness in the planning of these mobile demonstrations. The riders had been taught how to handle and best survive violent situations, but they did not, and perhaps could not, prepare for how to deal with the emotional wear wrought by travel under segregation and the strict emotional management necessary throughout their journey.[231] In addition to the beatings they took, they also endured hours in close quarters with potentially hostile strangers and long periods of waiting, with a great deal of time to reflect on the uncertainty of their situation and its many possible outcomes. When interviewed in 1963 about the nonviolent direct action approach by CORE and SNCC, and the effectiveness of using young black people as "shock troops" for the civil rights struggle, Urban League leader Lester Granger raised concerns with the approach: "Who is determining those who are psychologically prepared to take the shock, and

---

[228] Esta Seaton, review of *Courageous Ride toward Freedom*, by James Peck, *Clark Atlanta University* 24, no. 1 (1963). 91. doi: 10. 2307/274234. http://www.jstor.org/stable/274234.
[229] Booker, "Jet Team Braves Mob Action," 21.
[230] Ibid.
[231] Stewart, "Journey of Reconciliation Knocks Props from under Weak J.C. System," 19.

those who could be seriously harmed?"[232] Granger's concerns for the participants' psychological health were not unwarranted; some riders have hinted at the high psychological, as well as physical, cost of their participation.[233]

The group of Nashville students, including Lewis, Lafayette and Nash, had been following news of the Ride closely, and felt the impact of the beatings and bus burning personally. Lewis especially felt "shock" and "guilt," for he would have been on one of the attacked buses if it was not for an opportunity for foreign service that had required his presence in Philadelphia before the buses entered Alabama.[234] For the other Nashville students, the Ride was so close to their own aims as activists that they felt "a close kinship" with CORE's participants.[235] When the Ride ended early and the riders flew down to New Orleans, the students strongly felt that it needed to be continued, and they should be the ones to continue it. Nash acknowledged that their decision was based on protecting the image of black nonviolent resistance:

> …the impression would have been given that whenever a movement starts, all that has to be done is that you attack it, massive violence and the, the blacks would stop … So, under those circumstances, it was really important that the Ride continue. And again, part of the non-violent strategy understands that when that type of negative image is directed at you, one of the important things to do is find ways to convert it to, to positive energy, which we were able to do as a result of continuing.[236]

On arrival at Montgomery the Nashville group were badly beaten by a mob. According to John Lewis, it was only the actions of Alabama Public Safety Director Floyd Mann firing a gun that prevented participants and members of the press from being killed that day.[237] Diane Nash admitted that while acting as co-ordinator for the rides, she "cried just every night, profusely," and that it felt like "being at war."[238] That more young people signed up to replace activists who had so recently been

---

[232] "The Reminiscences of Lester B. Granger," n.d. 1963, p. 277.
[233] For example, black participant Dave Dennis talked of seeing jailed riders who had been convinced that they were going to die on their journey, pulling out their hair or banging their head on the wall. Orlando Bagwell interview with Dave Dennis, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965)*. Blackside Inc. Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO. (November 10 1985). http://repository.wustl.edu/concern/videos/kh04dr66w. White participant Jim Zwerg revealed that, of the riders he has talked to, "almost all" suffered emotional or medical problems after the Rides. interview with Jim Zwerg, *Skin Deep*. PBS, (June 17 1999). https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/peoplescentury/episodes/skindeep/zwergtranscript.html.
[234] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 144-45.
[235] Bagwell interview with Diane Nash. November 12, 1985.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Bass and DeVries interview with John Lewis. November 20, 1973. For a fuller account of the violence in Montgomery see Raymond Arsenault, "If You Miss Me from the Back of the Bus," in *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[238] Bagwell interview with Diane Nash. November 12, 1985.

bloodied and burned was an impressive display of courage and determination that reached the public through extensive national newspaper and television coverage, triggering admiration and sympathy in observers like Carol Ruth Silver, who would join the Freedom Rides just over three weeks after the Nashville group set off on the 15 May 1961.[239]

On the 26 May, SNCC appealed to members through the press to protest the arrest of the riders, and to become riders themselves.[240] More than four hundred people embarked on their own Freedom Rides throughout the remainder of 1961, and most of them were arrested at the bus terminal in Jackson, Mississippi, the new geographical focus of the movement; a court order banned organised rides in Alabama on May 20 1961.[241] Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett took a different approach from Alabama's Governor, realising that allowing violence to occur was not a viable strategy to resist desegregation of his state's public transportation. President Kennedy had stepped in after attacks on riders in Anniston and Birmingham, sending federal marshals to Alabama. Instead, whenever Freedom Riders arrived in Mississippi they were arrested, and after time in local jails were transferred to the maximum security Parchman Prison.

The experience of later riders was vastly different to what Peck, Lewis, and Nash endured. As streams of riders entered Mississippi, certain conventions began to be developed for interaction between demonstrators and police. Whilst Carol Ruth Silver and her fellow riders could not be completely sure that they would not be "met by a white mob with clubs," the idea was no longer to cross state lines on a long journey, testing all of the facilities on the way.[242] Silver deliberately sat apart from the black participants in her group eating breakfast at a terminal in Memphis because they did not want any "incidents" before they reached Jackson.[243] Barbara Kay described her July ride as "very simple; it was over very quickly and there was no fear or concern."[244] White participant Stephen Green, who was trained by Diane Nash,

---

[239] WGBH Educational Foundation. "Roster of Freedom Riders." PBS, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/freedomriders/people/roster (Accessed February 15 2016).
[240] "Negro Group Issues Freedom-Ride Call." *New York Times*, May 27 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/115478589/.
[241] Associated Press. "Judge Issues Writ," *New York Times*, May 20 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. http://search.proquest.com/docview/115391402/. At least three arrests occurred at Jackson airport. See "Air Freedom Ride Carries 3 to Jail." *New York Times*, June 8 1961, ProQuest Historical Newspapers. https://search.proquest.com/docview/115429474.
[242] Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary*, 24.
[243] Ibid., 23.
[244] Kay, "The Reminiscences of Barbara Kay," *Biographical Interviews*, p. 44.

recalled his brief, civil encounter with resisting segregated transport on June 10 as a "piece of theater."[245] Mary Hamilton, arrested June 25, outlined the basic script that governed the confrontation:

> Captain Ray said, "I said are you all going to move on? Move on, and move out of this here station."
>
> Our spokesman said, "We're interstate travelers. What reason is there for us to leave the station?"
>
> And he said again, he was very angry, "I said you all move on and leave this here station."
>
> Our spokesman said, "No. We will not leave the station."
>
> Captain Ray said, "Does that go for all of you all?"
>
> And we all said, "Yes. That goes for all of us all."
>
> He said, "Then you all are under arrest."[246]

Silver's description of her groups' arrest was almost identical. The atmosphere after they were arrested was one of joy and triumph as they achieved their goal, joking "gleefully" as the whole group, black and white, were placed in the police van: "I bet this is the only integrated public transportation in the state of Mississippi."[247] The accounts by Hamilton, Green and Silver point to a significant difference in protest conditions: the long waiting periods and uncertainty that plagued earlier riders were removed, resulting in a brief, orderly rebellion. If their journeys were less emotionally exhausting than those of the original CORE and SNCC riders, however, their stays in Mississippi jails and prison provided a greater test of will.[248]

Though the Freedom Rides throughout 1961 represented one of the largest and most high profile campaigns of nonviolent direct action in US history, with over four hundred participants, accounts from those involved suggest that nonviolent

---

[245] Stephen Green. "Narrative: Freedom Rider Diary, Forty Years Later." Civil Rights Movement Veterans, http://www.crmvet.org/nars/green1.htm (Accessed Febraury 15 2016).
[246] Louise Inghram Mary Hamilton, and others, *Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves* (Detriot, MI: News and Letters, November 1961. 3.
[247] Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary*, 25.
[248] Although many accounts of freedom riders in jail and prison describe the experience of protesting their incarceration together through song as "uplifting," there are also accounts of brutality and psychological torture being used by prison officers against riders, as well as diaries that describe the poor conditions and extreme boredom expected of a jail or prison account. See, for example, Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart*, 7-32; Silver, *Freedom Rider Diary*; Joan Trumpauer Mulholland, "Diary of a Freedom Rider," in *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC*, ed. Faith S. Holsaert (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 67-76; Green, "Narrative: Freedom Rider Diary, Forty Years Later"; Carmichael and Thelwell, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*, 194-211.

emotional expression was more often used in the service of power-oriented, rather than truth-oriented protest. Protesters like Silver understood that they were, at the very least, required to suppress the anger and frustration they felt that had motivated their recruitment, but the expression of love, calm, and desire to emotionally connect with the opponent was less important than it had been for the Journey of Reconciliation. There is little evidence that CORE intended to engage with the point of view of southern segregationists, or to explain their own as part of a nonviolent strategy of "seeking a settlement truly amicable and truly satisfying to both sides."[249] James Farmer's comments regarding his opponents suggested he did not believe it was even possible to convert them. In a letter to NAACP Executive Secretary Roy Wilkins in June 1961, Farmer wrote from prison: "Most of all, I find myself sorry for those who are wedded to the doomed, 19th century notion of segregation-apartheid! It is like a man hurling himself upon the casket of a deceased loved one, and going down with it into the earth.[250] One month later he spoke at the NAACP's 52nd Annual Convention, telling his audience, "the real freedom is with the freedom-riding inmates, and the real confinement is the imprisonment of the mind of the Mississippi officials."[251] He did not go on to outline how they might release the officials from their confinement, or suggest that freeing them of hate and fear was still part of CORE's plan.

Many of the later riders outwardly assumed the emotions and behaviour of nonviolence as an activist strategy, but were explicit about their scepticism of its philosophy. Lewis has suggested that the Freedom Rides themselves could have contributed to a backlash against nonviolence as a personal practice, rather than a media tactic:

> Forman and Stokely, and so many of the new people we were seeing coming through Nashville were jaded, outraged at the brutality they had seen or, in many cases, experienced during the Freedom Rides. Many of these young men and women were not veterans of the sit-ins. They had never been exposed to the kind of sustained nonviolent demonstrations we had orchestrated in Nashville. All they had seen was the horror and violence flashed on television screens and newspaper front pages during the Rides. *That* was what they were responding to.[252]

---

[249] Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence*, 51.
[250] "James Farmer to Roy Wilkins," June 14 1961, *Congress of Racial Equality, including publications...* Part 21. Letter. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[251] "Excerpts of Remarks by James Farmer at NAACP 52nd Annual Convention, Tindley Temple Methodist Church, Philadelphia, PA," July 11 1961, *Congress of Racial Equality, including publications...* Part 21. Report. LOC: Papers of the NAACP. ProQuest History Vault.
[252] Lewis and D'Orso, *Walking with the Wind*, 178.

While the outrage brought new recruits, they were not always especially familiar with nonviolence. The shocking images of white southerners savagely beating unprotected riders created such anger in many of the young black activists that they began to deride the philosophy of nonviolence and its concept of loving one's opponent, even while acknowledging its usefulness as a tactic.[253]

* * * *

In each of the protests examined in this chapter, there were participants who wholly embraced truth-oriented nonviolence, seeking to love and aid their opponent, but the majority of the participants agreed to adopt the emotions of nonviolence to change southerners' policies, not necessarily their minds.[254] The shift in approach can be broadly explained by the desire for accelerated change during the 1950s and 1960s, as African Americans began to feel a tension between the rights that were being recognised legally and their everyday experience of racial interaction. Scholars such as Louis Lusky have observed that there is a difference between "waiting for the establishment of a right and waiting for its enjoyment after it has been established," noting that it is much harder to wait patiently for the latter, as was expected of African Americans in the 1950s and 1960s.[255] Rapidly changing social conventions on such a large scale did not allow time for lengthy individual conversations to encourage mutual understanding. Of course, the nature of the protesters' opponents had also changed by the time the boycott began; white southerners were reacting to the same court decisions that motivated civil rights activists. Between 1947 and 1955, segregation became an even more polarised and politically-charged topic, leaving less room for courteous debate and the truth-oriented techniques of the Journey of Reconciliation and sit-ins of the 1940s. Instead, activists began to favour dramatic and attention-grabbing demonstrations that appealed to the news media, in order to

---

[253] Stokely Carmichael, "Interview," March 4 1964, *Who Speaks for the Negro? An Archival Collection*. Robert Penn Warren Centre for the Humanities: Vanderbilt University.53. http://whospeaks.library.vanderbilt.edu/interview/stokely-carmichael.

[254] The precise role of coercion in Gandhian nonviolence more generally is unclear; as David Cortright observed, Gandhi often employed nonviolent tactics such as boycotts and mass non-cooperation that can be viewed as politically coercive. Other scholars of Gandhi suggest that his distaste for coercion and inclination to compromise limited him as a leader, much as the Journey of Reconciliation's truth-oriented approach limited its political effect in 1947. David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas*. (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 218.

[255] Louis Lusky, "Racial Discrimination and the Federal Law: A Problem in Nullification," in *Southern Justice*, ed. Leon Friedman (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 256.

evoke outrage on the participants' behalf and force opponents to back down. The dramatic increase in television ownership over the period played a large part in delivering these affecting images into the homes of Americans, boosting the influence of the Freedom Rides. The visual power of violence juxtaposed with nonviolent emotions expressed by participants was paramount in generating support among moderates and recruiting new activists to the cause.

First-person accounts across all three case studies have established that management of emotion was the norm for activists challenging segregated transport; in each case participants attempted to contain negative emotions such as fear and anger, and instead express love, patience, and calm. Certain emotions were cultivated or hidden in public protest in large part for the same reason that African Americans performed emotional management on buses, streetcars and trains: to avoid making white Americans feel too uncomfortable. While these campaigns were intended to evoke some discomfort in white observers, specifically with the practical and moral failings of segregation, it was imperative that this did not slip over into a stance that could seem threatening, in order to maintain and build white liberal support. For protesters of segregated public transportation, Gandhian nonviolent resistance was a tool to turn a mirror on aggressors, highlighting, by the difference in behaviour, the opponent's failure to adhere to their own norms of morality and respectability. Whether embracing nonviolence as a tactic or a practice, activists co-opted the emotional discipline African Americans were forced to employ in the presence of white Americans and redeployed it as part of their resistance. The success and safety of protesters depended on their performance; although there were brutally violent reactions from white supremacist locals, participants' self-control made it difficult for onlookers to consider the vicious reprisals a reasonable reaction, thereby compelling outside intervention. Nevertheless, in each protest there are also examples of emotional expression aligning with positive feelings evoked by participation. During the Journey the calm demeanour of more experienced participants put others at ease. The mass meetings during the Montgomery Bus Boycott generated happiness, excitement and a certain degree of fearlessness in attendees. Finally, participants in the Freedom Rides reported finding elation, joy, and triumph in their activism, which, despite the self-regulation required of them to take part in the protest, may have helped to ease the strain of everyday emotional repression encountered in public spaces.

Conclusion
"There is a familiar stigma and shame:"[1] The emotional legacies of Jim Crow public transportation

"I think our interaction with the maître d' was racially-based because it was more about one customer feeling like she belonged in that space, and that we didn't."
– Member of Sistahs on the Reading Edge book club[2]

"…and what a loss that more black men are in prison than on the trains that no longer exist"
– Nikki Giovanni, "Train Rides – In Praise of Black Men"[3]

Eleven women belonging to the Sistahs on the Reading Edge book group, ten of whom were African American, boarded the Napa Valley Wine Train in California, on 22 August 2015. According to the women, before the train left the station they were told that their noise levels were offending other passengers. After another warning, and a reprimand from another passenger that the train was "not a bar," they were told that they would need to leave the train due to the noise of their laughter, and that police officers would meet them when the train stopped and escort them back to the station.[4] The women were "paraded" through six cars and off the train, remaining visible to the other passengers as they waited outside for their bus. One of the book club members, Allisa Carr, told the *Guardian* that it was one of the "most humiliating experiences in [her] entire life." Sandra Jameson, whose 63rd birthday the book club was celebrating that day, said that they were treated "as if [they] were

[1] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness.* (New York: New Press, 2010), 185.
[2] Rupert Neate. "Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train 'for Laughing' Settle Racial Discrimination Suit," *Guardian (London, UK)*, April 19 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/apr/19/napa-valley-wine-train-book-club-settle-lawsuit.
[3] Nikki Giovanni. "Train Rides – in Praise of Black Men," February 8 2002. http://freemusicarchive.org/music/Nikki_Giovanni/Nikki_Giovanni_at_Clark_College/Train_Rides_-_In_Praise_of_Black_Men.
[4] Veronica Rocha. "Group of Black Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train after Laughing Too Loud," *Los Angeles Times*, August 24 2015. http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-black-women-kicked-off-napa-wine-train-20150824-htmlstory.html; Lee Romney and Veronica Rocha. "Black Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train to Sue for Discrimination," *Los Angeles Times*, October 1 2015. http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-napa-wine-train-black-women-lawsuit-20151001-story.html.

criminals."[5] In fact, the train company did attempt to criminalise the women, posting a statement on its Facebook page suggesting that the women directed "verbal and physical abuse toward other guests and staff," an accusation that was quickly retracted and apologised for as the public reaction to the group's treatment gathered momentum.[6] Nevertheless, the women claimed that the company's online post damaged their reputations, further humiliating them as they experienced disapproval from family members, and two of the women lost their jobs afterwards.[7] Their story suggests that the Napa Valley Wine Train company had truly achieved the aim foregrounded on their website, to conjure "the spirit of luxury rail travel in the early 1900s" — and did so by mimicking the exclusionary practices of the Jim Crow era.[8] The women's experiences are evocative of the many stories that African Americans tell about segregated public transportation. The feeling of humiliation at being publicly reprimanded and rejected recalls Jo Ann Robinson in Montgomery leaving the bus in tears. The impression of being "paraded" through the car in front of white passengers is reminiscent of Dr. Benjamin Mays' walk through the train at gunpoint escorted by white passengers. That two of the women lost their jobs recalls, among other cases, Sergeant Toney's reduction in military rank after he was arrested for resisting segregation on a bus, despite the fact that he had broken no law. The racialised policing of space, mingled with tight control of black emotion in this recent story, is a motif observed repeatedly in the examination of public transportation in the Jim Crow era.

This thesis has employed social and cultural historical methods to recover a stronger sense of the emotional impact of segregation on African Americans who used public transportation, as well as the role of emotions in the struggle to bring about the demise of legal segregation. The central contention of this thesis is that, during the period 1896–1964, African Americans were frequently humiliated, outraged, angered, and shamed by the practice of segregation, and this was particularly acute on buses, streetcars, and trains. However, although feelings about segregation were acknowledged within black communities, recorded extensively in black media, and complained about in correspondence with black rights

---

[5] Rupert Neate. "Napa Wine Train Controversy: 'I Do Think It Was Based on the Color of Our Skin,'" *Guardian (London, UK)*, September 13 2015. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/sep/13/napa-wine-train-laughing-while-black.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Romney and Rocha, "Black Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train to Sue for Discrimination,"
[8] Rocha, "Group of Black Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train after Laughing Too Loud."

organisations, African American expression of these emotions was rejected and ignored by white Americans. The appearance of such emotions, or the refusal to express 'appropriate' ones, could lead to violence, abuse, or withdrawal of liberal support, in the case of groups mounting resistance to racial oppression. Consequently, the Jim Crow era, understood through an analysis of segregated public transportation, is characterised as much by severe and extensive white control of African American emotional expression as it is by segregation, job discrimination, and disenfranchisement. By shifting the focus to emotions, this thesis has not only suggested a more complete sense of the intensity of injustice experienced by black Americans in the Jim Crow era, but has also provided a fresh perspective on how nonviolent direct action campaigns worked within this broader context of emotional control. Racialised control of emotional expression was, and continues to be, a distinct wire in the birdcage representing African American oppression, constituting an oppressive force in itself but also interacting with other forms of subjugation.[9] This thesis has outlined how segregation provided opportunities for racial abuse that, when resisted or complained of, resulted in reprisals that were often as much to do with the emotional response as any challenge to segregation laws or customs. The examination of Pullman porters also exposed how expectations of emotional labour were closely intertwined with job discrimination based on race.

The civil rights campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s to defeat segregation in public spaces, *de jure* and *de facto*, were largely successful. By 1971, 88% of Americans rejected racially segregated transportation in one social survey, although a quarter still supported segregated schools.[10] Desegregation of education has never achieved a lasting, widespread success, despite the fact that education was the field in which *Plessy v. Fergusson* was overturned: as the first chapter showed, *Brown v. Board of Education* made use of social science research to make the case that segregated schooling was psychologically damaging to African Americans, an argument that the Supreme Court agreed with in its decision.[11] A 2016 study by the U.S. Government

---

[9] For a full explanation of the birdcage metaphor see Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*, 5.

[10] Camille Z. Charles Lawrence D. Bobo, Maria Krysan, and Alicia D. Simmons, "The Real Record on Racial Attitudes," in *Social Trends in American Life: Findings from the General Social Survey since 1972*, ed. Peter V. Marsden (Princeton University Press, 2012), 42.

[11] In 2004 there were a number of articles published marking 50 years since the decision, all of which suggest that the US has largely failed to desegregate its schooling system satisfactorily. See, for example, Feagin, Jr. and B. M. Barnett. "Success and Failure: How Systemic Racism Trumped the Brown V. Board of Education Decision." *Univ. Ill. Law Rev.*, no. 5 (2004). http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/unilllr2004&collection=journals&id=1

Accountability Office (GAO) suggested that the situation has worsened in the last few decades – in the 2000-2001 school year, "9 percent of K-12 public schools had high proportions of poor and Black or Hispanic students. By school year 2013-14, that number was up to 16 percent." The report also found that "8. 4 million largely poor, Black or Hispanic students attending these schools in school year 2011-12 had less access to certain types of courses," such as maths and science.[12] The link between unequal educational opportunity and economic inequalities is clear, influencing job opportunities and increasing the likelihood of incarceration. Parents who are incarcerated negatively affect their children's education, continuing the cycle.[13]

Michelle Alexander makes the claim that the Jim Crow era never actually ended, but transformed into a less visible system of racial control. She contends that, contrary to the popular narrative, the "clock has been turned back on racial progress," owning primarily to the vastly disproportionate numbers of African Americans held within the system of mass incarceration that emerged as a reaction to civil rights gains after the 1960s. A significant proportion of Frye's birdcage, for African Americans, is now literal imprisonment. To illustrate her argument, Alexander observes that more black men are disenfranchised today than in 1870, due to a justice system that criminalises them and simultaneously legitimises discrimination against ex-felons in "employment, housing, public benefits and jury service."[14] While acknowledging that current structures of mass incarceration and the old Jim Crow system are significantly different from one another, just as Jim Crow was different to slavery, Alexander outlines striking parallels and notices an emotional resemblance: "there is a familiar stigma and shame."[15]

In the context of continued systemic racial discrimination, then, what legacies of Jim Crow public transportation remain? Firstly, public transportation continues to

---

111; Thomas F. Pettigrew. "Justice Deferred a Half Century after Brown V. Board of Education." *American Psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004). doi: 10. 1037/0003-066X.59.6.521; Rhona S. Weinstein, Anne Gregory, and Michael J. Strambler. "Intractable Self-Fulfilling Prophecies Fifty Years after Brown V. Board of Education." *American Psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004). doi: 10. 1037/0003-066X.59.6.511.

[12] "Separate and Unequal?." *Watchblog: Following the Federal Dollar*. US Accountability Office, May 17 2017. Accessed July 3 2017. https://blog.gao.gov/2017/05/17/separate-and-unequal/.

[13] Caroline Wolf Harlow "Education and Correctional Populations," US Department of Justice, 2003. https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf; Russell W. Rumberger "Poverty and High School Dropouts," American Psychological Association, 2013. http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/indicator/2013/05/poverty-dropouts.aspx; Leila Morsy and Richard Rothstein "Mass Incarceration and Children's Outcomes," Economic Policy Institute, 2016. http://www.epi.org/publication/mass-incarceration-and-childrens-outcomes/.

[14] Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, 175-76.

[15] Ibid., 185.

be a site of forced interracial interaction, and a place to seek knowledge of the racialised "other," in addition to a flashpoint of potential racial conflict. When conducting research for the thesis in New York City in March 2016, I observed an interracial exchange reminiscent of Jamilia Jones' search for the truth on a Montgomery bus in the 1950s, which I described in the introduction. Jones sat directly behind a white woman in order to touch her hair, in an attempt to understand what was so different about the two of them. This exchange was a kind of inversion of Jones' anecdote: on the New York subway, a young white man boarded the crowded train on the last Brooklyn stop before Manhattan, and took hold of the same pole as a young black woman. After a few minutes staring at her, he complimented her braids and asked if he could touch them. Before she had expressed more than what seemed a nervous giggle, he picked up some braids of her hair and examined them before letting go and complimenting them again. The woman said nothing but just smiled as the train completed its journey through the tunnel, then alighted at the next stop. There is no way to know how the woman may have felt during this instance of unsolicited contact by a white man who seemed fascinated by the differences between them. Gendered, as well as racialised, expectations of her behaviour and emotional expression may have informed her reaction. Perhaps she was pleased with the compliments. Perhaps she considered the contact a personal violation, experiencing her own moment of moral shock. Maybe she did not know how she felt. However, having paid so much attention to the historical expression of emotion on public transportation, it seemed clear to me that her smile and laughter gave no reliable indication of her feelings, in particular because the confined and crowded environment of the subway left her nowhere to go if the interaction turned sour. The "mask that grins and lies" still has relevance in the post-Jim Crow era.[16]

Secondly, racial discrimination in public transportation has remained an active area of enquiry, as evidenced by Robert D. Bullard's 2004 edited volume *Highway Robbery: Transportation Racism & New Routes to Equity,* which explores how passengers have challenged public transportation inequalities in recent decades.[17]

---

[16] This phrase is taken from a Paul Laurence Dunbar poem, called "We Wear the Mask," and found published at the start of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson's account of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Jo Ann Gibson Robinson and David J. Garrow, *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*. (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 8.
[17] Robert D. Bullard, Glenn S. Johnson, and Angel O. Torres, eds., *Highway Robbery: Transportation Racism & New Routes to Equity* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004).

However, as the United States has become a nation that relies primarily on private automotive transportation, the issues around discrimination and *de facto* segregation on board public forms of transportation have become less important to the black rights struggle. African Americans, together with other minority groups, now make up more than half of passengers, and the problems of interracial interaction in the close quarters of the bus or train has become far less pressing than the legal and economic inequalities that prevent so many black Americans from being able to afford a car.[18] There is the suggestion in recent studies that low-income African Americans who do own a car may lose it because they are seven times more likely to be stopped than a white driver, and in some states, such as Wisconsin, the failure to pay traffic fines can mean a 12-month license suspension.[19] Bullard makes clear that the problems of transportation inequality today result from, and contribute to, multiple intersecting inequalities:

> Not having reliable public transportation can mean the difference between gainful employment and a life of poverty in the ghettos and barrios. Since most do not have cars, transportation is even more crucial for the vulnerable population that is moving from welfare to work. Training, skills, and jobs are meaningless if millions of Americans can't get to work. Of course, it would be ideal if job centers were closer to the homes of inner-city residents, but few urban core neighbourhoods have experienced an economic revitalization that can rival the current jobs found in the suburbs … more often than not, public transportation does not connect urban residents to jobs.[20]

Economic inequality seems to be both the cause and result of many of these contemporary challenges for African Americans; the days when enforced segregation in interstate commerce was considered by Thurgood Marshall to be the most pressing problem the NAACP faced are long gone.[21]

---

[18] The American Public Transportation Association found in 2007 that African Americans made up 33. 1% of transit riders, and 35.7% of riders on "roadway modes," i.e. buses, although they only made up 12.6% of the overall population of the United States in the 2010 census. See John Neff and Larry Pham "A Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics Reported in on-Board Surveys," American Public Transportation Association 2007. http://www.apta.com/resources/statistics/Documents/transit_passenger_characteristics_text_5_29_2007.pdf.

[19] Alana Semuels. "No Driver's License, No Job," *The Atlantic*, June 15 2016. https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/06/no-drivers-license-no-job/486653/.

[20] Bullard, Johnson, and Torres, *Highway Robbery: Transportation Racism & New Routes to Equity*, 19.

[21] "Thurgood Marshall to P. B. Young," *NAACP discrimination complaint files: transportation*. June 20 1945. In 2012 the NAACP called for a surface transportation bill to deal with a variety of transportation inequalities, focussed particularly on job access. One of the five "standard principles" they called for related to enforcement of Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. "NAACP Calls for Swift Passage of Highway Reauthorization Bill Which Focuses on Job Creation," news release, March 1, 2012, http://www.naacp.org/latest/naacp-calls-for-swift-passage-of-highway-reauthorization-bill-which-focuses/.

It is, then, tempting to dismiss cases like the unpleasant experience of the members of the book club on the Napa Valley Wine Train as anomalies, and perhaps irrelevant to the continuing black struggle. After all, the women were attempting to enjoy themselves in typically middle-class pursuits of drinking wine, sharing books, and engaging in lively discussion. There was no overtly racist language or violence used against them. However, attempting to understand the episode in emotional terms makes clear that their experience is connected to inequalities that African Americans continue to face. African Americans in public spaces risk any strong emotional expression, from anger to mirth, being considered offensive, dangerous, or even criminal by others who seek to police them. When white police officer Darren Wilson described his confrontation with the unarmed black 18 year-old, Michael Brown, in which Brown was shot and killed, Wilson testified at the Grand Jury that Brown "had the most intense aggressive face. The only way I can describe it, it looks like a demon, that's how angry he looked."[22] The potential consequences for any African Americans to fail to regulate their emotions in public, continues to be anything from social censure and embarrassment, such as that experienced by the book club members, to arrest, physical violence, and state-sanctioned death.

Technology has transformed the ways in which African Americans may choose to react to incidents of oppression. Social exchanges can be filmed and uploaded, or stories told via Twitter or Facebook, virtually but in real time. The deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of white police are captured on smartphones and the footage made public before an official investigation even begins. There are at least two reasons that this change is significant: firstly, social media is a relatively safe space to express outrage, anger, and frustration, at least compared with a confined public space such as a bus or train. Secondly, the reactions of those who see footage of incidents and exchanges online can quickly mount to collective action, as mobilisation of the Black Lives Matter movement has demonstrated.[23] Outrage and disgust were expressed by hundreds of people who saw

[22] Josh Sanburn. "All the Ways Darren Wilson Described Being Afraid of Michael Brown," *Time*, November 25 2014. http://time.com/3605346/darren-wilson-michael-brown-demon/.
[23] For more on Black Lives Matter see, for example, Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter.* (London: Verso, 2016); Wesley Lowery, *They Can't Kill Us All: The Story of Black Lives Matter.* (London: Penguin, 2017); Russell Rickford. "Black Lives Matter." *New Labor Forum* 25, no. 1 (2015). doi: 10. 1177/1095796015620171; Jonathan M. Cox. "The Source of a Movement: Making the Case for Social Media as an Informational Source Using Black Lives Matter." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 11 (2017). doi: 10. 1080/01419870. 2017. 1334935.

video and images that the women from the book club posted online throughout their journey. When it became clear that they were being penalised for their laughter, one of the women communicated their transgression on social media with the hashtag #laughingwhileblack. The hashtag was instantly understood as a riff on "driving while black," another everyday activity for which African Americans are disproportionately penalised, and reused in online conversations about the incident.[24] Social media, Twitter in particular, is not only a new form of media outlet but a new kind of public space. How racial interaction and emotional expression play out under these vastly different circumstances merits scholarly attention, in addition to the burgeoning field of enquiry that is examining social media as a tool for social justice.[25]

* * * *

In November 2013, the first two artefacts of the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture were installed – an early twentieth century guard tower from Angola prison in Louisiana, and a railroad car built around 1918, but refurbished with segregated seating in 1940 and 1950. The Southern Railway car was donated by Pete Claussen, chairman and CEO of Gulf & Ohio Railways, restored in Kentucky and then shrink-wrapped for its 3-day highway journey to Washington D.C. The size of the objects meant that they were placed in the foundations of the museum, to later be interred as the museum walls were built around them.[26] The segregated railroad car has become abstracted from the full range of its emotional impact. It is now a visual symbol of historic African American oppression, just as the phrase "the back of the bus" is now shorthand for any kind of

[24] Neate, "Women Kicked Off Napa Wine Train 'for Laughing' Settle Racial Discrimination Suit."; Richard J. Lundman and Robert L. Kaufman. "Driving While Black: Effects of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender on Citizen Self-Reports of Traffic Stops and Police Actions*." *Criminology* 41, no. 1 (2003). doi: 10. 1111/j. 1745-9125. 2003.tb00986.x.

[25] See Linda Hon. "Social Media Framing within the Million Hoodies Movement for Justice." *Public Relations Review* 42, no. 1 (2016). doi: 10. 1016/j.pubrev. 2015. 11.013; Lanae Spruce and Kaitlyn Leaf. "Social Media for Social Justice." *Journal of Museum Education* 42, no. 1 (2017). doi: 10. 1080/10598650. 2016. 1265852; Miriam Sobré-Denton. "Virtual Intercultural Bridgework: Social Media, Virtual Cosmopolitanism, and Activist Community-Building." *New Media & Society* 18, no. 8 (2015). doi: 10. 1177/1461444814567988; Amit M. Schejter and Noam Tirosh. "'Seek the Meek, Seek the Just': Social Media and Social Justice." *Telecommunications Policy* 39, no. 9 (2015). doi: 10. 1016/j.telpol. 2015.08.002.

[26] "First Iconic Artifacts Installed in the National Museum of African American History and Culture." *Museum News*, November 17 2013. https://nmaahc.si.edu/about/news/first-iconic-artifacts-installed-national-museum-african-american-history-and-culture.

discriminatory treatment.[27] Nevertheless, when visitors board it on a guided tour, aided by tour guides and sounds piped in by the museum to evoke a past time, the car may become more tangible as a form of oppression. Visitors may start to experience a little of the feeling evoked by segregation through the jostling and negotiating the other visitors, of different racial and ethnic groups, in a confined space where race and oppression is inevitably on their minds. Seeing the signs and the designated seats may sting visitors with outrage, or anger, or guilt, just as visitors from the North described their first encounter with *de jure* southern segregation. They may leave with a better emotional understanding of the everyday oppression of the Jim Crow era.

[27] See, for example, Susan Ades Stone and Barbara Ortiz Howard. "The Back of the Bill Is Like the Back of the Bus for Women," *Time*, April 13 2016. http://time.com/4292612/women-on-currency/.

Primary Sources

Unpublished Manuscript Collections

Amistad Research Centre, Tulane University

Preston Valien Collection

Eric Steele Wells Papers

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

Oral History Project Collection

Chicago History Museum

Arthur W. Mitchell Papers

Records of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Part 3: Records of the BSCP Relations with the Pullman Company

Columbia Center for Oral History

Biographical interviews

U.S. Air Force Academy Oral History Program

Library of Congress, Washington DC

Papers of the NAACP (Accessed via ProQuest)

Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record/Historic American Landscapes Survey (Accessed online)

Newberry Library, Chicago

Pullman Company Archives

Operating Department

Public Relations Department

Employee and Labor Relations Department

Records of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

Part 3: Records of the BSCP Relations with the Pullman Company

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York

World War II letters from African-American Soldiers, 1940-1945

Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project

Committee Against Jim Crow in Military Service and Training Records

Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Army ("Project Clear") Collection

The Pullman State Historic Site

Industrial Heritage Archives (Accessed online)

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, Stanford University

Montgomery County Courthouse: Montgomery County District Attorney's Files (Accessed online)

Clayborne Carson interview with Ed Blankenheim (Accessed online)

Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston MA

Martin Luther King Jr. Papers, 1954-1968 (Accessed online)

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, MA

Papers of John F. Kennedy, Presidential Papers (Accessed online)

Tom Putnam and Cassie Crossley interview with Genevieve Hughes, Bernard LaFayette Jr., and Ernest "Rip" Patton (Accessed online)

New York Public Library

Music Division (Accessed online)

Digital Collections (Accessed online)

Robert Penn Warren Centre for the Humanities, Vanderbilt University

Who Speaks for the Negro? An Archival Collection (Accessed online)

The Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History, Duke University, NC

Ad* Access (Accessed online)

National Archives Library, Washington, DC

United States National Archives and Records Service (Accessed online)

Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina

Charles M. Jones Papers (Accessed online)

Martin Luther King, Jr., Center for Nonviolent Social Change, Inc., Atlanta, GA

Martin Luther King Jr. Papers, Series I-IV (Accessed online)

Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, MO

Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954-1965) (Accessed online)

John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University Libraries, Durham, NC

Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South (Accessed online)

University of Illinois, Springfield

WWII Conscientious Objectors Project (Accessed online)

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Southern Oral History Program (Accessed online)

American Folklife Center, Library of Congress

Civil Rights History Project (US) (Accessed online)

Minnesota Historical Society

Rondo Oral History Project (Accessed online)

Magazines Consulted

The Crisis, Jet, Ebony, The Messenger, Liberation, Nation, *Time, Coronet, Pageant, The Atlantic.*

Newspapers Consulted

Washington Post, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Afro American (Baltimore, MD), Plaindealer (Kansas City, KS), Pittsburgh (PA) Courier, Arkansas State Press, People's Voice (New York, NY), Chicago Defender, Atlanta (GA) Daily World, Observer (London, UK), Sun (Baltimore, MD), Kentucky New Era, Guardian (London, UK).

Books, Journal Articles, and Other Published Sources

Beittel, A. D. "Some Effects of the "Separate but Equal" Doctrine of Education." *The Journal of Negro Education* 20, no. 2 (1951): 140-47. doi: 10.2307/2966459.

Belafonte, Harry. *My Song: A Memoir*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2012.

Brown, Earl, and George R. Leighton. *The Negro and the War*. Vol. 71, New York: Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1942.

Carmichael, Stokely, and Michael Thelwell. *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture)*. New York: Scribner, 2003.

Carter, Robert L. "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A Social Science Statement." *The Journal of Negro Education* 22, no. 1 (1953): 68-76. doi: 10.2307/2293629.

Chafe, William Henry, ed. *Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans Tell About Life in the Segregated South*, Behind the Veil Project. New York: New Press, 2001.

Chein, Isidor. "What Are the Psychological Effects of Segregation under Conditions of Equal Facilities?". *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 2 (1949): 229-34.

Clark, Kenneth Bancroft, and Woody Klein. *Toward Humanity and Justice: The Writings of Kenneth B. Clark, Scholar of the 1954 Brown V. Board of Education Decision*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004.

Cohen, Octavus Roy. "The Berth of Hope." In *Epic Peters, Pullman Porter*. Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2012.

Deutscher, M., and I. Chein. "The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation; a Survey of Social Science Opinion." *The Journal of psychology* 26 (1948): 259-87. https://search.proquest.com/docview/1290596705?

Douglass, Fredrick. *Various Incidents*. 1855, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2000. http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/douglass55/douglass55.html.

Durr, Virginia Foster, and Hollinger F. Barnard. *Outside the Magic Circle: The Autobiography of Virginia Foster Durr*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1990.
Ellison, Ralph. "If the Twain Shall Meet." In *Going to the Territory*. New York: Vintage, 1987.
Farmer, James. *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement*. New York: New American Library, 1985.
Forman, James. *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.
Frazier, E. Franklin. *The Negro in the United States*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949.
Gray, Fred D. *Bus Ride to Justice: Changing the System by the System the Life and Works of Fred Gray, Preacher, Attorney, Politician*. Rev. ed. Montgomery, AL: New South Books, 2013.
———. *Bus Ride to Justice: Changing the System by the System: The Life and Works of Fred D. Gray, Preacher, Attorney, Politician*. Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1997.
Green, Stephen. "Narrative: Freedom Rider Diary, Forty Years Later." Civil Rights Movement Veterans, http://www.crmvet.org/nars/green1.htm (Accessed Febraury 15 2016).
Gregg, Richard Bartlett. *The Power of Nonviolence*. London, UK: James Clarke, 1960.
———. *The Psychology and Strategy of Gandhi's Nonviolent Resistance*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1972.
Griffin, John Howard. *Black Like Me: The Definitive Griffin Estate Edition, Corrected from Original Manuscripts*. San Antonio, TX: Wings Press, 2004. 1961.
Grossack, Martin M. "Psychological Effects of Segregation on Buses." *The Journal of Negro Education* 25, no. 1 (1956): 71-74. doi: 10.2307/2293140.
Hoose, Phillip M. *Claudette Colvin: Twice toward Justice*. New York: Melanie Kroupa Books, 2009.
Jack, Homer A. "Journey of Reconciliation." *Common Ground*, no. 3, Autumn (1947): 21-26. http://www.unz.org/Pub/CommonGround-1947q3-00021.
Jacobs, Harriet Ann. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself: Electronic Edition.* Chapel Hill. NC: University of North Carolina, 2003. http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/jacobs.html.
King, Martin Luther, and Clayborne Carson. *The Papers of Martin Luther King Jr.: Symbol of the Movement, January 1957 - December 1958*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.
King, Martin Luther, Jr. *Stride toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2010.
King, Martin Luther, Jr. and Clayborne Carson. *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.: Birth of a New Age, December 1955 - December 1956*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992.
Kuhn, Cliff, Harlon Joye, and Bernard West. *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948*. Atlanta, GA: Atlanta History Center; University of Georgia Press, 2005.
Lewis, John, and Michael D'Orso. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.
Lomax, Louis E., and Mike Wallace. *The Hate That Hate Produced*. New York: WNTA-TV, 1959.
Lynn, Conrad. "The Southern Negro Stirs." *American Socialist* 3, no. February (1956): 7-9. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/uon/docDetail.action?docID=10503131.

Lynn, Conrad J. *There Is a Fountain: The Autobiography of a Civil Rights Lawyer*. Westport, CT: L. Hill, 1979.
Magruder, Calvert. "Mental and Emotional Disturbance in the Law of Torts." *Harvard Law Review* 49, no. 7 (1936): 1033-67. doi: 10.2307/1333061.
Martin Luther King Jr. "Our Struggle." *Liberation*, April 1956. ProQuest History Vault.
Mary Hamilton, Louise Inghram, and others. *Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves*. Detriot, MI: News and Letters. November 1961. http://www.crmvet.org/riders/news_letters.pdf
Mays, Benjamin E. *Born to Rebel: An Autobiography*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003. 1971.
McGuire, Phillip. *Taps for a Jim Crow Army: Letters from Black Soldiers in World War II*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 1983.
McLaurin, Melton Alonza. *The Marines of Montford Point: America's First Black Marines*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
Melick, Jake Wolf and Weldon. "A Pullman Porter Speaks His Mind." *Coronet*, April 1948, 81-84.
Moses, Robert Parris, and Charles E. Cobb, Jr. *Radical Equations: Math Literacy and Civil Rights*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001.
Myrdal, Gunnar. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944.
"NAACP Calls for Swift Passage of Highway Reauthorization Bill Which Focuses on Job Creation." news release., March 1, 2012, http://www.naacp.org/latest/naacp-calls-for-swift-passage-of-highway-reauthorization-bill-which-focuses/.
Nave, George F. *The New Negro's Attitude toward His Government at a Time Like This*. Muskogee, OK: 1917.
"Negroes Get Bus Classes: Montgomery Ministers and Others Give Instructions Regarding Integration. Chattanooga Times, December 15 1956." In *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*, edited by Stewart Burns. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
Newton, Adolph W., and Winston Eldridge. *Better Than Good: A Black Sailor's War, 1943-1945*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1999.
Olsen, Otto H., ed. *The Thin Disguise: Turning Point in Negro History: Plessy V. Ferguson: A Documentary Presentation, 1864-1896*. New York: Published for A.I.M.S. by Humanities Press, 1967.
Parks, Gordon. *A Choice of Weapons*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
Parks, Rosa, and James Haskins. *Rosa Parks: My Story*. New York: Dial Books, 1992.
Peck, James. *Freedom Ride*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962.
Perata, David D. *Those Pullman Blues: An Oral History of the African American Railroad Attendant*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996.
Pollak, Louis H. "The Supreme Court and the States: Reflections on Boynton V. Virginia." *California Law Review* 49, no. 1 (1961): 15-55. doi: 10.2307/3478655.
Prosser, William L. "Intentional Infliction of Mental Suffering: A New Tort." *Michigan Law Review* 37, no. 6 (1939): 874-92. doi: 10.2307/1282744.
Prothro, James W., and Charles U. Smith. "The Psychic Cost of Segregation." *Phylon (1940-1956)* 15, no. 4 (1954): 393-95. doi: 10.2307/272851.
Pullman Porters Quartette. "Jog-a-Long Boys," on *Black Secular Vocal Groups Vol. 1: The Twenties (1923 - 1919)*. Document Records, 1997, MP3. Originally released in 1927.

Raines, Howell. *My Soul Is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983.
Rice, W. A., and Henry Lee. "Let a Pullman Porter Give You a Tip." *Pageant*, February 1951, 94-98.
Robinson, Jo Ann Gibson, and David J. Garrow. *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1987.
Rollins, Judith, and Odette Harper Hines. *All Is Never Said: The Narrative of Odette Harper Hines*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995.
Santino, Jack. *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle: Stories of Black Pullman Porters*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991.
Seaton, Esta. Review of *Courageous Ride toward Freedom,* by James Peck. *Clark Atlanta University* 24, no. 1 (1963): 91-92. doi: 10.2307/274234. http://www.jstor.org/stable/274234.
Silver, Carol Ruth. *Freedom Rider Diary: Smuggled Notes from Parchman Prison*. Jackson, MI: University Press of Mississippi, 2014.
Sridharani, Krishnalala. *War without Violence; a Study of Gandhi's Method and Its Accomplishments*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939.
Thorne, Jack. *Recollections of a Sleeping Car Porter*. Jersey City, NJ: Doan & Pilson, printers, 1892. https://archive.org/details/recollectionsofs00thor.
Warren, Robert Penn. *Who Speaks for the Negro?* New York: Random House, 1965.
Washington, Booker T., Louis R. Harlan, Raymond Smock, and Stuart B. Kaufman. *The Booker T. Washington Papers*. Vol. 3, Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974.
Wells-Barnett, Ida B. *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*. New York Age Print, 1892.
Wells-Barnett, Ida B., and Alfreda Duster. *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970.
White, Walter F. "'Massacring Whites' in Arkansas." *Nation*, December 6 1919, 715-16. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nih&AN=13666964&site=ehost-live.
White, Walter Francis. *Rope and Faggot*. New York: Arno Press, 1969.
Wilson, Joseph F., ed. *Tearing Down the Color Bar: A Documentary History and Analysis of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.
Witmer, Helen Leland, and Ruth Kotinsky. "Personality in the Making; the Fact-Finding Report of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth." New York, N.Y., 1952.
X, Malcolm, and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballentine Books, 1964. 1955.
Zimmerman, Cynthia D. "Constitutional Validity of State "Jim Crow" Laws under the Commerce Clause." *Virginia Law Review* 32, no. 3 (1946): 668-77. doi: 10.2307/1068356.

Secondary Sources

Books, Journal Articles, and Other Media

Abrams, Kathryn. "Emotions in the Mobilization of Rights." *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* 46 (2011): 551-89. http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/facpubs/1035.

Abramson, Kate. "Turning up the Lights on Gaslighting." *Philosophical Perspectives* 28, no. 1 (2014): 1-30. doi: 10.1111/phpe.12046.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: New Press, 2010.

Arsenault, Raymond. *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Ashforth, Blake E., and Ronald H. Humphrey. "Emotional Labor in Service Roles: The Influence of Identity." *The Academy of Management Review* 18, no. 1 (1993): 88-115. doi: 10. 5465/AMR.1993. 3997508.

Barnes, Catherine A. *Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

Barnes, L. Diane. *Frederick Douglass: Reformer and Statesman*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Barrett, Lisa Feldman. "Constructing Emotion." *Psychological Topics* 20, no. 3 (2011): 359-80. https://doaj.org/article/c678a0f7b52f4e1a91e95df59e586577.

Bates, Beth Tompkins. *Pullman Porters and the Rise of Protest Politics in Black America, 1925-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Beebe, Lucius. *Mr. Pullman's Elegant Palace Car : The Railway Carriage That Established a New Dimension of Luxury and Entered the National Lexicon as a Symbol of Splendor*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961.

Berrey, Stephen A. *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015.

Biondi, Martha. *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Bodroghkozy, Aniko. *Equal Time: Television and the Civil Rights Movement*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012.

Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

Brazeal, Brailsford Reese. *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Its Origin and Development*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1946.

Brown, Nikki, ed. *Jim Crow a Historical Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic*. edited by Barry Stentiford. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2014.

Bullard, Robert D., Glenn S. Johnson, and Angel O. Torres. *Highway Robbery: Transportation Racism & New Routes to Equity*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004.

Burnham, Margaret. "Soldiers and Buses: All Aboard." *Race and Justice* 5, no. 2 (March 3, 2015 2015): 91-113. doi: 10.1177/2153368715573133.

Burns, Stewart, ed. *Daybreak of Freedom: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Cagin, Seth, and Philip Dray. *We Are Not Afraid: The Story of Goodman, Schwerner, and Chaney, and the Civil Rights Campaign for Mississippi*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

Camp, Jordan T., and Christina Heatherton. *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter*. London: Verso, 2016.
Caruth, Cathy. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
Catsam, Derek. *Freedom's Main Line: The Journey of Reconciliation and the Freedom Rides*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2009.
Catsam, Derek Charles. "Mister, This Is Not Your Fight!: The 1961 Montgomery Freedom Ride Riots." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 40, no. 2 (2007): 93-109.
Chakrabarty, Bidyut. *Confluence of Thought: Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.* . New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Chateauvert, Melinda. *Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998.
Clark, Kenneth B., Isidor Chein, and Stuart W. Cook. "The Effects of Segregation and the Consequences of Desegregation: A (September 1952) Social Science Statement in the Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka Supreme Court Case." *The American psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004): 495-501. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X. 59. 6. 495.
Cobb, Charles E. *This Nonviolent Stuff'll Get You Killed: How Guns Made the Civil Rights Movement Possible*. New York: Basic Books, 2014.
Cobb, James C. *The Brown Decision, Jim Crow, and Southern Identity*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005.
Cole, Stephanie, Natalie J. Ring, and Peter Wallenstein. *The Folly of Jim Crow: Rethinking the Segregated South*. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press, 2012.
Cortright, David. *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
Costigliola, Frank. "Reading for Meaning: Theory, Language and Metaphor." In *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, edited by Michael J Hogan; Thomas G Paterson: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Cox, Jonathan M. "The Source of a Movement: Making the Case for Social Media as an Informational Source Using Black Lives Matter." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 11 (2017): 1847-54. doi: 10.1080/01419870.2017.1334935.
D'Emilio, John. *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
Dalfiume, Richard M. "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution." *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 1 (1968): 90-106. doi: 10.2307/1894253.
Derickson, Alan. "'Asleep and Awake at the Same Time': Sleep Denial among Pullman Porters." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 5, no. 3 (2008): 13-44. doi: 10.1215/15476715-2008-004.
———. *Dangerously Sleepy: Overworked Americans and the Cult of Manly Wakefulness*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
Dittmer, John. "We Return Fighting." In *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
Doyle, William E. "Social Science Evidence in Court Cases." *The Educational Forum* 41, no. 3 (March 1 1977): 263-70. doi: 10.1080/00131727709336250.
Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
Durr, Kenneth D. *Behind the Backlash: White Working-Class Politics in Baltimore, 1940-1980*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.
Elkins, Stanley M. *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976.

Elliott, Mark Emory. *Color-Blind Justice: Albion Tourgee and the Quest for Racial Equality: From the Civil War to Plessy V. Ferguson*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
Ellis, Mark. *Race, War, and Surveillance: African Americans and the United States Government During World War I*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001.
Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Women and War*. New York: Basic Books, 1987.
"Emotional Climate: How Is It Shaped, Fostered, and Changed?". In *Changing Emotions*, edited by Dirk Hermans, Bernard Rimé and Batja Mesquita. Hove, East Sussex: Psychology Press, 2013.
Fairclough, Adam. *Race & Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995.
Feagin, Jr., and B. M. Barnett. "Success and Failure: How Systemic Racism Trumped the Brown V. Board of Education Decision." *Univ. Ill. Law Rev.*, no. 5 (2004): 1099-130. http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/unilllr2004&collection=journals&id=1111.
Franz, Kathleen. *Tinkering: Consumers Reinvent the Early Automobile*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.
Freedman, Estelle B. "Contesting the Rape of Black Women." In *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.
Frye, Marilyn. *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1983.
Gallicchio, Marc S. *The African American Encounter with Japan and China: Black Internationalism in Asia, 1895-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
Gandhi, M. K. *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1972.
Gardner, Michael R. *Harry Truman and Civil Rights: Moral Courage and Political Risks*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002.
Garrow, David J. *The Walking City: The Montgomery Bus Boycott 1955-1956*. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1989.
Gellman, Erik S. "'Carthage Must Be Destroyed': Race, City Politics, and the Campaign to Integrate Chicago Transportation Work, 1929-1943." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2, no. 2 (2005): 81-114. doi: 10.1215/15476715-2-2-81.
———. *Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
Genovese, Eugene D. "Rebelliousness and Docility in the Negro Slave: A Critique of the Elkins Thesis." *Civil War History* 13, no. 4 (1967): 293-314. doi: 10.1353/cwh.1967.0048.
Geselbracht, Raymond H. *Civil Rights Legacy of Harry S. Truman*. Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2014.
Gleason, William. "Voices at the Nadir: Charles Chesnutt and David Bryant Fulton." *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910* 24, no. 3 (1992): 22-41. doi: 10. 3149/jms.0801. 59.
Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Harmondworth: Penguin, 1990. 1957.
Goldzwig, Steven R. Review of *Harry Truman and Civil Rights: Moral Courage and Political Risks* by Michael R. Gardner. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 3 (2003): 592-96. doi: 10.1353/rap.2003.0062.

Goluboff, Risa Lauren. *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
Goodwin, Jeff, James M. Jasper, and Francesca Polletta. *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
Grandey, A. A. "Emotion Regulation in the Workplace: A New Way to Conceptualize Emotional Labor." *Journal of occupational health psychology* 5, no. 1 (2000): 95-110. doi: 10.1037//1076-8998. 5.1. 95.
Hague, Euan. ""The Right to Enter Every Other State' – the Supreme Court and African American Mobility in the United States." *Mobilities* 5, no. 3 (2010): 331-47. doi: 10.1080/17450101.2010. 494839.
Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past." *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1233-63. doi: 10.2307/3660172.
Hall, Todd H. *Emotional Diplomacy: Official Emotion on the International Stage*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015.
Hamlin, Françoise N. *Crossroads at Clarksdale: The Black Freedom Struggle in the Mississippi Delta after World War II*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. doi:10.1111/hisn.12036_14.
Harris, C. I. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (Jun 1993): 1707-91. doi: 10.2307/1341787.
Harris-Perry, Melissa V. *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.
Harrison, Alferdteen. *Black Exodus: The Great Migration from the American South*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1991.
Hashimoto, Dean M. "Science as Mythology in Constitutional Law." *Oregon Law Review* 76 (1997): 111-53. http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/lsfp/676/.
Hendrickson, Paul. "The Ladies before Rosa: Let Us Now Praise Unfamous Women." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8, no. 2 (2005): 287-98. doi: 10.1353/rap.2005.0076.
Hennick, Louis C. "Lifting the Screen." *Moving Monuments: Newsletter of the New Orleans Streetcar Museum Project* 2, no. 1 (1994): 1, 4-5.
Hine, Darlene Clark. "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West." *Signs* 14, no. 4 (1989): 912-20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174692.
Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012. 1979.
Hogan, Wesley C. *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
Holder, C. B. "Racism toward Black African Diplomats During the Kennedy Administration." *Journal of Black Studies* 14, no. 1 (1983): 31-48. doi: 10.1177/002193478301400103.
Hollars, B. J. *Thirteen Loops : Race, Violence, and the Last Lynching in America*. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2011.
Holloway, Jonathan Scott. *Jim Crow Wisdom: Memory and Identity in Black America since 1940*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013.
Holmes, Katie. "Does It Matter If She Cried? Recording Emotion and the Australian Generations Oral History Project." *The Oral History Review* 44, no. 1 (2017): 56-76. doi: 10.1093/ohr/ohw109.
Hon, Linda. "Social Media Framing within the Million Hoodies Movement for Justice." *Public Relations Review* 42, no. 1 (2016): 9-19. doi: 10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.11.013.

Horne, Gerald. *Race War: White Supremacy and the Japanese Attack on the British Empire*. New York University Press, 2004.
Horton, Carol A. *Race and the Making of American Liberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Huebner, Andrew J. *The Warrior Image: Soldiers in American Culture from the Second World War to the Vietnam Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.
Inscoe, John C. "Railroads, Race and Remembrance: The Traumas of Train Travel in the Jim Crow South." In *Writing the South through the Self: Explorations in Southern Autobiography*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2011.
Jakle, John A., and Keith A. Sculle. *America's Main Street Hotels: Transiency and Community in the Early Auto Age*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2009.
Jasper, James M. *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997.
Johnstone, Andrew. *Against Immediate Evil: American Internationalists and the Four Freedoms on the Eve of World War II*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014.
Jones, Colin. "The Emotional Turn in the History of Medicine and the View from Queen Mary University of London." *Social History of Medicine* Virtual Issue: Emotions, Health and Well-Being (2012). http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/sochis/emotions.html (no longer available).
Kelley, Blair L. M. *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy V. Ferguson*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.
Kelley, Robin D. G. "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South." *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (1993): 75-112. doi: 10.2307/2079698.
King, R. H. "Domination and Fabrication: Re-Thinking Stanley Elkins' Slavery." *A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 22, no. 2 (2001): 1-28. doi: 10.1080/714005195.
Kircher, John J. "The Four Faces of Tort Law: Liability for Emotional Harm." *Marquette Law Review* 90, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 795-806. http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1073&context=mulr.
Kornweibel, Theodore. *Investigate Everything: Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002.
Kosek, Joseph Kip. "Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence." *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005): 1318-48. doi: 10.2307/3660175.
Kramer, Ann. *Conscientious Objectors of the Second World War: Refusing to Fight*. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword, 2013.
Krugler, David F. "A Mob in Uniform: Soldiers and Civilians in Washington's Red Summer, 1919." *Washington History* 21 (2009): 48-77. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25704908.
LaCapra, Dominick. "Trauma, Absence, Loss." *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (1999): 696-727. doi: 10.1086/448943.
Leary, Joy DeGruy. *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*. Milwaukie, OR: Uptone Press, 2005.
Lentz-Smith, Adriane Danette. *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

Lev, Peter. *Transforming the Screen, 1950-1959*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003.
Lewis, David L. *Martin Luther King: A Critical Biography*. London: Allen Lane, 1970.
Ling, Peter. "The Incomparable Elkins." *Rethinking History* 1, no. 1 (1997): 67-74. doi: 10.1080/13642529708596303.
Ling, Peter J. *America and the Automobile: Technology, Reform and Social Change*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1990.
Lobel, Jules. *Success without Victory: Lost Legal Battles and the Long Road to Justice in America*. New York University Press, 2003.
Lofgren, Charles A. *The Plessy Case: A Legal-Historical Interpretation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
Lowery, Wesley. *They Can't Kill Us All: The Story of Black Lives Matter*. London: Penguin, 2017.
Lundman, Richard J., and Robert L. Kaufman. "Driving While Black: Effects of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender on Citizen Self-Reports of Traffic Stops and Police Actions*." *Criminology* 41, no. 1 (2003): 195-220. doi: 10.1111/j.1745-9125.2003.tb00986.x.
MacIver, Robert M. *Discrimination and National Welfare; a Series of Addresses and Discussions*. New York: Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1949.
Mack, Kenneth W. "Law, Society, Identity, and the Making of the Jim Crow South: Travel and Segregation on Tennessee Railroads, 1875 - 1905." *Law & Social Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1999): 377-409. http://www.jstor.org/stable/829102.
Mansfield, Harvey C. *Manliness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.
Marolda, Edward J. *The U.S. Navy in the Korean War*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2007.
Matt, Susan J., and Peter N. Stearns. *Doing Emotions History*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014.
Mays, Benjamin E., Freddie C. Colston, and Samuel DuBois Cook. *Long Journey: Dr. Benjamin E. Mays Speaks on the Struggle for Social Justice in America*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2011.
McAdam, Doug. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
McCabe, Katie, and Dovey Johnson Roundtree. *Justice Older Than the Law the Life of Dovey Johnson Roundtree*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009.
McKerrow, John. *The American Occupation of Australia, 1941-45: A Marriage of Necessity*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.
McWhirter, Cameron. *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2011.
Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick. "The Boycott Movement against Jim Crow Streetcars in the South, 1900-1906." *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 4 (1969): 756-75. doi: 10.2307/1900151.
Mjagkij, Nina. *Loyalty in Time of Trial: The African American Experience in World War I*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011.
Mody, Sanjay. "Brown Footnote Eleven in Historical Context: Social Science and the Supreme Court's Quest for Legitimacy." *Stanford Law Review* 54, no. 4 (2002): 793-829. doi: 10.2307/1229579.
Mollin, Marian. "The Limits of Egalitarianism: Radical Pacifism, Civil Rights, and the Journey of Reconciliation." *Radical History Review* 88, no. 1 (2004): 112-38. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/50932/pdf.
———. *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

Monteith, Sharon. "'I Second That Emotion': A Case for Using Imaginative Sources in Writing Civil Rights History." *Patterns of Prejudice* 49, no. 5 (2015): 440-65. doi: 10.1080/0031322X.2015.1103439.
Moore, Brenda L. *To Serve My Country, to Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American Wacs Stationed Overseas During World War II*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.
Moore, John Hammond. *Columbia and Richland County: A South Carolina Community, 1740-1990*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993.
Nordin, Dennis S. *The New Deal's Black Congressman: A Life of Arthur Wergs Mitchell*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997.
Oates, Stephen B. *Let the Trumpet Sound: A Life of Martin Luther King, Jr*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1994.
Ortlepp, Anke. *Jim Crow Terminals: The Desegregation of American Airports*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2017.
Parel, Anthony J. *Pax Gandhiana: The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
Parker, Christopher S. *Fighting for Democracy: Black Veterans and the Struggle against White Supremacy in the Postwar South*. Princeton University Press, 2009.
———. "When Politics Becomes Protest: Black Veterans and Political Activism in the Postwar South.". *The Journal of Politics* 71, no. 1 (2009): 113-31. doi: 10.1017/S0022381608090087.
Perret, Geoffrey. *Days of Sadness, Years of Triumph: The American People, 1939-1945*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
Pettigrew, Thomas F. "Justice Deferred a Half Century after Brown V. Board of Education." *American Psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004): 521-29. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X. 59. 6. 521.
Rabinowitz, Howard N. *Race, Ethnicity, and Urbanization: Selected Essays*. Columbia, MI: University of Missouri Press, 1994.
Reddy, William M. *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
Richardson, Riché. *Black Masculinity and the U.S. South: From Uncle Tom to Gangsta*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2007.
Rickford, Russell. "Black Lives Matter." *New Labor Forum* 25, no. 1 (2015): 34-42. doi: 10.1177/1095796015620171.
Romano, Renee. "No Diplomatic Immunity: African Diplomats, the State Department, and Civil Rights, 1961-1964." *The Journal of American History* 87, no. 2 (2000): 546-79. doi: 10.2307/2568763.
Roper, John Herbert. *The Magnificent Mays: A Biography of Benjamin Elijah Mays*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2012.
Rosenbaum, Jonathan. *Discovering Orson Welles*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007.
Rushdy, Ashraf H. A. *The End of American Lynching*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012.
Rust, Daniel L. *Flying across America: The Airline Passenger Experience*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.
Salter I, Krewasky A. *The Story of Black Military Officers, 1861-1948*. Hoboken, NJ: Taylor and Francis, 2014.
Santino, Jack, and Paul Wagner. *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle*. San Francisco, CA: California Newsreel, 1983. VHS.

Schejter, Amit M., and Noam Tirosh. "'Seek the Meek, Seek the Just': Social Media and Social Justice." *Telecommunications Policy* 39, no. 9 (2015): 796-803. doi: 10.1016/j.telpol.2015.08.002.
Schuler, Edgar A. "The Houston Race Riot, 1917." *The Journal of Negro History* 29, no. 3 (1944): 300-38. doi: 10.2307/2714820.
Schultz, Kevin M. "The FEPC and the Legacy of the Labor-Based Civil Rights Movement of the 1940s." *Labor History* 49, no. 1 (2008): 71-92. doi: 10.1080/00236560701740093.
Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990.
Scott, Lawrence P. *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1994.
Shouse, Eric. "Feeling, Emotion, Affect." *M/C Journal* 8, no. 6 (December 2005). http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php.
Simmons, Charles A. *The African American Press: A History of News Coverage During National Crises, with Special Reference to Four Black Newspapers, 1827-1965*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1998.
Simmons, LaKisha Michelle. *Crescent City Girls: The Lives of Young Black Women in Segregated New Orleans*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.
Simpson, William M. "A Tale Untold? The Alexandria, Louisiana, Lee Street Riot (January 10, 1942)." *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 35, no. 2 (1994): 133-49. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4233092.
Smith, Gerald L., Karen Cotton McDaniel, and John A. Hardin. "Chiles, James Alexander." In *The Kentucky African American encyclopedia*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2015. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=MPiACgAAQBAJ&lpg.
Sobré-Denton, Miriam. "Virtual Intercultural Bridgework: Social Media, Virtual Cosmopolitanism, and Activist Community-Building." *New Media & Society* 18, no. 8 (2015): 1715-31. doi: 10.1177/1461444814567988.
Sokol, Jason. *All Eyes Are Upon Us*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachuesetts Press, 2017.
Spruce, Lanae, and Kaitlyn Leaf. "Social Media for Social Justice." *Journal of Museum Education* 42, no. 1 (2017): 41-53. doi: 10.1080/10598650.2016.1265852.
Stearns, Carol Zisowitz. *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History*. edited by Peter N. Stearns. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
Theoharis, Jeanne. *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013.
Timberg, Bernard. *Television Talk: A History of the Tv Talk Show*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002.
Tushnet, Mark V. *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
Tuttle, William M. *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919*. New York: Atheneum, 1970.
Tye, Larry. *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class*. New York: Henry Holt, 2004.
Underhill, Robert. *The Rise and Fall of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*. Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2012.
'-Maessen, Laura. *Robert Parris Moses: A Life in Civil Rights and Leadership at the Grassroots*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.
Walker, Robert J. *Let My People Go!: The Miracle of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*. Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2007.

Wallach, Jennifer Jensen. *Closer to the Truth Than Any Fact: Memoir, Memory, and Jim Crow*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008.
Wardlow, Chester. *United States Army in World War II, the Technical Services, the Transportation Corps: Movements, Training and Supply*. Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 2003. 1956.
Weinstein, Rhona S., Anne Gregory, and Michael J. Strambler. "Intractable Self-Fulfilling Prophecies Fifty Years after Brown V. Board of Education." *American Psychologist* 59, no. 6 (2004): 511-20. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X. 59. 6. 511.
White, G. Edward. *Law in American History*. Vol. II, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
Williams, Donnie, and Wayne Greenhaw. *The Thunder of Angels: The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the People Who Broke the Back of Jim Crow*. Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 2006.
Williamson, Joel. *After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965.
Wolfinger, James. "'We Are in the Front Lines in the Battle for Democracy': Carolyn Moore and Black Activism in World War II Philadelphia." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 72, no. 1 (2005): 1-23. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27778656.
Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966. First published in 1955.
Zangrando, Robert L. *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909-1950*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1980.

Theses and unpublished works

Mikkelsen, Vincent. "Coming from Battle to Face a War: The Lynching of Black Soldiers in the World War I Era." Doctoral thesis., Florida State University, 2007. https://fsu.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fsu:180643/datastream/PDF/view.
Mizell-Nelson, Michael Jack. "Challenging and Reinforcing White Control of Public Space: Race Relations of New Orleans Streetcars, 1861--1965." Doctoral thesis, Tulane University, 2001. https://digitallibrary.tulane.edu/islandora/object/tulane%3A24178.
Nguyen, Mary. "Law Enforcement Involvement in the Death of Samuel Mason Bacon." Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic: Northeastern University School of Law, 2013. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/samuel-mason-bacon.pdf
Ostergaard, Geoffrey. "Gandhian Nonviolence and Passive Resistance." Satyagraha Foundation for Nonviolence Studies: Speech given at Muirhead Society, University of Birmingham, 1974. https://civilresistance.info/ostergaard
Pearce, Rosemary. "Murder on the Kansas City Special? Pullman Porters, Emotions, and the Strange Case of J. H. Wilkins." *Journal of American Studies* (forthcoming).
Thompson-Miller, Ruth. "Jim Crow's Legacy: Segregation Stress Syndrome." Doctoral thesis, Texas A&M University, 2011. http://oaktrust.library.tamu.edu/bitstream/handle/1969.1/ETD-TAMU-2011-05-9215/THOMPSON-MILLER-DISSERTATION.pdf.

Legal Cases

Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
Bruce Boynton, Petitioner V. Commonwealth of Virginia, 364 U.S. 454 (1960).
Hall V. Decuir 95 U.S. 485 (1877).
Henderson V. United States, 339 U.S. 816 (1950).
Irene Morgan V. Commonwealth of Virginia 328 U.S. 373 (1946).
J. Alexander Chiles, Plff. In Err., V. Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company, 218 U.S. 71 (1910).
Mitchell V. United States Et Al., 313 U.S. 80 (1941).
Plessy V. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).
United States Vs. Sergeant William C. Nesbit, Et Al., United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General (1917).

Reports

Cherup, Alex "Servicemen Slain on Streetcars by Motormen with Guns: A Legal History and Analysis of the Killings of Veterans Walter Lee Johnson and Madison Harris" Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic Summer, 2014. Northeastern University School of Law, 2014. http://nuweb9.neu.edu/civilrights/wp-content/uploads/servicemen-slain-on-atlanta-streetcarsby-motormen-with-guns-a-legal-history-and-analysis-of-the-killings-of-veterans-walter-lee-johnson-and-madison-harris.pdf (Accessed June 30 2015).

Harlow, Caroline Wolf "Education and Correctional Populations" US Department of Justice, 2003. https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf (Accessed July 6 2017).

Morsy, Leila, and Richard Rothstein "Mass Incarceration and Children's Outcomes" Economic Policy Institute, 2016. http://www.epi.org/publication/mass-incarceration-and-childrens-outcomes/ (Accessed July 6 2017).

Neff, John, and Larry Pham "A Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics Reported in on-Board Surveys" American Public Transportation Association, 2007. http://www.apta.com/resources/statistics/Documents/transit_passenger_characteristics_text_5_29_2007.pdf (Accessed July 6 2017).

Rumberger, Russell W. "Poverty and High School Dropouts", American Psychological Association, 2013. http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/indicator/2013/05/poverty-dropouts.aspx (Accessed July 6 2017).

Webpages

Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education. "Phase One - Gradualism and Negotiation." http://www.atlantahighered.org/civilrights/timeline_detail.asp?year=1945 (Accessed July 5).

Linder, Doug. "Lynchings: By Year and Race." Tuskegee Institute, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingyear.html (Accessed 21 May).

RSW. "Appendix 1: Accommodations." http://www.pullmancar.org/Appendix-1.pdf (no longer available) (Accessed November 10 2016).

"Separate and Unequal?." *Watchblog: Following the Federal Dollar*. US Accountability Office, May 17 2017. https://blog.gao.gov/2017/05/17/separate-and-unequal/.
WGBH Educational Foundation. "Roster of Freedom Riders." PBS, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/freedomriders/people/roster (Accessed February 15 2016).