Skin In The Game: Black Participatory Research (BPR) and Black Anarchist Coalition Building for Anti-Black Racist Organizing

by

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Abstract

Utilizing a Black Participatory Research (BPR) (Drame & Irby, 2016) methodology, this research convened 10 local Black organizers representing 5 organizations across amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton) to co-investigate and improve our praxis and collective understanding of Black coalition building as a form of anti-Black resistance to anti-Black racism and structural violence. Guided by six emergent and related research questions, BPR data generation included educational sessions with 3 members of the BPR team, 3 focus groups, and 7 interviews with Key Informants. Data was analyzed collectively while drawing from select literature and respective and shared organizing experiences.

Black radical theories centering Afropessimism (Wilderson, 2020) and Black Anarchism (Ervin, 2021) were deemed as inseparable tools for actioning Black personal collective resistances and survivals. BPR calls for an organic strategy of building coalition bonds across Black experiences and asserts that Black anarchist coalition is an essential ideology and pedagogical strategy for strengthening Black organizing and resistance work locally, regionally, and ultimately, for global Black survivals. Black Organizers in this project affirmed the need for a continued commitment for: (1) comprehensive political education; (2) adopting intersectional Black radical praxis; and (3) building community-wide power while prioritizing Black survivals. In realizing the necessity for new/alternative strategies of Black resistance, this project is ultimately concerned with understanding and contributing towards Black coalition formations to resist anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness in perpetuity.

Keywords: Black consciousness; Black diasporic organizing & anti-Black racism; Black coalition building; anti-racist education & organizing; Afropessimism; Black Anarchism; Black Participatory Research (BPR).

Dedication

This work is dedicated to future generations of Black radical resistors and our African/Black ancestors—but especially my grandmothers: *mamaye*, who was not afforded the privilege to read and write and *adey,* who tirelessly sat with young students to learn her 'ABC's in her elder years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

AAC	Afro-American Council
AAACP	Alberta Association for the Advancement of Colored People
AAL	Afro-American League
ADOS	African Descendants of Slaves
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, People of Colour
BLM	Black Lives Matter
Black	Participatory Research (BPR)
BCAACP	British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People
BPP	Black Panther Party
BEAR	Black Emancipatory Action Research
BSCP	Brotherhood Sleeping Car Porters
BUF	Black United Front
CBWC	Congress of Black Women of Canada
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CLACP	Canadian League/Association for the Advancement of Colored People
CWL	Colored Women's League
CRM	Civil Rights Movement
NAWC	National Advancement of Colored Women
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NBCC	National Black Coalition of Canada
NFAAW	National Federation of Afro-American Women
NSAACP	Nova Scotia Advancement for African Canadians
OSCB	Order of the Sleeping Car Porters
PARA	Pan-African Reconstruction Association
PAR	Participatory Action Research
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
UNIA-ACL	Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The past few decades have witnessed a burgeoning scholarship on topics of Black history, migrations, and anti-Black resistance in the Canadian context, augmenting perceptions of a limited Black history by challenging scant assumptions of Black migrations North via the Underground Railroad (Walker, 2019). Despite this rise in contemporary scholarship contributing towards archiving Black life, there is a paucity of research on historical and contemporary Black coalition organizing work. Black organizing has a long history of resistance and coalition work that has significantly enabled and expanded the possibilities and capacities for Black living despite the constraints of living in a settler colonial and capitalist society. That said, Black organizing efforts which action resistance, survival, and care work, however, has done so in arguably conflicting and siloed ways.

With this caveat in mind, this study co-investigates the historical and contemporary ways in which Black diasporic community build, organize, and enact resistance work for strengthened possibilities of Black coalitional resistance. The focus on the need to comprehensively strengthen Black community organizing recognizes opportunities in coalesced action to co-produce communal strength and power and in turn co-create alternative solutions and spaces for Black survivals. While this research project does not attempt to recreate historical practices, strategies or spaces, the study searches for lessons that may affirm productive tactics and inform alternative strategies of resistance for alternative world making because, and as many Black scholars continue to argue (Anderson, 2021), Black survival has never been a sufficient outcome of Back liberation work. On the one hand, it is this problematization of the perpetual issue of anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness that this project seeks to respond to. Additionally, we pose issue with the repetitive nature of Black organizing and resistance that we critique with the attempt to better understand historical and continued Black coalitional resistance for strengthened contemporary Black organizing.

Black Participatory Research (BPR)

Coalescing local Black organizers through Black Participatory Research (BPR) methodology (Drame & Irby, 2016), this project sought to create a shared space for the exchange of perspectives and experiences pertaining to contemporary learning and lessons for the future derived from lived experiences of organizing and resistance. BPR therefore served as the most fitting methodology given its ability to not only capture the individual and collective organizing

and resistance experiences of participating Black organizers and literature, but to create space for the exchange of shared, distinct, and opposing experiences and lessons on topics of organizing, resistance, and survivals. Moving past traditional types of research was critical for the practice of learning from each other. This work was to be dedicated to discussing organizing strategies that could be adopted for future Black organizing.

Research Purpose and Questions

As such, the emergent and co-created research purpose was to attempt to use BPR to initiate a collective exploration in understanding and building prospects for anti-racist Black organizing, coalition building and anti-racism education in Canada. We collectively sought to address this research purpose guided by the following questions that we developed over the course of the BPR:

(1) What is the historical legacy and context of Black migration, anti-Black racism and anti-racist Black organizing in Canada?

(2) What can be learned from contemporary cases of anti-Black racist organizing to inform Black organizing and coalition building?

(3) How might Black theoretical traditions and Black anti-racism education inform organizing and coalition building?

(4) What are the perspectives and analyses of contemporary Black organizers and coalition builders regarding anti-Black racist organizing?

(5) What are some key platforms that can or should inform and guide organizing and coalition building work?

(6) What is the role of anti-racist education in anti-Black racist organizing?

Research/er Positionality

Praxis or cycles of (theoretical) reflection and action in Black organizing (Rodney, 1969; Ervin, 2021) has been central to this collective journey of studying histories of Black coalition organizing to glean contemporary lessons of anti-Black resistances. Praxis involves learning from continuous everyday experiences of individual and collective resistances that are inseparable from Black life. My diasporic upbringing as a Zimbabwe-born Eritrean settler across Turtle Island and the countless lessons learned from inter/generational and transnational experiences have always guided my dedication to social change and long-term interest in labouring to build and strengthen coalition politics and strategy, including via this BPR initiative.

This process of lifelong learning to mobilize community emerged organically from growing up in war-induced formations of Eritrean diasporic communities that continue to be dispersed globally. Living in Tkaronto (Toronto) and amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton) contextualize my personal settler migration experience where I and other Black peoples distinctively and relationally occupy, survive, and benefit from settling[1] across stolen Indigenous Land or what explicitly and respectively makes up present-day eastern and western settler colonial Canada. While a historical analysis of Eritrean history and migrations are outside the scope of this thesis, my research/er positionality articulates with three key observations which intimately ground me as a researcher in relation to this BPR focus on Black Diasporic coalition building work. The first realizes that Black anarchist strategies of resistance were integral survival strategies in response to European settler colonial and anti-Black violence in the Horn, including my ancestral home of Eritrea. The second recognizes that Black consciousness preceded the Black Power movement's emergence in 1968. And thirdly, Eritrean diasporic organizing continues to employ coalition building as a reoccurring strategic response to everyday oppression experienced as part of the after/life of colonization. I briefly elaborate on each of these observations and groundings below.

Anti-colonial resistances across the Horn were instrumental in ensuring the failure of European settler colonialism in my ancestral home of Eritrea and surrounding areas of the continent. As Wolde Giorgis (1989) explains,

> "As the bridge to the hinterlands of Africa, Eritrea has always taken the brunt of invasions aimed at the highlands…. The Eritreans are still the coastguards of the mainland. The major battles in Ethiopian history were fought in Eritrea. The battlefields of Debarwa, Gundet, Gura, Kufit, Saati, Dogali, and Koatit are testimonials to the resistance against Egyptians, Sudanese, Turkish, and Italian invaders" (p.74).

There are a few records of individual and collectivized Eritrean anarchist efforts of anti-colonial individual and collective armed resistance which caused "chronic instability for the Italians" instigating "the Ethio-Italian conflict of 1895-96" (Negash, 1987, p.98) culminating in Italy's loss during the battle of Adwa in 1896 (Negash, 1987; Reid, 2011) in bordering Ethiopia. At the same time, the coastal region located in the Huorn of Africa that survives as Eritrea has a

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[1] Black, POC, and white people have relational yet distinct settler migration experiences at the expense of Indigenous sovereignty; this project is however limited to the ways Black peoples experience and respond to settler colonialism.

complex history of occupation, empire politics, imperialism, and settler colonialism that maintains and reproduces racial capitalism and anti-Blackness.

Black consciousness not only preceded the well-known Black Power movement or 1968 but was uniquely significant during the 1930s when it rose in the form of an emerging international Black coalitional politic in response to the occupation of Ethiopia (which included the then-province of Eritrea) by Fascist Italy followed by the settler colonization of Eritrea from 1885[2]-1941. Wolde Giorgis (1989) outlines some of the segregationist laws targeting Eritreans that mirrored Jim Crow laws experienced by African Americans across Canada and the United States:

> "No native is allowed to be seen in white areas; Domestic servants are to come to their masters' house when the sun rises and leave when the sun sets and are to walk along the designated routes; Native will live in restricted areas of the cities; Natives must take their shoes off when they go into government offices; No native is allowed into shops and restaurants designated for whites; Busses are to be divided in two by curtains, the backs for Blacks; Blacks are obliged to salute whites whenever they see them; Natives are not to be educated beyond the fourth grade; Natives will not have senior positions in the military; Those who violate these regulations are to be publicly flogged and imprisoned" (p.75).

Black resistance to the spread of Italian settler colonial rule and occupation engaged local, regional, and universal coalitional efforts inspiring a unique form of Black consciousness during the Italio-Ethiopian War (October 1935-May 1936) (Ben-Ghiat, 2020). And though the participation of African Americans against the European colonization in defence of one of the last uncolonized African countries is overall understudied (Scott, 1978), a plethora of Black resistance efforts were taken up by peoples of African descent to resist the colonization of the Kingdom of Ethiopia, or Abyssinia at the time. Anti-colonial solidarity across the Black Diaspora included protests that brought together 25,000 Black and white people to what is now New York (Ben-Ghiat, 2020): over 10,000 to hear NAACP co-founder, W.E.B Du Bois and other civil rights leaders at Madison Square Garden (Ben-Ghiat, 2020); thousands in Montreal and Toronto (Panneton, 2021). Meanwhile, thousands of peoples of African descent attempted to enlist in the

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[2] Please note that the Scramble for Africa started in 1885. Italy's imperial and settler colonial project including their efforts of establishing plantations for resource extraction involved the importation of cattle infected with rinderpest via ship to Massawa of coastal Eritrea in 1887 resulting in the death of 90% of Eritrea's cattle and oxen by 1890 and years of severe drought and nation-wide biological warfare (Wolde Giorigis, 1989).

Ethiopian army: 1,400 men from Jamaica requested their participation in writing to King George V (Ben-Ghiat, 2020; Panneton, 2021), thousands were recruited in Montreal and Toronto (Panneton, 2021); and the Pan-African Reconstruction Association (PARA) alone recruited 1,000 from New York, 8,000 from Chicago, 5,000 from Detroit, 2,000 from Kansas City, and 1,500 from Philadelphia (Scott, 1978). Despite their organizing efforts via petitions and persistence, both African Americans and African Canadians were prohibited from joining the Ethiopian army; yet two African American pilots, Herbert Julian and John C. Robinson were successful in enlisting and fighting during the Italio-Ethiopian war (Ben-Ghiat, 2020; Panneton, 2021). Black consciousness, as will be discussed throughout this thesis, proves to be globally relevant, timeless, and inseparable from Black coalition building for social change. Eritreans continue to employ an African and Black diasporic coalitional resistance in response to their everyday experiences of oppression and modern-day enslavement. It is this personal and collective experience and understanding of displacement and exile that I add to the complexities of being and becoming Black. As Dei and Lordan (2016) have phrased, "we must bring multiple readings of relations to Land…to trouble and complicate hegemonic claims to the primacy of the settlement of stolen Land as a starting point for all decolonial/anti-colonial engagements" (p.xv). And so, this work intends to contribute to the extensive work of Black scholarship regarding Black migrations, Black diasporic understandings of unbelonging, and experiences of exile.

Research Significance

This research derives multiple significance from its' methodological, theoretical, pedagogical, social, and personal contributions.

Methodological Significance

While Black Participatory Research (BPR) and Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR) have both been used to study Black organizing (Akom, 2011; Lenette, 2022), this particular focus on Black diasporic coalitional resistance offered through this work is distinctive as probably the first utilization of BPR as a methodology to learn from historical and continuing Black coalition work. Its' methodological significance is also important for the greater body of participatory action research (PAR) in general which has seldom engaged Black political realities and lives. The selection and activation of BPR alone was also significant considering the additional dedication and labour required for PAR as a process of knowledge generation, education, organization, and mobilization, such together making an undertaking into a life project thereby

exceeding the boundaries of traditional research and its primary preoccupation with knowledge projects for post-secondary institutional archives.

Theoretical Contributions

This project recenters Black radical theories (Austin, 2018) to strengthen anti-Black racist action. In doing so, it provides insights into what it means to join Black radical theory with meaningful organizing praxis. More specifically, literature reviewed and discussions emerging from this study offer a clearer sense of what forming Black anarchist coalition foundations and bonds could look like with the contributions of Afropessimist theory.

Pedagogical Importance

By engaging various forms of learning, this project became a platform for knowledge exchange and knowledge building for strengthening current and future coalitional organizing and action from historical, personal, collective, and archived sources. The use of literature, historical knowledge, and personal experience confirmed the continued significance of Black coalition work, anti-racist education and resistance to anti-Black racism across Turtle Island with a particular focus on the settler colony of Canada.

Social Change/Organizing Relevance

Engaging in this study deepened understandings of historical and contemporary as well as borrowed organizing practices, successes, challenges, and barriers. The literature review and discussions with Black Organizers and organizations alike express and demonstrate the crucial importance and role of studying and gathering historical knowledge in understanding current and future organizing. As such, increasing our awareness of historical organizing has realized the ways prior organizing is very much related and connected to contemporary resistance.

Personal Impact

This work of course speaks to my personal interest in studying and socially activating topics of Black organizing, resistance, and Black diasporic survivals. Formally studying and examining the ways in which Black coalition work has and continues to be integral to Black resistance and life has both deepened my own historical knowledge of Black organized resistance and further developed my understanding of relevant theories to strengthen Black anti-racist organizing and educational strategy.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Limitations and Delimitations</h2>

Limitations

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic during the spring of 2020 caused us to reconsider our initial plans of co-hosting interviews and focus group discussions for data generation and analysis in person. Though community organizing and other practices eventually transitioned with many successes online, this impacted the research site's capacity to hold these conversations in community-based environments. This BPR project was however still limited by the time for the completion of a master's dissertation. This limited the number of focus group discussions we could facilitate as part of the documented project or organizing and coalition building. For example, while we planned to hold a third focus group discussion with Black Organizers and BPR members, combined focus group discussions were limited to two. A final limitation related to participant contributions in this BPR study pertained to feelings of discomfort experienced by some Black organizers. Revealing their identity to other Black organizers in focus group discussions prevented the involvement of one participant. On a broader scale, participants shared concerns of surveillance, appropriation, cooption, and retooling Black resistance efforts, which set boundaries around the information Black organizers were willing to have documented as part of the study.

Delimitations

Our study of Black organizing and resistance had a targeted focus on investigating coalition formations, organizing strategies, and politics. The literature review in the second chapter covers Black organizing in Canada while only bringing in related, shared, and comparative Black organizing and coalition building in the United States. While there have been successful historical and contemporary attempts of interracial coalesced resistance, this study actively excludes interracial or multiracial organizing in order to better understand and contribute towards Black organizing and coalition building. Participant size was also delimited to accommodate MEd thesis related time restrictions and do-ability even though BPR is an open-ended process as far as organizing and coalition building goes when it comes to Black engagement. While various social media platforms were used to digitally scan which groups were "actively" or publicly organizing. This choice of participant selection recognizes and rejects the assumption that those who did not post were not active or organizing. Sourcing from Edmonton was also a delimitation except for one of the Elders who was located and interviewed from Montreal given the

importance of her historical knowledge regarding Black regional coalition formation and organizing. In addition to geographic and sampling size delimitations, types of Black organizing groups were limited. While we initially wanted to capture Black coalition work across schools and campuses and there was broad interest across student groups, we limited the number of participating Black student groups to one high school and one post-secondary.

Research Assumptions

Listed below are the assumptions I held prior to starting this study. This study was initiated under the assumption that Black coalition structures are an effective form of Black organizing and are essential to Black resistance. Past organizing experiences also informed my assumption that local and regional Black organizing are not only siloed in practice but are also confronted by internal and external barriers and challenges to forming coalitions for strengthened organizing. Past coalition work informed my assumption that coalition building is a critical yet difficult strategy that is central to resolving cyclical organizing issues collectively identified, discussed, and addressed during personal organizing efforts. Relatedly, while I was aware that there were repetitive realities of Black organizing practices that were and are inherited that are helpful and harmful to Black organizing and life in general, I assumed that the root issues would not be "black or white". As such, the biggest assumption entering this study was the belief that Black coalitions serve as an important solution to resisting anti-Black racism based on lived experiences and observations and that siloed practices prevented possibilities of Black coalition formation and successful actions.

Organization of the Thesis

Centering Black coalition building as one of countless forms of Black resistance, this Black Participatory Research (BPR) project is written up in six chapters. As the introduction to the research project, this first chapter opens with an overview of the study encompassing the research context, purpose, and questions. Making space for a thematically framed positionality, it briefly takes the opportunity to contextualize my own historical context as the project's researcher. This chapter then highlights the significance of participatory approaches to studying historical and contemporary organizing by explaining the methodology of choice and specifying the unique value that BPR offers. These sections are followed by outlining the importance of the research topic and research study then discusses the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the

8

overall project. As evident in this section, this chapter closes with an overview of the thesis project by outlining the components that make up each chapter of the study.

Structured in three parts, Chapter 2 begins with a contextual overview of anti-Black racism, Black migrations, and historical and contemporary Black organizing across Canada. Depicted chronologically from Black arrivals to the contemporary Black Lives Matter (BLM) era, this chapter rejects the assumption that Black arrivals initially emerged with the transatlantic slave trade by starting with the earliest recorded arrivals of peoples of African descent that predate the "discovery" of Turtle Island by Christopher Columbus and then traces Black migrations regionally across Canada. While there is overlapping coverage on the topic of Black migrations across greater Turtle Island and the greater Abya Yala, a comprehensive focus of migrations across the greater continent falls outside the scope of this research.

The third chapter provides the theoretical context which grounds this research project. As such, it underscores Afropessimism and Black Anarchist theory to communicate their usefulness to Black organizing and coalition building specifically. It also touches on the ways in which Black radical theories, such as Black Radical Feminism, Decolonial Praxis, and Black Disability Framework were influential to this work.

Chapter 4 describes the project's research design, methods, and approaches undertaken for this study. It lays the foundation by sharing the motivations of Black organizers involved in the research study as well as my own as a Black graduate researcher. Next, it provides an overview of Black Participatory Research (BPR) as the chosen methodology. This methodological context is followed by descriptions of the research context, design, and the site of the research study. This chapter explains participant selection, data generation, and analysis process applied to individual interviews and focus group discussions. Lastly, this chapter ends with commentary on the role and priority of adhering to ethics for this project. In Chapter 5, the Program of Action captures the local historic and current Black organizing and resistance efforts of participants to paint some of the varying ways we, peoples of African descent resist and survive continued experiences of anti-Black racism. This chapter starts by sharing early dialogues between BPR members and myself to illustrate the ways in which Afropessimism and Black Anarchist theories informed our broader co-investigation of Black coalition building. By gathering 13 Black organizers and their organizing experiences, the fifth chapter puts forward lessons for contemporary and future Black resistance.

The sixth and final chapter concludes by reflecting on the overall research project. It outlines the research contributions by revisiting the research purpose and questions, as well as considers directions for future Black organizing research and policy development. It also responds to previously identified assumptions listed in the first chapter of the introduction. It concludes with principled directions informed from our discussions on building Black Anarchist coalitions as a BPR project in motion which germinates from this thesis research into perpetuity. Turning now to an overview of historical and contemporary Black organizing and resistance in the literature review.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Part and parcel of the regenerative process of re/defining Black resistance is the joint project of Black erasures and denials of anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness that continue to suffocate Black radical organized resistances. Given this context, we question the rationale and ways in which certain Black liberatory projects are deemed meaningful over others by rethinking what it means to work towards Black liberation for social change. With these intentions in mind, this review of associated literature is specifically guided by the following two research questions:

1) How has historical coalition building between Black organizers and or groups created positive outcomes or better possibilities?

2) What do current efforts of coalition building amongst Black organizers and or groups look like?

Black Migrations, Anti-Black Racism and Learning from Historical and Contemporary Black Organizing and Coalition Work

Coalition building continues to be integral to the collective survival and strategic efforts across peoples of African descent. While African peoples historically saw themselves as distinct identities across the continent before European colonial contacts and the violent capture and trafficking of Africans for imperial and settler colonial interests, coalition bonds[3] and formations across the African continent occurred in several ways. A comprehensive understanding of coalition and coalitional politics includes the recognition and critiques of pre-colonial African coalitional politics that encompass, but are not limited to broad sociocultural and governance structures, the ways in which African feudal systems and expansive kingdoms structured themselves, and pre-Western democratic and peoples-driven ethno-tribal decision-making practices—some of which are still practiced across the continent and most likely, transplanted across the African Diaspora. Of simultaneous importance are the enduring coalitional politics and governance structures that remain central to the communal life, organizing, and governing politic of Indigenous communities across Turtle Island and greater Abya Yala[4] (North, South, and

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[3] Influenced by the discussion between bell hooks and Cornel West (hooks, 2017), I use the term coalition bonds to describe the nature of solidarity across Black identities and groups.

[4] 'Abya Yala' is adopted from the work of De Loggan (2021) and is used starting here and throughout the dissertation when referring to the Americas (North, Central, and South). The origin of Abya Yala, meaning "the 'land of full maturity or 'land of

Central America), such as the Haudenosaunee Nation. Existing as one the earliest forms of democratic governance in the world (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, n.d), their coalition structures predate the arrivals of peoples of African descent via the transatlantic slave trade or otherwise, European-Indigenous colonial contacts, and the subsequent settler colonization of Turtle Island. In the same vein, coalition politics has remained key to Black individual and collective dis/organized resistances across the Black Diaspora including by African-descended peoples since their arrivals to Turtle Island as well the greater Abya Yala.

Three fundamental observations and emergent insights from a review of the associated literature here are as follows:

(1) Black resistance continues to take on varying forms of coalitional structures, strategies, and politics both pre-colonially as well as since the early arrivals of peoples of African descent to Turtle Island.

(2) Black organized resistances emerge from radical roots but are perpetually deprioritized in their current re/formations, misconstrued, and co-opted for alternative, namely neoliberal and neocolonial interests—both of which are outside the ultimate visions that reflect and build upon the foundations of Black liberatory futures.

(3) Black historical organized resistance is intergenerational and cyclical and thus necessitates the survival of peoples of African descent.

Considered together, what seems evident is that Black resistance is learned and passed down generationally undergoing transmission through distinct and ongoing Atlantic migrations to Canada and the United States while simultaneously "becoming Black"[5]. Comparatively, Black resistance is also structurally cyclical in nature. This is not only the case by virtue of the persistent erasures and suppressions of historical and prior organized resistances by Black peoples, but also in the systemic ways in which Black organizing labour is required and reproduced across sites, movements, and generations, which has been made disposable despite coalesced efforts of resistance. Cultivating a Black radical organizing strategy is therefore important to struggle for meaningful material social change while working towards the

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vital blood'" (p.21) is what the Kuna-Tule, of modern-day Panama and Columbia refer to the so-called Americas prior to European colonial contacts and colonization (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

[5] Throughout this dissertation, the phrase and politics of "becoming Black, described by Ibrahim (2019) is applied to describe the linked and simultaneous process of racialization peoples of African descent have historically and continue to experience.

dismantling and ultimate destruction of settler colonial ideologies, logics, systems, structures, and worlds.

With the above considered, this literature review is divided into three parts. The first section presents an overview of the arrivals of peoples of African descent to Canada coupled with their enduring local, regional, and cross-border responses to anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness. The second section offers a study of Black historical organized resistance synthesized according to the following movement periods: (1) antebellum Black anarchist resistances, (2) an expansive movement for Black civil rights, (3) the Black Power era of 1968 and its continued yet suppressed Black radical organizing efforts, and (4) an understanding of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) era as contemporary organized resistance against systemic anti-Black racism.

Overview of Black Migrations: African to Black Identity Shifts

Before 1492

Black and Indigenous relations predate the year of 1492, or the period marked by the arrival of Christopher Columbus and other European colonists that led to the genocidal project and guaranteed the theft of Indigenous Lands through settler colonialism. Or, as Robyn Maynard (2017) conveys, "the violent reorganization of our world and commencement of Black lives and their labour under the transatlantic slave trade" (p.542). Not only did this cataclysmic journey to the 'New World' irreversibly transform African peoples into Black bodies, but the activation of chattel slavery also severed and, in many cases, distorted ancient cooperative relations between African and Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island and Abya Yala.

bell hooks (1994; 2000) makes various mentions of a Black presence across Turtle Island prior to Columbus' colonial explorations and European colonial claims of a 'New World' despite already-occupied lands by Indigenous Nations and Peoples for time immemorial. In considering the reality that African and Indigenous Peoples regularly visited each other's native lands prior to European colonial contacts, Forbes (1988) complicates the assumption that the presence of Black peoples across Turtle Island is exclusively rooted in the transatlantic slave trade by pointing to the fact that Africans used the forceful nature of the Atlantic Ocean's currents[6] and winds to travel to Turtle Island. As Ivan Van Sertima similarly points out in the naming of his 1976 book, *They* (with reference to African peoples) *Came Before Columbus*. Forbes (1988) is also useful in

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[6] Forbes (1988) not only describes the currents of the Atlantic Ocean as supporting the transport "… of floating objects from the Americas to Europe and Africa as well as from the latter to the Americas" (p.6) but makes note of Indigenous Peoples who 'discovered' Europe, arriving in Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula before 1492.

explaining the multi-dimensional ways African and Indigenous Peoples culturally relate by addressing the reality of pre-colonial cultural exchanges between African and Indigenous Peoples given that "some Africans were already exposed to American cultural influences before leaving Africa. […] especially by Brazilian Native Americans" (p.1-2). Not only did the lives of African and Indigenous Peoples intersect in multiple ways, but their ways of life also consisted of anti-oppressive and reciprocal exchanges that must be considered for bettering Black-Indigenous relations in contemporary life while recognizing the distinct ways that African and Indigenous worlds and Peoples have been impacted by structural violence of (settler) colonialism and neocolonialism. Though also very distinct, African and Indigenous Peoples share cultural and spiritual connections in many ways. In fact, hooks (1992/2015) writes that "[t]he Africans who came before Columbus to these Americas that we now call home did not come as strangers" (p.271).

The overall lack of awareness regarding the broad range of Black-Indigenous relations can therefore be explained by colonial disruptions that employ projects of erasure. It is in these ways that Black erasures emergent from racist biases and institutionalized white supremacy expunged and suppressed historical realities, such as knowledge about African travelers who came to America prior to Columbus as well as the shared connections between African and Indigenous Peoples (hooks, 1992/2015).In the next section, the intensifying reality of Black migrations is explored as part of the oppressive origin and nature of Black life that is not only inseparable from the global structure of racial capitalism, but an extension of the initial forced removals of African peoples from the continent via the transatlantic slave trade.

Contextualizing Black Migrations: Survival or Resistance?

The transatlantic slave trade is conceptualized distinctly throughout this chapter's focus on Black migrations and our project's overall discourse on Black oppressions, survivals, and resistance. While its unique centuries-long occurrence and lasting impacts are universally incomparable, the transatlantic slave trade is not isolated from the modern and continual enslavement of Black bodies. But rather, a broadened understanding of Black arrivals to, and across Turtle Island and the greater Abya Yala involves related, yet differing complexities rooted in the legacy of the slave trade that continually perpetuate mass migrations of continental Africans and African-descended peoples. Contemporary Black migratory patterns are therefore understood as extensions, and in some cases, reproductions of the initial forced removals of Africans out of

Africa and other locations that have formed Black diasporic communities via the transatlantic slave trade. Black diasporic peoples can therefore be described as undergoing *forced* migration referring to the capture of peoples of African descent through the Euro-American transatlantic slave trade and continuum of modern-day African slave markets, *voluntary* migrations referring to travels prior to 1492 and both the Euro-American and Arab transatlantic slave trade, and *induced* migrations of peoples of African descent caused by socioeconomic inequitable realities (Davies & M'Bow, 2007). In other words, our globalized approach to studying the enslavement of Black bodies not only recognizes the continuity of slavery in tracing the migrations of African-descended peoples to the 'New World' while respecting the uniqueness of chattel slavery that re/introduced Africans to Turtle Island, but it also connects Black experiences of displacement from their original Lands for the uninterrupted neo/colonial purpose of accessing African land and resources as the only recognized sources of wealth. Building on these understandings of Black migrations as resistance to enslavement include the contemporary and ongoing capture, trafficking, commodification of African bodies at slave markets, and enslavement of Africans across the African continent and the Middle East, however a detailed examination of social death as it pertains to modern forms of enslavement falls outside of the boundaries of this dissertation. Having laid the foundation for how we understand the migrations of peoples of African descent, the upcoming section provides an overview of the earliest African migrations to Turtle Island.

Early Forced African Migrations

The forced migration of African-descended peoples started with indentured labour in the early 1600s intensifying into chattel enslavement within a few years of African arrivals to the 'New World' (Mensah, 2002). Up to twenty million Africans were detained in chains, removed from Africa, and organized below the deck of ships that transported their bodies as goods via the Middle Passages under vile conditions of which they were expected to withstand for a period of 60 to 90 days (Henry, 2012). Despite the characterization of the 'Black Atlantic' or the 'Middle Passages' as "a journey of no return", it is critical to recognize that few enslaved Africans did, in fact, return home to Africa (Campbell, 2006).

Prior to the 17th century, slavery was already being imposed on Indigenous Peoples by French colonists who referred to the Indigenous persons as *panis* (Winks 1971; Mensah, 2002; Henry, 2012; Marano, 2018) across Turtle Island. Accounts as early as 1501 reveal that 50 Indigenous Peoples were enslaved by Portuguese explorer Gaspar Corte-Real (Junne, 2003).

Panis became a synonym for slave; occasionally applied to enslaved Africans as well: enslaved persons "were sold, side by side with livestock, since no public market was set up for their sale" (Winks, 1971, p.45). Upon experiencing labour shortages, colonies shifted their focus to peoples of African descent by instigating their capture and import in considerable numbers by the end of the 17th century (Mensah, 2002; Junne, 2003). The importation of enslaved Africans became legal in New France or modern-day Quebec on May 1st, 1689 (Marano, 2018). Yet the first record of an enslaved African was in 1628 when a young child was stolen from Ghana or Madagascar and renamed Olivier le Jeune (Junne, 2003; Henry, 2012) after his enslaver, Paul le Jeune, a missionary priest, who forcibly brought Olivier to New France, or now Quebec (Winks, 1971; Austin, 2013; Maynard, 2017; Marano, 2018). Mathieu Da Costa is the next earliest recorded individuals of African descent to arrive to the colony of Nova Scotia in 1605 with explorer and fur trader, Pierre Du Gua De Monts and explorer, Samuel de Champlain (Hamilton, 1994). Multilingual in French, Dutch, Portuguese, and Pidgin Basque, Da Costa is recognized as "….one of Sieur de Monts' most useful men as he knew the language of the Mi'kmaq, the First Peoples of Nova Scotia and therefore served as interpreter for the French" (Hamilton, 1994, p.14). Foreshadowing Black migrations today, the arrival of Olivier le Jeune in comparison to Mathieu Da Costa are stark in contrast. Olivier Le Jeune was apprehended as a child, forced to convert to Christianity, then labour for his enslaver until his emancipation. Meanwhile, Da Costa's increased agency in comparison to Olivier Le Jeune meant that he worked alongside European explorers co-establishing Port Royal [now Annapolis Royal] with Samuel de Champlain in the early 1600s" (Hamilton, 1994; Mensah, 2013). This comparison is an important consideration as it attempts to demonstrate one of the many ways the politics of complicity has been historically active since our/African initial contacts with Europeans. hooks (1992/2015), for instance, offers the example of African American soldiers who fought Indigenous Nations and Peoples alongside the American colonial government as well as some Indigenous individuals who enslaved Africans. Certainly, it was European imperial greed that introduced chattel enslavement. Part of the afterlife of slavery, however, is also the lasting effects of complicity in the transatlantic slave trade, both unknowingly and knowingly by other African peoples and the enslavement of peoples of African descent by Indigenous Nations and Peoples (Bartl, 1995; Krauthamer, 2013; Haas, 2022). Recognizing this complexity of adopted colonial practices does not attempt to, nor should it overshadow the ways in which Black

and Indigenous Peoples cooperatively resisted enslavement and oppression, as will be shown in the upcoming sections. Rather, as originally pointed out by Tiffany King (2019, 2014), better understandings of Black life and experiences of anti-Blackness in settler colonial societies are integral to strengthened understanding the context of anti-Blackness and slavery (Maynard, 2017). On a broader scale, we can see that the extensive afterlife of slavery is pervasive with racial capitalism universally reproduced through the capitalist accumulation of Black bodies for paid, underpaid, and unpaid forced labour. Now that we've outlined initial forced African arrivals to Canada, the next few sections overview African and African-descended migrations regionally across Canada.

Early Black Migrations to the Maritime Region

The history of African-descended peoples of Agg piktuk,Unama'kik, Eskikewa'kik, Sipekne'katik and Kespukwitk or present-day Nova Scotia (Walker, 2019) exceeds other colonial provinces and territories (Mensah, 2002; Ibrahim, 2019) and is thus comparatively unique. Peoples of African descent migrated to Nova Scotia (which included the eventual colony of New Brunswick until 1784) as Black Loyalists (1783), Jamaican Maroons (1796), and Black Refugees (1812) (Walker, 2019). Black peoples have however been in Nova Scotia prior to these three major waves of migration (Rutland, 2018). Afro-Indigenous or Black Indigenous Peoples recorded by Katz (1986) as 'Black Indians' have as a result existed on Indigenous, Mi'kma'ki territory for over 400 years (Beals and Wilson, 2020).

The first wave of African peoples occurred during the mid-eighteenth century resulting in their cultivation of "the first free Black communities" (Whitehead, 2013, p.11) in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, according to Krauter and Davis (1978) and cited in Mensah (2002). It is estimated that 1,200-2,000 enslaved persons of African descent were brought to 'Nova Scotia' by 3,5000 white Loyalists as their "property" (Frost, 2022) following the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) (Whitfield, 2017; Walker, 2019; Rutland, 2018; Moser, 2021; Frost, 2022). During this period, 3,500 free Black persons referred to as "Black Loyalists" not only "t[ook] refuge [but their freedom] by hiding behind British lines" (Whitehead, 2013, p.35) migrating to the Maritimes of Canada (Whitfield, 2017; Rutland, 2018; Moser, 2021). Black Loyalists were perceived to be loyal to the British colonial crown and therefore took the opportunity to gain their freedom "as early as 1775" (Whitehead, 2013, p.13) through the promise to land for fighting alongside the British during the war (Mensah, 2002; Rutland, 2018). In addition to their arrivals

as enslaved persons and Black Loyalists, peoples of African descent also arrived as "freeborn persons" […] or as indentured servants" (Whitehead, 2013, p.11). And so, if we consider the already opposing lives of Olivier le Jeune and Mathieu Da Costa who respectively arrived as enslaved and free persons while working for European colonial explorers from Africa, following the defeat of the British, the complexity and diversity of Black life in Nova Scotia is further complicated with the transportation of enslaved persons of African descent and free Black persons on shared ships (Frost, 2022) to Nova Scotia. It is important to note that some of the peoples of African descent embarking on the next chapter of their lives —either free or enslaved upon migration to the colony of Nova Scotia, were African-born and thus retaking the most unforgettable journey of their lives (Whitehead, 2013).

Following their rebellion against the British colonial government in Jamaica, 600 (Henry, 2012, p.92; Rutland, 2018) to 900 Jamaican Maroons evaded their enslavement when they migrated to Nova Scotia from 1796 to 1834 (Rutland, 2018). Their deportation from Jamaica by the British colonial government stemmed from their perpetual fear of rebellion in solidarity with the French against the British (Mensah, 2002). Prior to their maroonage Jamaica, Maroons of this region predominantly originated from the Ashanti tribe of Ghana in Western Africa who were captured and forcibly transported to Jamaica by the Spaniards/Spanish, but through persistent escapes from plantations cultivated Maroon societies (Lockett, 1999; Mensah, 2002). While in Nova Scotia Maroons also consistently resisted conditions of enslavement by submitting petitions to the colonial government of Nova Scotia and Britain to request that they be relocated to a different land with a climate akin to Jamaica (Lockett, 1999). In response, they were relocated to the new settler colony of Sierra Leone in their 4th year of settlement in Nova Scotia (Mensah, 2002; Rutland, 2018) as part of their peace agreement with the British colonial government (Henry, 2012) joining 1, 200 Black Loyalists who left to Sierra Leone from Nova Scotia 8 years prior after arriving from Georgia and South Carolina following the American Revolution War (Lockett, 1999). As of current the last Jamaican Maroon community exists in Accompong, St. Elizabeth of Western Jamaica (Henry, 2012).

The War of 1812 between British North America and America called upon the support of thousands of Black peoples for a second time in exchange for their freedom (Whitfield, 2017) assuring enslaved Africans that if they left their enslavers in 'America' they would receive free status and access to land (Mensah, 2002). Approximately 3,600 Black Refugees from the United

States were thus brought to Canada in 1815 with a majority arriving in the colony of Nova Scotia (Mensah, 2002). They were however not provided access to land as promised nor was the land they accessed sufficient for survival (Mensah, 2002). While in the colonies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the Black Refugees who evaded their enslavement founded new Black communities "in Preston, Hammonds Plains, and Loch Lomond" (Whitfield, 2017, p.215). Despite fighting two wars alongside the British for their freedom from generations of enslavement and forced displacement/exile from their own native land, by "1815 the Nova Scotia Assembly attempted to block further black immigration, stating that people of African descent were "unfitted by nature to this climate, or association with the rest of His Majesty's colonists" (Whitfield, 2017, p.215).

Early Black Migrations to Central Canada and Underground Railroad

Peoples of African descent have existed in 'Ontario' or Upper Canada as it was initially claimed since colonial imposition (Landon, 2009) on the Haudenosaunee (also referred to as Iroquois made up of five nations, Seneca, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Mohawk) and Wendat (also known as Huron) Nations (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, n.d).The annual flight of enslaved persons of African descent from the United States can be traced since the War of 1812 (Landon, 2009; Henry, 2012). The Fugitive Act of 1850 further sparked the flight of tens of thousands of fugitive enslaved persons (Henry, 2012; Hamilton, 2022) or 'freedom runners', as referred to by Hamilton (2022). As a result, this legislation enabled the recapture of fugitive persons of African descent from northern states for their return to their enslaver and life of servitude (Henry, 2012). Like African American abolitionist and the first African American nationalist (Kahn, 1984), Dr. Martin Robinson Delaney, many enslaved peoples of African descent "believed that it was one of the best places for Black peoples to escape to, until a national homeland was possible" (Walcott, 2008). It is important to recognize that at the same time as the flight of fugitive enslaved persons of African descent arriving in pre-confederation Canada via the 'Underground Railroad'[7], persons of African descent were still being sold, enslaved, and resold across Canada (Landon, 2009) in the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and Central province of Quebec (Hamilton, 2022). Guided by 'conductors', runaway persons accessed 'stations' where fugitive persons were able to access a place of rest and supplies such as food and clothing from

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[7] Codes alerting 'freight agents' that fugitive enslaved persons were on route were communicated via telegraph as cases of hardware in reference to men and cases of dry goods when communicating incoming women—in some cases, people were transported north in boxes and shipped (Landon, 2009).

'station agents' throughout their journey following the 'North Star' until they reached 'freight agents' (Landon, 2009) in the 'land of freedom of colonial Canada, which encompassed early Ontario (Upper Canada), Quebec (New France), and the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick until federation as one settler colony in 1867. One of the most well-known examples is the renowned Harriet Tubman, who was critical in facilitating the flight and safe arrivals of hundreds of enslaved African peoples (Robinson, 1997; Mensah, 2002). Though we cannot be certain of exact migration numbers, an approximate of 20,000 fugitives arrived in 'Canada' from 1850-1860 alone (Mensah, 2002) with up to 60,000 enslaved peoples of African descent freed throughout the duration of the Underground Railroad (Robinson, 1997).

Black Migrations to British Columbia

Peoples of African descent have lived in what is now British Columbia since the gold rush of 1858 (Kilian, 2019). The first Black settlers arrived as refugees in response to the rise of anti-Black racism in California and the U.S *Dred Scott* decision by the Supreme Court of America (Arenson, 2022) mostly settling in Victoria Island of the western province (Kilian, 2019; Mensah, 2002; Watkins, 2022) at the invitation of Guiana-born Governor James Douglas, who is increasingly documented as being born from a free Barbadian mother and Scottish father (Creese, 2022). In light of this, six hundred Black peoples from San Francisco, California left for Vancouver Island in 1858 (Creese, 2022; Kilian, 2019): they were not enslaved persons of African descent fleeing enslavement via the Underground Railroad—their migrations transpired following these journeys that mostly ventured east and were thus free persons (Arenson, 2022). Despite this distinction, the experiences of peoples of African descent who migrate to Western Canada were not unique to the remaining regions of settler colony of Canada (Abdi, 2005). Painting the various ways in which Black peoples in mid-19th century California experienced anti-Black violence, Kilian (2019) traces several individual and collective narratives that document attempts of enslaving and re-enslaving peoples of African descent in California. Solidified by localized introductions of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1852 that allowed the arrest of fugitive enslaved persons in 1852 coupled with Bill 339, which prohibited the migration of peoples of African descent into California (Kilian, 2019) and the Dred Scott decision by the Supreme Court of America (Arenson, 2022). It was these developments that ultimately forced free Black persons to flee and thus in a state of forced migration. Archy Lee's narrative alone of his capture and return to his enslaver outlines the ways in which legalized anti-Black racism

worked in systemic ways to not only capture and return him to his enslaver, but also to produce additional legislation that further re-introduced and preserved the status and treatment of enslavement of Black peoples in California. When Black communities in San Francisco, California mobilized to earn legal funds for Archy at Zion Methodist Episcopal Church, they also exchanged discussions to decide on their destination considering Vancouver Island, British Columbia in 'Canada', Panama in the Caribbean, or the Mexican state of Sonora (Kilian, 2019). Renowned Black writer and educator, Mary A. Shadd also encouraged the migration of African Americans to Vancouver Island, British Columbia in her 1852 work, *A Plea for Emigration, or, Notes of Canada*, recognizing its proximity to the continent of Asia and therefore possibilities for trade relations and the need to prevent the expansion of slavery to 'Canada' from the 'United States' (Junne, 2003). Hence, the resulting first migration of peoples of African descent to Victoria were hundreds who arrived in April 25th, 1859 (Junne, 2003).

Historically, early Black settler families settled in the eastern neighbourhood of Strathcona in Hogan's Alley given its closeness to the railway as many Black men laboured as Black porters (Creese, 2022; Watkins, 2022). An African Methodist Episcopal Church and businesses were established with the early Black settler community reaching an approximate total of 800 in the 1920s (Watkins, 2022). By 1920s the Black settler community established. Similar several Black settler communities across Turtle Island, such as Africville in Nova Scotia, Hogan's Alley was destroyed by the local government. Early Black Pioneers were not only integral to the construction of British Columbia, but also the preservation of the settler colony of British Columbia from the expansive efforts of 'United States' (Kilian, 2019). Despite their long-standing settlement of Black peoples across the colony and now-province, peoples of African descent have become what Orwell has described as "unpersons" resulting in some Black pioneers moving further east (Kilian, 1978). And while they experienced many successes with their migration journey to British Columbia which provided immediate safety from re/enslavement, their provided refuge in British colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia did not guarantee their safety from anti-Black racism. Unique from hundreds of early Black pioneers who settled in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, and Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, Black settlers in British Columbia did not migrate south to fight with the Union during the African Civil War (Anderson, 2021). Many

Black pioneers did however return to the United States following the American Civil War (1865) and legalized abolition of slavery (Creese, 2022).

Black Migrations to the Prairies

The last terrain to be accessed by Blacks in 'Canada' were the prairies (Mensah, 2002) encompassing the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Yet, as can be seen across scholarship regarding historical migrations of Black peoples to 'Canada', the dominant focus has been on "the experiences of people[s] of African descent who have resided in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Quebec" (Este & Bailey,2022, p.419). The primary migration source of the first Black peoples to the prairies included descendants of approximately 4,500-5,000 enslaved Africans by five Indigenous Nations (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole also known as 'the Five Civilized Tribes') across the Southern United States displaced during land seizures in Oklahoma via the 'Indian Removal Act' of 1830 (Este & Bailey,2022).African American families who left Oklahoma in response to intensifying Jim Crow legislation that prevented voter rights and segregated public spaces such as schools and businesses threatened or used racial violence towards their families and lives. Reading about land being sold for $10, they settled rurally in what is now Alberta's Amber Valley previously known as Pine Creek (east of Athabasca), Breton, Campsie close to Barrhead, and Wildwood (previously Junkins) as well as Eldon District in Maidstone of Saskatchewan (Mensah, 2002; Este & Bailey, 2022). Provincial governments across colonies enacted several barriers to deter the emigration of African Americans. Government actors used strict medical assessments that rewarded doctors who successfully rejected African Americans at borders (Mensah, 2002). Businesses not only "advocated for the exclusion of Blacks", but railroad companies also enacted full prices to African Americans or outright refused to accommodate their travel while white families were offered decreased or no fees for service (Mensah, 2002). Though latter repealed due to a bureaucratic error, Edmonton City Council passed an Order-in-Council P.C 1324 in 1911 to ban the immigration of Black peoples for an entire year (Mensah, 2002). Despite being part of Alberta's history for over a century, the government and province of Alberta officially recognized and celebrated Black History Month (BHM) as of January 2017.

Contexts of Anti-Black Racism

Experiences of anti-Black racism and Black resistance are interconnected. The interconnection of anti-Black racist experience and Black resistance action are evident in both perceived and actual anti-hegemonic responses alike. The emergence of European imperialism, colonialism, and

slavery have situated alternativity as anti-hegemonic responses to the local and global project of anti-Black racism experienced through the racialization by peoples of African descent. The inescapabilty of anti-Blackness is universal. Evident across countless languages and cultural groups, from colourist practices such as the fear of skin darkening to the word 'black' or variations of 'blackness' holding negative meanings evident throughout the English language with terms such as "black lie, black book, black death, blacklist, black magic, black sheep etc." (p.20) as listed by Mensah (2002), who examines this in reference to Anton Allaher (1993:41) who asks, "[w]hen did Black people come to be worth less than others?" While it is clear throughout this thesis that this is not perceived by participants or myself, the researcher, this internal interrogation speaks to the global lens by which systems and structures and consequently individuals and peoples have individually and collectively developed anti-Black ideologies, logics, assumptions, and practices. A deeper look at this thought realizes that this question is part and parcel to common rhetoric amongst us Black peoples. Put differently, this question also asks when and how did we become Black? In response to this shared rhetoric/question, this section offers a conceptual introduction to anti-Black racism, describes experiences of anti-Black racism, pinpoints the development of Black identity and Blackness by tracing the emergence of racial capitalism, and discusses Black diasporic displacement attached to Black migrations.

Learning from Joint Projects of Historical and Continued Erasure and Denial

The historical erasure of persons and communities of African descent existing and resisting across the Western world currently comprising North America and Europe is not new, nor did it start during the Civil Rights Movement, which was strategically dominated by Dr. Martin Luther Jr. Rather, it is a strategic, continuous, and systemic international project. As further detailed in the literature review, its' origins can be located to imperial European contacts during which the creation and imposition of long-lasting colonial narratives was attempted. In effect, the project of erasure as applied to resistance towards anti-Black racism persists to simplify and reframe countless trajectories of Black organizing and resistances as linear. The project of Black erasures also suppresses the multiplicity of Black organizing while denying a wide-ranging nature of resistance efforts since Black arrivals to Turtle Island. Operated by systemic strategies, it was and continues to incessantly be employed by neo/colonial structures to prevent Black individuals and their communities as well as greater society from access to the ways in which Black diasporic groups and Black Indigenous Peoples organize/d to survive. In place of Black organizing

23

education—especially Black radical organizing, the joint project of erasure and denial replaces the growing range of Black resistance that have surfaced since the arrivals of peoples of African descent with liberalist attempts of diversity and inclusion into the white supremacist settler colonial nation. By instilling the assumption that the existence of peoples of African descent across the Westernized world has been recent, it redefines and compartmentalizes issues of race, racialization, and racism as contemporary and unrelated to global systems of imperialism, racial capitalism, and settler colonialism. Likewise, when continued Black resistance are denied as occurring elsewhere or also recent emergences that should be practiced in specific ways, it discards generations of Black resistance that have not only occurred in multiple ways, but revolutionary ways that are depicted as "terrorist" or "radical" in nature. Additionally, it does not encompass the cross-bordered and global ways peoples of African descent have and continue to be in resistance to neo/colonialism and enslavement as a direct result of the triangular settler colonial project that started in Turtle Island circa 1492.

Becoming Black

Contrary to widespread paradigms that uphold what can be referred to as an 'anti-Black gaze', peoples of African descent have not always self-identified as Black persons nor were they externally considered by non-Blacks as a common people, or as Black people. Prior to initial European colonial contacts with Africans during the 15th century which sparked the onslaught of Euro-American chattel enslavement, imperialism, and (settler) colonization of the African continent, African peoples understood their individual and collective identities based on local tribal or nomadic clan, ethnic, and regional relations. Ibrahim (2019) points to the reality that "outside of modern-day South Africa, race is not "the" defining social identity in Africa" (p.2). Casteist structures (Wilkerson, 2020) have long existed in differing ways to the construct of race; such has been the case with ancient hegemonic governance systems that have resulted in modern post-colonial forms persisting through tribalism, colourism, and class-based discrimination. Outside of these existing conditions that have and continue to structure various internal oppressions within respective African societies, we have not and are not considered Black in Africa (Hartman, 2008; Ibrahim, 2019). In reality: it has been our exit/s from the continent and arrival to other lands that we are either introduced or re-introduced to Black life. In other words, or as similarly put by Ibrahim (2019), we are not "born Black since Blackness (and race in general) is a performative category…, [hence] one becomes Black" (p.150). Allaher's thought-

24

provoking question echoed by Mensah (2002) that asked, "[w]hen did Black people come to be worth less than others?", as listed earlier, is therefore important to understand the rationale by which Black persons—or peoples of African descent were deliberately transported across the Atlantic Ocean as the best option for involuntary generational labour. Through this process of becoming Black driven by commodification that simultaneously classified Africans as Black, this systematic process of hierarchical racial organization and selection is explained in detail by Carmichael (1967) who explains that,

> "Indians would have been a natural solution, but they were too susceptible to diseases carried by Europeans, and they would not conform to the rigid discipline of the plantation system. Poor whites of Europe were tried but proved unsatisfactory. They were only indentured servants, brought over to serve for a limited time; many refused to complete their contract and ran away. With their white skins, they assimilated easily enough into the society. But [B] lack Africans were different. They proved to be the white man's economic salvation" (p.30).

Though there have been previous references and dehumanization of African/Black peoples, it is this emergence and process of racial capitalism that brings us to this cyclical point where peoples of African descent ultimately became Black and therefore became globally deemed "worth" less and essentially regarded and treated worthless. As also characterized by Carmichael (1967), Black peoples cost less resulting in the global institutionalization of enslaving Black bodies for settler colonial labour needs.

Emergence of Racial Capitalism: Initial Enslavements of Black Bodies

Prior to European colonial contacts and subsequent colonialization across Africa, our understandings of unity with respect to social relations were related to tribal and regional relations. Discussing Europe's period of transition from feudalism to capitalism, Cedric Robinson (2000) pinpoints that "it was there—not Africa—that the word and ontological formation of "Negro" was first manufactured" (Location No.173) specifically identifying that when "European labor was being thrown off the land and herded into a newly formed industrial order […], African labor was being drawn into the orbit of the world system through the transatlantic slave trade" (2000, Location No.193). As a result, the chattel enslavement of African peoples took place over four hundred years across Turtle Island and the greater 'Americas'. The absence of large-scale plantations in early settler colonial 'Canada' in comparison to the 'United States' however

perpetuates the fallacy that slavery was not practiced in Canada (Mensah, 2002). Moreover, "[s]lavery in Canada, when acknowledged, is often argued away on the basis of this comparison and on the question of numbers. Small numbers were supposed to have made the practice more palatable, less harsh" (Hamilton, 2011, p.99) as is the continuing comparison of anti-Black racism experienced in the United States versus Canada. Canada is both assumed and projected as not having a race or racism problem—McKercher (2019) points to Constance Backhouse, who has referred to this as "an ideology of racelessness". Black peoples have however been associated with slavery and thus experienced anti-Black racism since the first arrivals of African descent to Canada; and in parallel manner, Blackness has been made to equate to slavery (Walker, 1985). Emerging from the foundation of racial capitalism or the commodification and transformation of enslaved Africans into Black bodies for much-needed labour, Black peoples were and are still thought and treated as being outside the boundary of humanity. The non-humanity of slaves made them the absolute property of their masters" (Austin, 2013). Most enslaved Africans transplanted across Turtle Island and the greater 'Americas' were originally from Western Africa (Du Bois, 1998), but "[i]n origin, the slaves represented everything African" (p.1). Accounting for their diverse origins and embodied journeys, Du Bois (1998) describes that,

> "…among them appeared the great Bantu tribes from Sierra Leone to South Africa; the Sudanese, […] from the Atlantic to the Valley of the Nile; the Nilotic Negroes and the black and brown Hamites, […]; the tribes of the great lakes; the Pygmies and the Hottentots; and […], distinct traces of both Berber and Arab blood" (2000, p.1-2).

Extending prior to the transatlantic slave trade, Wilderson (2020) adds to the examination of the origins of anti-Blackness by identifying its earlier roots within the Arab slave trade "… which began in AD 625, through its European incarnation beginning in 1452, everyone south of the Sahara had to negotiate captivity" (Location No. 302). It is thus clear that together, both the Arab slave trade then the transatlantic slave trade respectively created early Afro-rooted Diasporic communities as well as a growing modern Black Diaspora.

The Point of No Return: Continuities of Displacement

Though Black peoples share continental roots to Africa as well as neo/colonial identities as Black peoples that cultivate important, real, and forged connections, peoples of African descent also navigate complex experiences as insiders and outsiders concerning our relationship to Africa and Black identity. Despite individual and collective resistances to both ontologies or experiences of

slavery and anti-Black racism, peoples of African descent are constantly reminded of slavery through anti-Black experiences while walking this earth as physical epitomes of slavery by virtue of our Blackness which has been proven to be inescapable, for many of the Black Diaspora, since birth. African Descendants of (specifically transatlantic) Slavery (ADOS) are specifically reminded that because of chattel enslavement—by both Euro-Americans and other Africans, they are outsiders to "home" on several accounts when visiting or returning to Africa. This feeling and experience of felt unbelonging and exclusion has been documented by Hartman (2008) who pens experiencing the label of *Obruni*, which she defines as 'stranger' or 'foreigner' when visiting Ghana for the first time. More recent African/Black Diaspora, such as myself are also distinctly perceived as Black first and no longer African or our respective ethnic/national identity first when we visit and/or settle elsewhere because of displacement that translates to a forgetting and change of consistently speaking our mother tongues, cultures, practices, ways of life, and logics. We are informed by natives and locals of the region that we are either 'too Black' or also referred to and treated like foreigners. Across the Black Diaspora, this serves as a significant reminder of our initial separation(s) and continued displacement from "back home" when we are unequivocally referenced as foreign to home. More recent Diaspora of the continent reflect upon this paradox with slight and short humour. While it is ironic for those of us who are recent migrants from Africa or born "back home" where we are often told to go back while in the locations we have migrated and settle. It is even more ironic for those who because of (settler) colonialism survived efforts of imperialism and chattel slavery from Africa and as a by-product have taken root in Turtle Island (presently the Caribbean Islands, United Sates and Canada). And so, notwithstanding our shared African origins, we are marked as strangers or regarded as temporary regardless of where we visit or settle as well as on several accounts when we visit or return to Africa. Despite when we have left Africa however, Black Diaspora will always have an insider-outsider identity and experience in relation to Africa. Nevertheless, when we return or visit the continent, foreigners (non-Blacks) perceive us as Black amongst other Blacks in Africa as is often the case in the nation-states we have migrated to and settled. While this is may be a common assumption, it is also an initial expectation shared by descendants of the continent who visit or return "back home". Whether or not we have previously returned to Africa, our expectation if, or when we do visit, or return is a sense of belonging and welcoming "home". This is partly because we understand our return to be to our own—peoples, cultures,

27

ways of life and being. Yet, our experiences of returning are not exempt from dynamic concepts of space and time. Our return(s) result in a relearning of, or initial introduction to what has been left of, and or revival of our Lands, cultures, and Peoples etc. as well as remnants of the aftermath of colonial contacts and exchanges. And thus, we as Diaspora learn that because of our separation(s) from our Land and origins via theft of Black bodies as well as the continual forced migration of Black bodies we have become and are Black first in many ways. Mbembe (2017) refers to this "process of transforming people of African origin into Blacks, that is, into bodies of extraction and subjects of race, largely obeys the triple logic of ossification, poisoning, and calcification (p.40)." Post-exodus from Africa, we are Black through reclamation: because of, and in response to colonialism and its lasting effects. A similar perspective is brought forward by Ibrahim (2019) who sees that,

> "when continental Africans 'join' Diasporic Africans (in North America or Europe) or when the latter 'go back' to Africa (mostly, interestingly, for tourism; otherwise in search for 'roots'), both are rubbing a symbolic act of defiance on the face of history of colonialism, imperialism and the Middle Passage. They are joining the African Diaspora by becoming part of it. But they have to first confront this history— the history of the present— where their bodies are already read as "Black" (p.21).

Genocide

The genocide of Indigenous Peoples across Abya Yala is the largest known holocaust (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009). Not only did it impact Indigenous Nations and their futures through "the forced sterilization of Indigenous women" (Maynard, 2017, p.34), it was also cultural impacting the use of respective Indigenous languages and systemically replacing them with English and French as Africa was also transformed to be mostly Anglophone or Francophone. The genocide of Indigenous social life and ways of living affected social orders restructuring collective-based societies into hierarchical and linear-based systems transforming understandings of space and time. Quill Christie-Peters' alternative approach argues that they "did not realize that the body and homeland cannot be separated, that they are not distinct entities" (Longman, 2018). Rather, the Land and Peoples are connected through the ways that they relate and maintain the Land as well as through representing their Lands as originating from, and belonging to the Land.

A multitude of efforts were strategically attempted to enact not only the ethnic and cultural genocide of peoples of African descent, but also the spiritual and psychological

destruction of peoples of African descent. In Canada, their experiences of racialized violence and torture ranged from "whippings, being jailed for petty offenses, and being sentenced to death by hanging" (Henry, 2012, p.22). W.E.B Du Bois (2012/2017) paints a comprehensive picture of the treatment of enslaved Africans by documenting the following realities across the United States in specific by detailing that,

> "…Slaves were not considered men. They had no right of petition. They were "devisable like any other chattel. They could own nothing; they could make no contracts; they could hold no property, nor traffic in property; they could not hire out; they could not legally marry nor constitute families; they could not control their children; they could not appeal from their master; they could be punished at will. They could not testify in court; they could be imprisoned by their owners, and the criminal offense of assault and battery could not be committed on the person of a slave. The "willful, malicious and deliberate murder" of a slave was punishable by death, but such a crime was practically impossible of proof" (p.7).

Despite efforts of resistance, as is further fleshed out in the last section on anti-Black resistances, peoples of African descent "…remembered Africa, despite thoughts of their white enslavers to the contrary. They remembered their languages, their music, and their stories. They still cooked their favourite dishes, using foods such as okra and eggplant, brought originally from Africa. They passed on to their descendants a distinctively African style of coiled basketry, pottery, and house-styles" (Whitehead, 2013, p.100).

Institutional Racial Exclusion and Segregation

While racial segregation was not officially legislated in 'Canada', it has always been part and parcel to not only the intended project of establishing a white settler colony and creation of Canada, but also the initial purposes of Black immigration to the colonies. Various scholars including Robyn Maynard (2017) detail an extensive history of dehumanization and subjugation of Black life across institutions through outlining anti-Blackness at the hands of the state of Canada. The Jim Crow era therefore still took many forms. Black peoples were prevented from accessing various businesses such as restaurants, pubs, theatres, and hotels as well as public spaces including skating rinks and swimming pools (Shaw, 1991). Public institutions such as churches and schools were also racially segregated not only prohibiting the access of Black peoples, but also Chinese students. Reynolds (2016) outlines the official and legislated ways in which the government of Canada created segregated schools whereby: Nova Scotia formally

segregated schooling using the Education Act of 1836 and 1865 and Ontario's Common School Act of 1850; segregation in education continued until the 1960s. Residential and boarding schools across Canada and the United States separated Indigenous children from their families until as recent as 1996.

Despite holding post-secondary degrees with varying areas of expertise and skills, employment opportunities were also systemically limited to low paying labour (Shaw, 1991), poor working conditions, and daily anti-Black harassment and violence. The only roles Black men were allowed to hold in both Canada and the United States were as porters (Foster, 2019). Racial segregation also took place in the military during World War I. While Black peoples in Canada wanted to join the military to "earn" their place in the settler society, they were initially regarded as unfit then placed in a white-led racially segregated unit, the No. 2 Construction Battalion (Reynolds, 2016, p. 142).

Considering experiences of "everyday racism" Essed (1991), Black and Indigenous experiences of marginalization and segregation did not end with residential schools closing or racial segregation between Whites and Blacks ending in 1983 (Maynard, 2017, p.34). The process of assimilation requires that Black and Indigenous Peoples blend into Whiteness. It causes erasures of local Indigeneity with respects to how Indigenous Peoples lived in and valued kinship, navigated the systems of the Land and educated and learned from one another. Their simplistic approach of assimilation resulted not in the acceptance of their ways, but in cultural pollution resulting in what the writer calls "cultural blanks": a person who is culturally black is a person with no cultural code or set of norms to guide their behaviour (Alfred, 2005, p.11). Many state practices continue practices of racial exclusion and segregation by systemically centering whiteness and upholding the social myth that Canada is a country based on equality.

Policing and Institutionalized State Terror

The police system and (settler) colonial practices of policing took form and were arguably necessitated as early as the first enslaved Africans. This is evident in records by Katz (1982) who captures King Ferdinand's call to lift all restrictions of sending Africans to the New World required the inclusion of a "trustworthy person" who would oversee groups of enslaved Africans (Katz, 1982). Policing practices were societally and institutionally maintained in the carceral efforts of capturing (Maynard, 2017) and recapturing fugitive persons or "freedom runners" as referred by Bell (2021). These attempts are exhibited across local, regional national, and

transnational or cross-border newspaper ads that searched for enslaved persons who escaped the carceral environments of their enslavers' homes and or plantations. Alternatively, these runaway ads offered "evidence of the courage, resourcefulness, and determination" demonstrated (Bell, 2021) to survive enslavement for their liberated future selves, co-conspirers, and families. These efforts were further supported by funding or equipping slave catchers who "made themselves indispensable (for as long as possible) to the White slavers" (Wilderson, 2020, Location No.303). Surveillance strategies across slave societies were also employed in the 'workplace' of enslaved Africans, such as the request of former American president George Washington, whereby details records that could identify enslaved peoples who escaped (Bell, 2021).

The land of 'milk and honey' that was assumed to be free from slavery was and remains in a constant state of terror. Outside of the institution of policing, Black peoples experienced white mob and vigilante violence and lynching in Canada. Though appeared to be an American fear tactic with limited archival history, Mathieu (2010) uncovers lynching attempts of Black peoples in Canada, such as the five hundred white vigilantes who attempted to lynch George Freeman, a Black man from Chatham, Ontario in 1851: one of the earliest stops of the Underground Railroad and eventual settlement for freed enslaved peoples of African descent from the United States. A noose is still a clear symbol of fear and terror used towards Black peoples. Years later in 1884, Louie Sam, a fifteen year old Indigenous child from Sto:lo First Nation occupied by British Columbia police was falsely apprehended and lynched by approximately 100 white vigilantes for the death of a white shopkeeper across the border in Washington state (Carlson, 1996).

Continuum of Black Organized Resistances

Amongst countless and varied efforts of resistance to anti-Black racism by peoples of African descent, the following 'periods' of Black resistance are relevant to learning from past organizing for contemporary Black coalition building. Though anti-Blackness was practiced and challenged prior to the arrivals of Europeans as is evident with the Arab slave trade of Black bodies from Eastern Africa with the inclusion of the Horn, this thesis is especially concerned about the ways in which peoples of African descent have—despite their continuing resistances—been both disrupted and dislocated by the transatlantic slave trade and resulting systems of neo/colonization that continue to cyclically force migrations to the Western World, namely Canada, United States, and countries across Europe. Following this revisitation of abolition, this section deconstructs and

redefines the civil rights movement (CRM) as a transnational advancement of settler colonialism and racial capitalism then critiques the ways in which Black Power re-ignites Black radical resistance while adopting CRM principles of Black exclusion via uses and applications of patriarchy, Queerphobia, and other oppressive ideologies, logics, and systems. And lastly, this section gathers from the ways in which Black Lives Matter (BLM) takes into consideration the lessons learned from past organizing to propose an international Black resistance that is coalitional while unapologetic and thus radical unlike neoliberal Black organizing strategies of and continuing from the civil rights movement. In what follows, this section first expands understandings of abolition era with individual and organized Black antebellum abolitionist and innately anarchic resistances from land to ship revolts in the African continent and fugitive including maroonage resistance to Turtle Island and Abya Yala post-arrivals that unsettle long-standing perceptions that suggest an absence of Black resistance to enslavement. In summary, outlined in this portion of the chapter is a foundational overview of Black organized resistance since the earliest recorded arrivals of African descendants followed by lessons that may be helpful for current, continued, and future Black organizing. To do so, this thesis project conducts a historical review and analysis of regional Black resistance that leans on distinct and shared histories of the United States as well as centers Black organizers and groups that engage in a coalitional politics. Within this critical recollection is the recognition of the ways in which Black organizing across Turtle Island are linked across borders: what occurred in what is colonially known as the United States influenced and affected organizing that would occur in what is now Canada, and vice versa.

Historic Black organizing has also, in many ways, created positive outcomes and better possibilities for Black individuals and communities. This section puts forth two critical lessons for current, continuing, and future Black organizing. First and foremost is the recognition that Black collective organized resistance must be intersectional *while* relational across Black identities for the comprehensive needs of Black communities to be prioritized rather than denied, rejected, or neglected which in turn, re/creates organizing silos as seen in our historical analysis. Another critical point of learning was the reminder that neoliberalism was never nor is currently an effective strategy of Black organizing, resistance, and survivals. Rather, it proposes that the political interests and visions for Black liberation were used to further reinforce settler colonial structures by instilling racial integration and necessitating heterosexual conformity. The

upcoming section considers Black anarchist praxis, Black women, and the Black church as the earliest Black institutions that have been integral to the earliest Black diasporic resistances.

Black Anarchist Roots of (Eternal) Black Resistance

Despite widespread assumptions that assert otherwise, a substantial amount of literature shows that the some of the earliest Black peoples—enslaved Africans, were persistent in their individual and collective resistance against the perpetual conditions of slavery and anti-Blackness imposed on their personhood since their initial captures from the African continent and transplants throughout the colonies carved out to create North America, South America, and the Caribbean islands. While it is difficult to account for the exact number of rebellions that occurred on the ships that carried enslaved Africans, Boyd (1998) refers to a 1962 study co-authored by Mannix and Cowly that identified over 154 rebellions that took place on ships during the period of 1669-1845. Christmas Day in 1522 marked the first recorded rebellion on Turtle Island; on the island of Santo Domingo, whereby enslaved Africans and Indigenous Peoples rose and murdered their masters and overseers on a plantation owned by Diego Columbus (Katz, 1986, p.33). As phrased by Mbembe (2017), "the Black slave [….] was constantly on the threshold of revolt, tempted to respond to the insistent call of liberty or vengeance" (p.19). In other words, there was never a moment during the transatlantic slave trade when enslaved Africans did not struggle for their freedoms (Boyd, 1998). Yet the origins of the first abolition movement are credited for emerging as late as the 17th century and often attributed to the work of the Society of Friends, more commonly known as 'the Quakers' (Polgar, 2019). As such, the earliest abolition movements are depicted and perceived as being led and organized by white activists, such as the Quakers who acted on behalf of enslaved Africans given the increasing risks of Black resistance from individual escapes to any mobilized gathering or resistance. However, it was not only enslaved Africans—both in continental Africa and across the Diaspora—who initiated the first anarchist resistances to anti-Black oppressions, it was their sole determination that cultivated a "cycle of enslaved resistance" (Polgar, 2019, p.28).

One of the many ways enslaved Africans resisted their enslavement was through countless means of escape: enslaved Africans were therefore in a constant state of fugitivity. Determined to flee their conditions of chattel enslavement, they became "polycentric" resisters from the countless and continuous attempts of escape they survived (Bell, 2022). Fleeing various forms of bondage during the Atlantic slave trade, their strategies ranged in tactics as seemingly minimal as evasion,

passing as a white person or free person of colour, escaping conditions of social death through death by suicide[8], and as long-term as stealing away (Boyd, 1998) from their enslavers and joining or creating their own sites of maroon societies (Katz, 1986). Routes of escape used included the use of canoes, raft via rivers, rail, boxed crates[9] for shipment, horse, and foot (Blackett, 2017). Consequences of fugitive enslaved persons were significant and included punishment such as whipping and the cropping of ears closed (Bell, 2022). Simultaneous to the theft, enslavement, and displacement of African peoples was the genocide, erasure of their cultures, languages, and ways of life for the colonial occupation of and resource extraction from Indigenous Lands across Turtle Island and the greater Abya Yala. And thus, local "Indigenous and Black Peoples gravitated to each other in the face of such subjugation" (Beals & Wilson, 2020, p.30) resulting in some enslaved Africans seeking refuge within Indigenous communities essentially escaping to the woods (Katz,1986; Robinson, 2000), "forests, hills, and swamp lands" (Foreman, 2021, p.43). Enslaved Africans joined remote communities or created their own settlements known as maroon societies (Davis, 1972; Katz, 1986; Boyd, 1998; Robinson, 2000; Foreman, 2021) as a means of resisting their conditions of chattel enslavement. Katz (1986) notes that the first Africans brought to the New World by Europeans probably arrived in April 1502 with new governor of Hispaniola, Nicolas de Ovando, who requested to King Ferdinand later that year that no more Africans be sent to the Americas as "they fled amongst the Indians and taught them bad customs, and never could be captured" (p.28). This too, confirms Black-Indigenous bonds cultivated from shared struggles and persistent attempts at survivals. As Robinson (2000) reiterates, the first Africans who were involuntarily brought to the New World responded out of "a total rejection of the[ir] experiences of enslavement and racism" they were experiencing; they were thus "more intent on preserving a past than transforming Western society or overthrowing capitalism" (p.xviii). When enslaved Africans joined Indigenous communities, they also contributed to local ways of life. Their separate or joint spaces re-created free societies that not only served the immediate need of escape for their freedom, but offered shelter where families educated their children, developed their agriculture and trade, practiced religion, and established systems of governance (Katz, 1986). As a result of these alliances, enslaved Africans absorbed strategies on how to live off the land, such as hunting,

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[8] The Igbo Landing refers to the 1803 rebellion by enslaved Igbo peoples where upon arriving in Georgia rebelled against their enslavers throwing them overboard then drowned together in refusal of their enslavement in 1803, Georgia (Navarro & Robertson, 2020).

[9] Henry Brown mailed himself in a crated box from Richmond, Virginia to an anti-slavery office in Philadelphia (Blackett, 2017).

fishing, trapping, medicinal, agricultural, and weather knowledge (Whitehead, 2013). Generations of living alongside and within Indigenous communities created Afro-Indigenous communities, a people Katz (1986) refers to as 'Black Indians'. Becoming rooted in Indigenous Land[10] and indivisible from Indigenous identity, "whites looked at Native American villages in the South and found black faces staring back at them. Paranoia told whites that these people were about to rise up, liberate slaves, and kill whites" (Katz, 1986, p.126). These accounts demonstrate that the earliest peoples of African descent who experienced enslavement via anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness acted on the vision for Black liberation that were anarchist in theory and practice.

Revolts, rebellions, fugitivity, and objections to African oppression and enslavement were however not only unpublicized at the time of their occurrence, but they were also suppressed with the attempt of discouraging other enslaved persons from resisting (Davis, 1972; Aptheker, 2021). Considering the varying ways in which the joint project for erasure and denial of anti-Black racism (as discussed in the previous section of this chapter) and Black resistance started as early immediate as the first or initial captures. Regardless, evidence of Black resistance is apparent in (known and unknown) organized efforts and movements, in the surviving Black diasporic communities and institutions built and rebuilt upon their destruction (by the state and or white vigilantes), and the revivals of Black collective consciousness that continues to mobilize groups across the Black Diaspora in the interest of meeting their shared needs and interests as well as through their connections of shared challenges and struggles.

Anarchist praxis is an innate part of Black resistance. Learning from ongoing efforts of resistance in the face of Black tire, loss, and the simultaneous absorption into the anti-Black racial capitalist (settler) colonial world we are in has reintroduced us to what can be argued as the most important part of Black life, Black resistance, *because* of its attachment and reproduction of Black survivals or living. These lessons teach us to love the Black skin we are in despite historical and continued experiences of anti-Blackness that not only attempt to teach alternatives to systemic anti-Black racism but are also diverted by legacies of anti-Blackness that persuade us to adopting internalized modes of anti-Blackness towards ourselves. Looking back to the earliest direct actions that form foundations of contemporary direct action demonstrate some of the countless enslaved Africans resisted. The survival of Black individuals and communities have

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[10]Katz (1986) accounts for African/Black-Indian societies during the American Revolution and the Civil War in "New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Connecticut, Tennessee, and Massachusetts" (p.129) and a population of one hundred thousand in Mexico by 1650 (p.29).

been interdependent on, and exclusively due to the perpetual local, regional, and global resistances of enslaved persons of African descent. Since the formation of the tri-relationship between Indigenous Peoples, Europeans, and Africans, Black survivals and resistance extends in parallel to each other as an endless continuum. Amadahy and Lawrence (2009) link the relationship between Black and Indigenous Peoples through the following interconnected historical and ongoing relation:

> The gold and silver claimed during the initial sixteenth-century fueled Europe with the financial capital to continue expeditions to the East and build ships that made global mercantilism possible; in particular, the Atlantic trade of slaves and goods between Africa, the Americas, and England. This resulted in the industrial revolution, diasporic Black realities, and global imperialism (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009, p.106).

As a result, neither Africa nor what is currently considered the Caribbean, the United States and Canada making up North America and South America have been still. Afropessimist scholar, Jared Sexton explains this reality through what he refers to as "a process of permanent destabilization in which Black bodies remain indelibly linked with slavery" (Austin, 2013, p.47). Aided in this understanding is Black consciousness, which has and is used as an irreplaceable tool of Black Anarchist resistance because "even [B]lacks, as the Black Panthers said, must become Black" (Ibrahim, 2019, p.15). The next couple of sections discuss the ways in which Black women served as institutions of resistance and the formation of Black churches acted as the first physical institutions of Black resistance across the Black Diaspora in Turtle Island.

Black Women: The Crux of Black Resistance and Survivals

Enslaved Black women were integral to the collective fight for Black freedom. In addition to the casteist structure of slavery imposed on her, the racialized and gendered roles Black women performed as a Black woman and mother necessitated her resistance. Black women were not only reduced to the capital value of their forced labour, but they were also dually vital to their owner and the greater system of slavery considering their ability to reproduce more enslaved persons (capital) and chattel (reproducers) for their enslavers. And thus, "the routine rape of [B]lack women increased the wealth of slaveowners and solidified an enduring association of forbidden sexuality, sexual violence, and blackness" (Abdu-Rahman, 2012, p.35). Black women were therefore commodified in her requirement to fulfil her commercial duty to generate more chattel: her children, who were also ordained as 'slaves' for the purpose and continuity of free slave labour. At the same time, enslaved Black women were even more essential for the generational

survival of Black persons in (settler) colonies. Because "slavery was a matrilineal system. It was the centrality of the [B]lack woman to establish kinship and heritage..." (Abdu-Rahman, 2012, p.37). Constantly in survival mode themselves however, Black women were robbed of the chance of being with their kin. Black women were also paradoxically condemned by Black men for producing them as "inhuman, illegitimate, slave" (Abdu-Rahman, 2012) yet central to Black anarchist struggles for Black freedom. Conceptualized by Davis (1972) rape of enslaved Black women as one of the many forms of institutional terror, West (2018) sees the complicit ways in which Black men become "perpetrators of sexual violence and simultaneously be victims of the system of slavery" (p.1) causing Black women to use natural contraceptive solutions, such as chewing cotton-root to prevent birthing.

In addition to their proactive resistances caused by rape, enslaved Black women orchestrated and aided in ordinating escapes to safe houses to settle North or arrive in Canada via the Underground Railroad (Johnson, 2015 cited from Foner & Garraty, 1991). Their collective organizing also included their work in anti-slavery societies as early as 1830 (Johnson, 2015 as cited from Yee, 1992). Upon obtaining a sense of freedom, Black women worked to rebuild their families that had been torn and displaced "by working towards the purchase of their relatives' and friends" (Davis, 1972, p.90). Families were otherwise only kept together when it benefited the slave enslaver, such as for the purpose of producing new slaves as quoted from Historian, John Henrik Clarke (Davis, 1972) or "plantation stability and labour control" (Egerton, 1993, p.22). For the most part, families were kept apart: as Membe (2017) states, in the 'New World' the Black slave is stripped of all kinship with enslaved persons of African descent experiences the loss of their parents. Without the right and ability to cultivate immediate and extended familial relations, they were also robbed of familial bonds, which were forged with other enslaved persons reminiscent to enduring Indigenous African ways of collectively raising children. Indeed, Black women were individually and collectively essential for the survival and continuity of Black kin/persons, community, and society.

Black Church

Black churches played a foundational role in Black organizing relations in Canada and the United States. Since the earliest arrivals of enslaved Africans, communally formed spiritual gatherings and spaces, eventually Black churches provided a variety of supports. They were not only an immediate space of communal resistance that created opportunities for organizing to address the needs of

Black individuals from their first formations to contemporary life, but they also offered a sense of uninterrupted spiritual observance during a period when enslaved Africans were prohibited from speaking or expressing their cultural origins or lost them over generations. Henry (2012) makes critical mention that Black churches not only acted as a fundraising engine that was responsive to the needs of the first refugees—African fugitives, but also offered community-driven education spaces despite American and Canadian anti-Black policies and practices of racial segregation that prevented Black children from accessing public schooling. Societal exclusion through segregation is further discussed in the first section of this chapter of the literature review.

Early Roots of Black Coalitional Resistance

With a total of 50 state-based chapters organized according to respective regional divisions across the United States, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is widely recognized as a—if not *the* most prominent senior Black coalition-based organization. Its emergence is attributed to the Niagara Movement (1905-1910) as the official precursor that set the groundwork of the long-standing Black civil rights organization (Rudwick,1957; Jones, 2016). Notwithstanding the limited scholarship regarding the work and impact of the Niagara Movement, historical and evolving contributions address the undeniably critical role of the Niagara Movement yet fail to recognize that the Niagara Movement is neither the sole, most important, or most influential predecessor to the NAACP. Also unknown and overlooked (Thornbrough, 1961) are countless other Black organizations that were formed across Turtle Island or Canada and the United States. during the 19th century or "the century of resistance" as labelled by Dr. John Henrik Clarke (Boyd, 1998, p.43). While this thesis centers Black organizing across modern-day Canada, Black organized resistance has not been restrictive to specific regions with historical evidence that demonstrates its international reach. Various scholars push the timeline further to uncover the historical efforts of Black organizing groups that were not only more influential but existed as the culminative blueprint for generations of Black organized resistance but no longer exist or were coopted into mainstream contemporary organizations. As such, this section underscores 4 key organizing spaces that were not only central to historical Black resistance in canada, but also effective to the enduring existence of the NAACP, and arguably contributed to contemporary Black diasporic individual and collective resistance. The first section introduces early mutual aid efforts and formalized societies of mobilized enslaved, free, and fugitive African-descended individuals and communities. This is

followed by a contextual understanding of colo(u)red conventions that reintroduced mass Black organized collective resistance with the inaugural and enduring local, national, and transnational resistance against anti-Blackness. The third presents Black women clubs, such as the National Advancement of Colored Women (NACW) which created community-based programs and services consistently using generational mutual aid strategies to connect the needs of Black individuals, families, and local communities on a national and transnational level via coalition efforts. And lastly, the fourth considers the Afro-American League (AAL) later re-envisioned and renamed the Afro-American Council (AAC), which grounded the future and lasting politics of racial integration taken up by the NAACP and an overwhelming number of Black and non-Black organizations today.

Early Mutual Aid Societies: African Indigenous Origins to Black Survival, Resistance, and Coalition Bonds

It is assumed that mutual aid emerged from anarchist-communist theory rooted in seeking autonomous independence from the state (De Loggans, 2021). This assumption however disavows earlier origins of mutual aid. Pre-colonial understandings disprove this whitewashing of anti-colonial praxis demonstrating that "mutual aid is rooted in Black and Indigenous resistance to state violence" (De Loggans, 2021, p.30) across Turtle Island and the greater Abya Yala (North and South America) while also sharing pre-colonial tradition across BIPOC communities (De Loggans, 2021). Mutual aid can be defined as collective-driven practices of resistance and survivals that seek to establish systems of community care. The mobilization of mutual aid societies across the Black Diaspora were specifically "designed to shield the members from the competitive exploitation inherent in market systems, not to teach them how to be efficient exploiters" (Greenbaum,1991, p.97). Mutual aid strategies of resistance were thus originally non-exploitive in nature. The ancestral tradition of mutual aid is therefore inseparable from global anti-Black resistance efforts and the overall ways of life that govern the reciprocal ethos and innate communal relations of African-descended peoples. This tradition therefore predates European colonization, racial capitalization, theft, and the cyclical displacements of Africans via the Atlantic slave trade (De Loggans, 2021). As such, anti-Black resistance including the Black anarchist resistance strategy of mutual aid remains a constant tactic that sustains the survival of peoples of African descent.

Mutual aid can be expressed in several ways. As described earlier in this chapter, prior to antebellum, enslaved Africans—despite their differing origins — "operated as a community within a community" (Shaw,1991, p.12) practicing mutual aid with supportive childcare on plantations, observing spirituality underground, the intentional practice of generational folk tales and songs which contributed to the progressive cultivation of shared identity and group consciousness (Shaw, 1991). Enslaved women combined their agricultural plots, would pool their resources to plant and farm gardens, create burial societies, and take care of widows and children" (Gordon-Nembhard, 2017, as cited in Mochama, 2020). While mutual aid has metamorphosized into a buzz word contemporarily and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, it continues to be practiced across Black Diasporic circles (Mochana, 2020) and the African continent alike. Black organized resistance involves a "historical legacy of collective consciousness and mutual associations" (Shaw, 1991, p.11) since the earliest Black arrivals to Turtle Island. One of the most common mutual aid practices central across African traditions include money pools also known as "*sol* (Haiti), *susu* (Ghana), *box hand* (Guyana), *jama* (Kenya), *hagbad* (Somalia)" whereby money is gathered from each person for the financial support of each person monthly (Mochana, 2020). The ways in which Indigenous African mutual aid strategies were adopted are clear in the emergence of *cabildos* by Afro-Cubans, and *esusu* or *susu,* Yoruba-named rotating credit systems in Jamaica and Trinidad (Greenbaum, 1991). In fact, early Black Diasporic mutual aid societies strongly identified with Africa and being African with almost all the preliminary associations upholding 'African' within the name of their organization: they resembled West African democratic and secret societies that coordinated "economic, social, and political groups" (Harris, 1979, p.613). Similar to the how mutual aid was used as a survival strategy[11] by free and unfree peoples of African descent, the Potlatch ban is exemplar of one of the settler colonial strategies employed to prohibit and penalize Indigenous Peoples particularly the "Haida, Nuxalk, Tlingit, Makah, Tsimshian, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakwa̱kawakw" Peoples and communities across the Northwestern coast of Canada from traditional gift-giving ceremony of Potlatch from 1885 until 1951 (De Loggans, 2021).

Since their early emergences across Turtle Island, mutual aid societies have been referred using various names including as beneficial or benevolent associations, secret societies, and "cooperative associations", as noted by Spencer (1985). Some of the first mutual aid societies

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[11] As cited in Harris (1979), Melville Herskovits referred to mutual aid societies as "African survivals in the New World" (p.611).

were created by peoples of African descent: as such, many founding members spoke one if not multiple African languages as they were born in Africa (Harris 1979; Greenbaum, 1991).

By collecting weekly or monthly fees across membership (Greenbaum, 1991), mutual aid societies acted as insurance and protection offering sick, death, and disability benefits, such as funding and direct supports for orphans and widows; covered burial expenses locating plots navigating racial segregation even in death; and funded social, cultural, and education programs including funding learning for orphans (Browning, 1937; Harris, 1979; Spencer, 1985; Greenbaum, 1991). Cyclical in nature, mutual aid replicated the life cycle "where the aged and infirm are taken care of by the young and healthy" (Greenbaum, 1991, p.97). Today, we see mutual aid coopted and capitalized under the guise of non-profit organizations that still offer sites as "…meeting halls, old age homes, orphanages, hospitals, schools, and housing" (Greenbaum, 1991, p.99).

Learning about early mutual aid associations strengthens our knowledge and understanding of contemporary Black organizing strategies locally, regionally, and internationally. In specific, these readings helped locate the origin of self-help institution building amongst collective free Black peoples, initial Black Diasporic coalition formations, organized efforts to return to Africa as well as pre-Garveyite attempts to create "an independent black nation" (Harris, 1979, p.609) since a majority were born in Africa or their parent/s were (Harris Jr., 1979). It also foreshadows the intensification of Black respectability politics outlined in one of the first Black mutual aid societies' written rules as only respectable Black persons were permitted to participate in early Black mutual aid societies prohibiting members who exhibited alcohol use, suspending "disorderly conduct, and excluded "delinquent members" (Browning, 1937; Harris, 1979). As of 1838, there were 119 Black mutual aid societies (Shaw, 1991). The downfall of formal mutual aid societies, like many future Black organizing groups is credited to financial instability as recognized by Spencer (1985). Rising out of mutual aid efforts were banks, insurance companies, and Black-owned businesses (Harris,1979; Greenbaum, 1991), the national convention movement and fraternal orders (Harris, 1979), and all-Black southern towns in the United States following Reconstruction as Shaw (1991) puts, "were radical and ultimate examples of mutual aid associations" (Shaw, 1991, p. 13). Today, many Black social and cultural associations that seek to serve respective communities of Black Pioneer, African and Caribbean

identities—still with burial grounds, community learning and support for formal education, as continuing priorities of Black organizing.

Colo(u)red Conventions: The First Black Transnational/Continental Coalition

The meeting of Black organizers on September 15th, 1830, in Philadelphia marks the first known large Black community gathering (Lee, 1913; Foreman, 2022) presumably with the inclusion of the region that becomes Canada. After Cincinnati's eight-day "riot of 1829" where 1,000 free Black peoples were hunted and attacked by hundreds of white vigilantes from August 15th-22nd (Foreman, 2021), free Black peoples converged to discuss and plan another forced migration— this time from the United States (Lee, 1913; Foreman, 2022). Out of this conference was the continuation of hundreds of state-based, national, and transnational Colored Conventions across almost every state in the U.S (including Schenectady, New York; Sacramento, California; Cleveland, Ohio; Little Rock, Arkansas; and New Orleans, Louisiana) as well as Canada— namely, Chatham, Ontario (Foreman, 2021, p.21). Emerging from their two-day discussion as free, freed, and fugitive Black persons was the consensus for Black emigration to Canada and opposition to the West African emigration plan by the American Colonization Society (Lee, 1913; Foreman, 2021). Almost 90 years later Marcus Garvey re-envisioned this plan of returning home to Africa (Foreman, 2021)—this will later be discussed as spart of the review of UNIA organizing activities[12] and impacts in Canada. The coalitional nature of colored conventions did not start in 1830. As recognized by Harris (1979), mutual aid societies contributed to preparing future coloured conventions given their former diasporic coalition politics and organizing diasporic knowledge and experience of mutual strategies.

Afro-American League: The First Black National Coalition

Besides the earliest coalition efforts in the form of abolitionist resistance networks ran by enslaved peoples of African descent from the African continent up to and including Turtle Island, a literature review of Black historical organizing finds that the first recorded Black coalition in Turtle Island was the Afro-American League (AAL) that was established by Tim Thomas Fortune in 1887 (Thornbrough, 1961; Justesen 2008). Not only did Fortune identify the siloed

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[12] The full-circle attempt of Black organizing in anti-colonial resistance against European colonization is briefly discussed in the Methodology where UNIA and other Black Diasporic efforts extend to Africa during the Italian occupation of Ethiopia.

nature in early Black organizing, but he also foresaw community gatekeeping and internal violence as a central issue to Black coalition building:

> "all those men who have profited by our disorganization and fattened on our labor by class and corporate legislation, will oppose this Afro-American League movement. [And] they may resort to the coward[ly] argument of violence; but are we to remain forever inactive, the victims . . . ? No, sir. We propose to accomplish our purposes by the peaceful methods of agitation, through the ballot and the courts, but if others use the weapons of violence to combat our peaceful arguments, it is not for us to run away from violence. . . . Attucks, the black patriot— he was no coward! Toussaint L'Ouverture— he was no coward! Nat Turner— he was no coward! . . . . If we have work to do, let us do it. And if there comes violence, let those who oppose our just cause "throw the first stone" (Alexander, 2012, p.27).

While Fortune wanted organizing groups to identify themselves as affiliates with the AAL, other Black organizers wanted to "preserve their local independent and cooperate when they chose on an issue-by-issue basis" (Carle, 2014). This is a critical fissure in organizing interests that remains a contemporary concern that is evident.

As anti-Blackness in the form of lynching was on a rise, "there were calls for the revival for the" AAL in the form of similar objectives and platform, but unlike AAL, the AAC was not able to compare to AAL or align with African Americans at the time (Thornbrough, 1961). Though both Fortune and Washington were both born into slavery, Fortune and Washington held distinct political orientations and responses. The AAL was the first organization to center the rights of African Americans using a vision of racial integration whereas Booker T. Washington used the notion of racial uplift that prioritized vocational training to "assist in the newly freed slaves' placement into paid-wage labor" and avoided challenging Jim Crow (Justesen 2008). As recognized by Carle (2012), Fortune was not an integrationist: he and others advanced that African Americans should cultivate their own communities through class-based democratic coalition change whereas Washington failed to critique the structural issues. As previously noted, the importance and impact of AAL has traditionally been minimized (Alexander, 2012), neglected (Justesen, 2008), or deemed insufficient given its limited existence (Alexander, 2012) across scholarship. Critical studies centering the AAL or the later restructured AAC (Thornbrough, 1961; Justesen, 2008; Alexander, 2012) over the years have however exposed the

ways in which both versions of the organization cumulatively span almost a decade serving as the blueprint to contemporary Black organized resistance employed in the 19th century and maintained thus far (Justesen, 2008; Alexander, 2012). Despite its decline, it is not only clear that the AAL emerged as the first African American civil rights organization, but also that "the program of the NAACP, both in objective and methods, was essentially the program which Fortune had conceived for the AAL twenty years earlier" (Thornbrough, 1961, p.512).

Black Women Clubs: Early Black National Coalitions

Differing claims regarding the emergence of Black women clubs exist across literature. As critiqued by Shaw (1991), several sources identify: racial exclusion from necessities and basic services, the intensification of racial segregation affirmed by Jim Crow legislation, the increase of racial violence, lynching and mob violence, attacks on the character of Black women, and the overall deterioration of race relations as encompassing what Historian Rayford Logan coined as the "nadir"[13] period as impetus for the formation of Black women clubs. While these challenges were key motives for the formation of Black women clubs, Shaw (1991) challenges these statements proposing that organized resistances and mutual aid traditions of African American women preceded both the nadir period as well as the emergence of white women clubs, specifically the General Federation of Women's Clubs, of which African American women organizers and Black women club leaders, such as the NACW, were prevented from taking part or speaking at as discussed in Jones' 1982 work. Rather, as it has also been made clear throughout this thesis, Black individuals and organized groups have a long history of "self-help, institution-building and strong organization to which Black women have made continuous contributions" (Lerner, 1974, p.159).

Akin to Black mutual aid societies, Black women clubs were responsive to the prohibited access of Black peoples from services. They created culturally safe environments that served as their own community-based institutions in the form of learning centres, such as nursery schools, kindergarten, and daycares as well as care centres like orphanages, senior homes (Lerner, 1974; Shaw, 1991) amid racial violence and exclusion by the state. Black women clubs also created alternative shelters for incarcerated Black youth (Kendrick, 1954; Shaw, 1991), public health centres and hospitals financing and sustaining their services (Shaw, 1991), and mentorship and

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[13] The "nadir of the Negro, the lowest point of [B]lack civilization…[as defined by] C.Vann Woodward took place from 1890s-1920s (Jones, 1982, p.20).

leadership training for young girls to succeed into the NACW (Kendrick, 1954). Undoubtedly, Black women clubs existed as extensions or continuations of mutual aid or benevolent societies (Shaw, 1991), of which they equally took upon themselves to create, coalesce, and action. Taken together, these studies clarify that while Black women clubs were not strictly feminist advocacy groups, but rather they organized with gender oppression as their primary concern (Jones, 1982). As autonomous political sites of resistance, they co-created local solutions for their Black communities for the improvement of all members of Black community (Jones, 1982; Shaw, 1991). Much like the AAL and its eventual restructured organization as the AAC, the impact of Black women clubs is overlooked and undervalued (Lerner, 1974); yet even the African American Council (AAC) depended on the work of Black women clubs, such as the National (NACW) "to address social welfare concerns" (Carle, 2014). As realized in the sections above, "…the work of organized black women before the formation of the NACW was no different from the activities of club women after the creation of the NACW…the founding of the NACW did not mark the beginning of the important organized work of black women against racism, sexism, and their efforts" (Shaw, 1991, p.11). Black women clubs were also coalitional in nature. As noted by Shaw (1991), 19-20th century club members were mostly recent migrants—thus, the diverse geographic origins of the residents now meant that "the community" was no longer local; it had national roots. And so, to effectively address the concerns of the members, the club network and many club activities became national" (Shaw, 1991, p.17).

Building Regional to International Black Coalitions

Black organizing has never been limited to a particular location. There are many cases where a broader coalitional politics has been applied. Below are studies of regional to international Black coalitional organizing that focus on the international influence of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), Black labour organizing through the Brotherhood of Sleeping Carters (BSCP), and the Canadian League for the Advancement of Colored People (CLACP).

UNIA: Building a Global Black/African Coalitional Resistance

Widely referred to as UNIA, the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League (UNIA-ACL) was founded by Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) in 1914 in Kingston, Jamaica (Benjamin, 2008; Marano, 2018). With quick success as one of the fasting growing Black global movements, UNIA developed over 30 branches worldwide gaining over 2 million members within its first year after its headquarters moved to the epicenter of Black culture

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and community, Harlem, New York (Benjamin, 2008). Over the years, UNIA was active across Turtle Island (including so-called Latin America with approximately 50 divisions in Cuba alone) as well as the continents now referred to as South America and Africa (Austin, 2018). In what follows, this section provides an overview of: the historical and continued impact of UNIA organizing across 'Canada', the UNIA movement internationally, and centers the ways in which UNIA emerged as locally driven divisions that cultivated community-based opportunities for Black survivals during the Jim Crow era that straddled both sides of the colonially imposed Canada-U.S. border.

The organizing philosophy of UNIA held a two-pronged approach. While it foundationally prioritized the empowerment of the global Diaspora of African descent, it also proposed a refashioned "Back-to-Africa" (Marano, 2018) project that claimed to offer the final solution to anti-Black racism continually experienced by African-descended peoples. Garvey's messages with concern and effort to ignite Black empowerment was both revolutionary and controversial to its period of emergence. This is especially relevant bearing in mind that Black organizing during the 19th century was dominated by a vision of racial uplift that was limited to Booker T. Washington's conservative and accommodationist approaches that were grounded in individual hard work, Christian principle and practice (as cited in Laing, 2009, Marano, 2018), and strategy of political negotiation for the patient arrival of African American civil rights. Garvey was still very much inspired by the life and resulting philosophies of Washington, as was the case after his reading of Washington's autobiography *Up from Slavery* (Marano, 2018). Only part of Garvey's response to anti-Black racism and oppression is agreeable with Washington's solution to racial disenfranchisement experienced by African Americans. Unlike Garvey and his perspective of relational Black identity, not only did Washington see himself as American distancing himself from African culture and identity (Marano, 2018), but he was also an integrationist who saw his life and Black collective futures as dependent on the authority, acceptance, and cooperation of white settler colonialism for Black liberation.

Where Garvey's UNIA movement, Washington's leadership of African Americans, and African American leaders who opposed Washington (such as Du Bois) diverge is Garvey's realization that the sole solution to the global condition of anti-Black racism is the emigration of African-descended peoples from the 'Americas' to a newly imposed Black nation-state in Africa. As Zumoff (2012) describes, to Garvey, the United States was "the white man's country" (p.63);

he therefore only saw "that [B]lack freedom was possible outside of the United States" (p.63). And thus, while Garvey is precise in his conclusion of the colonial project of the U.S as never serving the true liberation of African-descended peoples, he failed to see the ways in which the re/carving of a state in Africa was a neocolonial in nature and simply a cooption of settler colonialism taught by European colonialism.

What Garveyites, Washingtonians or gradualists, and supporters of Du Bios' then-radical attempt of obtaining constitutional African American civil rights is that the settler colonial state, either the U.S or Canada, has never afforded Black life on either side of their border out of a commitment for a moral cause postbellum or in recognition of the cyclical oppression of Black bodies. Both settler colonial states have maintained the need for Black bodies for purposes of labour via racial capitalism and have therefore coopted their prior movements of Black resistance and survival for the mass settlement of Indigenous land. There is a dearth of research concerning the emergence and movement work of UNIA across the United States. As recognized by Marano (2008) however, literature regarding the historical and continual impact of UNIA across Canada continues to be minimized and understudied. Looking back at the work of UNIA divisions across Canada offers how diasporic Black communities organized on local terms despite the international nature of UNIA and sheds light to the ways UNIA divisions effectively functioned as regional coalitions.

After years of suppression, hypersurveillance, and attacks by the 'U.S' state and opposing African American leadership towards Garvey and his movement, Garvey was convicted by the FBI in 1922 (Laing, 1976), detained for two years in Atlanta (Boyd, 2015), then deported for mail fraud by way of New Orleans, Louisiana back to Jamaica in 1927 (Boyd, 2015; Marano, 2018). It is at this juncture that UNIA shifted its focus to Canada prioritizing it as the central site for raising consciousness through local, regional, and transnational convergence hosting UNIA's 1936 and 1937 national and international conferences in Toronto (Marano, 2018). Despite making up a smaller diasporic population in Canada compared to the United States, UNIA alerted the consciousness of Blacks across Canada are connecting them with the African Diaspora on a global scale. UNIA membership across 'Canada' was evidently essential to the organization and especially to the organization's survival after Garvey's death (Marano, 2018) in 1940.

Black Radical Labour Organizing: OSCP and BSCP

As mentioned in our review of UNIA organizing, the settler colony has always needed, imported, and depended on Black labour for the advancement of its settler colonial project. While

experiences of Black Diasporic labour have varied across the timeline of Black migrations until current, without the parallel continuum of Black resistances to racial capitalist oppression since the forced importation of enslaved peoples of African descent or Black labour, any gains would not have been possible. A closer look at Black labour organizing addresses the ways in which Black resistances were successful through continued coalesced action. Below the ways in which Black radical labour organizing via the formation of the Order of the Sleeping Car Porters (OSCB) and introduction of the Brotherhood Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) has been practiced in coalitional and cross-bordered ways is discussed. Not only was their anti-Black labour resistance to racial segregation, exclusion, and the daily terror experienced by Black workers connected across Canada and the United States, Black labour organizing spaces raised individual and collective racial, political, and social consciousness amongst Black persons both locally and internationally. Black resistance to unequal and restrictive work opportunities during the early 1900s created collectivized avenues for labour rights and protection through Black unions. The period of World War I (1914-1918) and II (1939-1945) specifically presented a catalytic shift for Black organizing in Canada and the United States. Black Veterans, who fought for either Canada or the United States with the hope of gaining civil rights for Black peoples collectively, resumed Black life post-service to racial segregation (Zamalin, 2019). Though more limited in the case of 'Canada' (Calliste, 1987), the past several decades offer scholarship (Calliste, 1995, Reynolds, 2016; Mathieu, 2010; Foster, 2019) that attempt to uncover Black labour organizing history, such as the cross-border experiences and resistance of Black sleeping car porters in Canada and the United States.

When the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) created the Pullman sleeping car and produced the role of porters to Canada in 1881 (Reynolds, 2016), they reinforced the neocolonial perception and treatment of Black men as inferior through strictly recruiting and employing Black men to serving whites across the settler colonies of Canada and the United States. The role of sleeping car porters reinstated "gendered and racialized mobile beau ideal in which rich, civilized white men were served by Black men doing women's work, thereby reinforcing Black manhood's incompleteness" (Mathieu, 2010; as cited in Reynolds, 2016, p.135). Hence, the creation of the role of porters served as an extension of the pre-antebellum initiated by the transatlantic slave trade and "a reminder of the race relations of the old south, which was based on the master and slave relationship" (Reynolds, 2016, p.135). Related to the experiences of

enslaved peoples of African descent, it's important to specify that Black porters were generally African Descendants of Slaves (ADOS) with generational link to serving white people. Their role as Black porters extended this labour as they also served white people with housekeeping duties such as making their beds, cleaning the sleeping car and the passenger's clothing and shoes, serving food, entertaining passenger's children, and any other passenger's desires (Reynolds, 2016). Of parallel experience to enslaved persons of African descent, Black porters were referred to as 'George' after the company owner, George Pullman which sustained the slavery practice of renaming enslaved persons after their enslaver despite their resistances by making their names visible for passengers (Allen, 2015).

Despite and following the perpetual suppressions of Black union formations with consequences such as the termination of union leaders in Canada, the first Black union in 'North America' was successfully established as the Order of Sleeping Car Porters (OSCP) in 1917 (Foster, 2019; Moser, 2021). As solidified in their constitution, Black workers were prevented from joining the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE) before 1919 when the OSCP was permitted as an auxiliary organization yet practices of racial discrimination were continued and supported in policy (Calliste, 1987; Hunt & Rayside, 2007). After Black porters in 'Canada' approached the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) founder, A. Philip Randolph in 1925 (Allen, 2015; Foster, 2019), Black porters of the CPR were eventually independently unionized by the American-based Black union in 1952 with their first agreement formed in 1945 (Hunt & Rayside, 2007). Recruitment efforts were successfully hosted in Toronto and Montreal with up to 1,000 in attendance (Foster, 2019) eventually becoming the first national and international Black union which also welcomed and supported Mexican and Filipino porters (Allen, 2015).

An even lesser focus is on the key involvement of Black women, who formed the Ladies' Auxiliary of BSCP. The plethora of their work included outreach for union membership, mobilizing membership and Black community for direct actions, resource mobilization, and political education. Montreal's Ladies' Auxiliary of BSCP division formed "the first BSCP credit union…" which "help[ed] members adjust to economic crisis through saving plans and budgeting" (Nembhard, 2014, p.156). In addition to raising funds, they were the main engine that secretly recruit other porters through mobilizing the wives of Black porters (Pfeffer, 1995). Jessica Gordon Nembhard (2014) notes that for over 20 years the International BSCP was a

proponent of cooperatives: the work of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the BSCP specifically delivered cooperative-centered consumer and business education.

Overall, BSCP advocated for Black labour rights and employment equity legislation, improved and safer work conditions, such as "shorter work week, greater job security, and better pay" (Zamalin, 2019, p.100). In effect, not only "increased living standards of thousands of black families…" (Cha-Jua,1998, p.20), the BSCP "transformed black economic vulnerability into a form of power" (Zamalin, 2019, p.101). As documented by (Hunt & Rayside, 2007), Panitch and Swartz acknowledge that the legislative advancements gained by Black porters that are afforded to all peoples was a direct response to the labour resistance of the Black union organizing. Despite the resistance efforts of the OSCP and BSCP for Black civil rights in the Jim Crow era that plagued Canada and the United States since the early 1900s, "the practice of Jim Crow in the Canadian railways did not end until the 1960s" (Reynolds, 2016, p.142). Black peoples were, in fac, prevented access to "higher-paying skilled jobs such as engineering and conducting" until the 1960s (Reynolds, 2016, p.157).

Civil Rights Movement in Canada

A plethora of efforts by peoples of African descent were engaged during the civil rights era, known as the period between the 1950s and 1960s. The centralized focus on figureheads, such as Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., however, overlook the many individual resistances, collectivized organizing labour and accomplishments of Black community organizers and activists prior to, during the 50s and 60s, and post-movement who's individual and united labour contributed to the daily and collective survivals of Black peoples—in effect, constituting Black civil rights with the attempt of making Black life more survivable. Without their relentless efforts, Parks and King's legacies would also not have been. Specific to this thesis' study, a fixation on mirroring King-inspired resistance denies Black radical organizing strategies and overall politic that was central to local, regional, and international resistances prior to, during, and after the movement. In practice, it also motivates the replication of organizing praxis predicated on neoliberalism that necessitates hierarchical politics and respectability politics that are reproduced through sexist, gendered and misogynist, colourist and racist, and classist exclusion or conformity—essentially non-conforming identities outside the scope of white settler colonial ideals. This is echoed more recently during the current Black Lives Matter (BLM) era by Oprah Winfrey, who critiques BLM in comparison with Southern organizing led by King during

the 60s as captured in *Selma,* as lacking "…some type of leadership to come out of this to say: …This is what we want…. This is what has to change. And these are the steps that we need to take to make these changes" (McDonald, 2016, p.149). So, what can we learn from a critical study of the making of social movement leaders, such as Kings and Parks of the African American civil rights movement?

Rosa Parks is distinctively renowned as "the Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" (Wilson, 2005, p.300; Schwartz, 2009, p.134). Despite this continued recognition she "was not the only person, not even the central person in the civil rights movement" (Loeb, 2005) as referenced by Schwartz (2009). Countless individual and collective resistance efforts including in opposition to racially segregated transportation precede Rosa Parks' incident of 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, which officially marked the beginning of the African American civil rights movement (1955-1968).

Anti-racist resistance through legal reform did not start during the civil rights movement's prime of the 50s and 60s. But rather, attempts for the individual and collective freedom of enslaved Black persons and the overall abolition of slavery were conducted through antislavery and civil rights petitions by countless enslaved Black persons during Antebellum America (1832-1860). In essence, petitions acted as the first "instrument of law and justice and later as a tool of organization, advocacy, and legislative pressure" (Carpenter, 2021, p.166). Even with limited literature regarding their individual and collective resistances, it is clear that "enslaved Blacks learned how to use the courtroom to put existing law to use and assert their rights" (Konig, 2022, p.147-148). Felix, petitioned for emancipation as early as 1773 proposing that "freeing industrious Black people would…. provide a supply of labor for tasks and taxes" which was followed by a petition by three other enslaved individuals who requested their emigration to Africa from Massachusetts as free persons; together, the four called for the ultimate abolition of slavery (Carpenter, 2021, p.167). Unlike modern requests of state-recognized annual holidays, celebrations, and awards, petitions for emancipation and returns to Africa were critical and radical attempts at freedom that risked Black survival; VanderVelde raises that "[i]n suing for freedom, the slave defies his or her master…" (Konig, 2022, p.166).Contradictory to widespread misinformation that perpetuate media, education and scholarship, Black community organizing through legal reform, comparable to the United States occurred since the early 1900s with heightened efforts during the 50s and 60s as a renewed avenue towards anti-racist social change.

While not as well-known as early individuals, such as Rosa Parks or Dr. MLK Jr., and collective efforts, like the NAACP, in the United States, there were similar protest attempts and successes made by Black peoples across Canada during the early 1900s. Individual resistance to anti-Blackness across Canada include: Amistad Pride Taylor, a Toronto-based barber fought a skating rink in 1906 (Brown 2020); Charles Daniels, a railway porter in Calgary, Alberta, who filed against a segregated movie theatre in 1914 (Mohamed 2018; Ward 2018) followed by Fred Christie in 1936, who pushed his legal case to the Supreme Court (Moser, 2021). The increasingly known Viola Desmond (Davis prior to her marriage) was a hairdresser who was physically assaulted and arrested after resisting racial segregation in a Nova Scotia movie theatre in 1946 (Moser, 2021).

Despite the depth of Black radical thought and action that continue to sustain generations of African-descended peoples globally, organized efforts towards racial integration through claims of institutional change and superficial state recognition have played a strong role. On the one hand, these attempts perpetually redirect Black organized resistance towards maintaining the status quo and hierarchical order to reinforce settler colonial standards grounded on cis-heteronormativity and white supremacy driven by racial capitalism. On the other, it distorts essential individual and collective material conditions of Black life of incessant articulation by Black persons and communities that are not simply "better" or "improved", but liberatory in nature, and hence, non-negotiable. Community attempts at integration within the settler state is best described as a "politics of recognition" by Dene scholar, Glen Coulthard (2014), who critiques political engagements based on discussion, negotiation, and compromise enacted by the settler colonial state of Canada towards Indigenous Peoples and Nations effectively denying projects of sovereignty and meaningful reconciliation driven by Nation-Nation relations. Rooted in the aftermath of nationalism that have not liberated post-colonial nations, these strategies of coloniality have succeeded both Black diasporic migrations and become staple strategies of settlement since the proclaimed discovery of the New World. This is evident across peoples of African descent who seek political recognition from the settler colonial state as if "a seat at the table" is strategically practical—or even possible—for the true liberation of Black diasporic peoples.

Niagara Movement

While not as well-known as early individual and collective civil rights efforts of the United States, such as the Niagara Movement which later became the National Advancement for National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP), there were similar attempts and successes made by Blacks across settler colonial Canada during the early 1900s despite the exclusion from Black organizing they experienced.

Though Black Canadians were not permitted to join Black organizing of the Niagara Movement that re/emerged as the NAACP, its eventual growth into local chapters, such as the Nova Scotia Advancement for African Canadians (NSAACP)[14] emerging in 1945 (Moser, 2021) created opportunities for Black Canadians in Nova Scotia to collectivize against anti-Black racism. Their organized efforts supported Desmond's case prompt[ing] the formation of a legal defence fund…" (Moser, 2021, p.312) which was reflected nine years later during Parks' case with Montgomery's NAACP's chosen strategy of legalism in the mid-1950s though strategies of legal defence were used prior to both cases as well as the formation of the NAACP as explained earlier in this chapter.

The Niagara Movement arose as a radical response to Washington's leadership that was based on accommodation strategy and policy (Jones; Thoms & Aquino, 2005) and conservativism that was ignited from his 1895 speech, the "Atlanta Compromise" (Thoms & Aquino, 2005). After experiencing racial exclusion from prospective venues in Buffalo (Walcott, 2008; Mugoli, 2020), their first conference in 1905 hosted 29 Black men in Fort Erie, Ontario from July 11th 13th and resulted in the group's formation (Thomas & Aquino, 2005). Black peoples in Canada, however, were prevented from joining this inaugural meeting to mobilize against anti-Black racism despite also being born in the United States or directly descending from enslaved African Americans as they assumed that Blacks in Canada did not experience racial discrimination (Walcott, 2008). Considering the eventual growth of affiliated branches that developed[15] in Canada, such as the CLACP and the NSAACP discussed in the upcoming section, this early start would have been an opportunity for Black transnational organizing across the two settler colonial states.

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[14] NSAACP was successful in two cases: Desmond's case and the Children's Hospital, which prevented (Moser, 2021, p.40).
[15] An indirect development also includes the Council for the Advancement of African Canadians which operates in Edmonton and taken inspiration from the name but exists as the "Africa Centre".

CLACP: Black Regional Coalescing Efforts in Canada

Part and parcel to the critical labour resistances by Black porters was the development of the Canadian League/Association for the Advancement of Colored People (CLAP). After being approached by Velmer Coward (King), the secretary-treasurer of Winnipeg's BSCP chapter at the time, BSCP International's co-founder and Vice President of the National Advancement for Colored People (NAACP), A. Phillip Randolph aided Black peoples in forming the CLACP in Montreal (Calliste, 1995;) in 1942 (Marano, 2018; Foster. 2019).

The CLACP's main office was in Calgary (Foster, 2019) with divisions in 'Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver' (Foster, 2019, p.147). Calliste (Spring 1995) recognizes that the creation of CLACP as a NAACP chapter that was created by Black peoples to cultivate a shared space for civil rights action in Montreal but differentiates that CLACP divisions of Calgary and Vancouver became the AAACP and the BCAACP, respectively the Alberta and British Columbia Association for Colored People. Alternative arguments gathered in Marano's (2018) dissertation argue that the AAACP, similar to the Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NSAACP) was an independent organization and therefore unattached from CLACP. Parallel to the historical and contemporary focus of the NAACP, the AAACP was also a multi-racial organization that centered systemic issues encountered across education funding scholarships, inaccess to housing and employment, and addressing the segregation of public spaces including pools and halls (Marano, 2018).

Not only was CLACP structured as a national organization that evidently coalesced locales across 'Canada' as discussed above, but there were also opportunities of important cross-bordered coalition relationships since its establishment. For instance, the CLACP and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) built an alliance in 1926 that collaboratively protested the removal and substitution of Canadian National Railway (CNR) Black waiters with white men (Marano, 2018) and persistent "threat of replacement labor […] always lurking around the corner" (Zamalin, 2019, p.100).As recognized by Calliste (January, 1995), "prior to the 1950s, Blacks and other minorities did not have the power to pressure governments to enact and enforce strong antidiscrimination legislation in employment" (p.298).When Randolph called for the first March on Washington in 1941, the envisioned protest resulted in the enforcement of Executive Orders 8802 and 9346 (Cha-Jua, 1998) by then United States President Roosevelt (Calliste, Spring 1995; Cha-Jua, 1998). These legislative actions increased Black employment in

the U.S as well as formed the first regulatory board, FEPC tasked to address discriminatory hiring (Calliste, Spring 1995; Cha-Jua, 1998). Though these gains did not outline or action penalties, corrective action, or accountable measures for breaches (Calliste, Spring 1995) in the case of America, both these developments positively impacted the introduction of Fair employment Practices (FEP) legislation in Canada (Calliste, 1995). Though their work declined in the 1960s (Marano, 2018), the coalitional and cross-border organizing of BSCP and CLACP led to the adoption of critical employment legislation (Calliste, 1995).

Black Power Movement in Canada

While the Black Power era of 1968 is known for its radical politics and organized resistance, the Black Power movement is not responsible for the birth of Black radical thought and action across Turtle Island. With respect to the development of Black radicalism in Canada, this section proposes two main causes. On the one hand, it evident that the re-emergence and intensification of Black radical organizing during this period was undeniably due to the continual impact of Black political organizing in the United States. At the same time however, early and surviving Black communities across Canada had prior radical roots that were locally ingrained in daily Black life and resistance.

Local Black communities organized in shared principle with Black radical praxis and the American-based Black Panther Party (BPP) before the growing shift to Black Power in Canada during the late 1960s. Self-determined to survive, they created spaces for Black community to access their basic needs while developing self-reliant social systems and structures that served Black community despite the state making local services inaccessible As reflected by Austin (2007), even though "Canada is not the first place that comes to mind in association with Black Power" (p.516), the self-determination and self-reliance of Black communities are evident characteristics. Most notably, in the historic Atlantic or Nova Scotia, Black individuals forged communal relationships that relied on each other as kin despite the state's perpetual efforts to forcibly displace Black Indigenous communities in the city of Halifax. By covering Black Power movements in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Montreal, Quebec, this section offers a contextual background to the early formations of Black Power movement across Canada emerging the late 1960s.

Black Power in 1968 Montreal

If one considers the extensive history of student protest across Canada (Austin, 2009), it should be no surprise that three student-driven political events based in Montreal led to the transition towards Black Power in the late 1960s: the Conference Committee on West Indian Affairs (later known as the Caribbean Conference Committee (CCC) founded in 1965 followed by the Sir George Williams Affairs and the Congress for Black Writers in 1968. It was these four key events during the late 1960s that led Black Diasporic peoples especially across the Atlantic settler colonies at the time towards Black radical thought and action and offered timeless lessons and advanced local, regional, and international Black resistance.

Caribbean Conference Committee (CCC)

Formed in 1965 by a group of Caribbean students who recently migrated to Montreal, the political work of the Caribbean Conference Committee (CCC) was initially started to discuss and address "the social, economic, and political challenges facing Caribbean societies" (Hastings, 2022, p.203). Primarily driven by the vision of gaining financial resources and advancing their education to serve their Caribbean places of origin upon their return (Austin, 2007), this work started as a temporary vehicle[16] of political activism that connected Caribbean migrants to back home. For two consecutive years, the CCC coordinated conferences and social gatherings that brought many leading Caribbean intellectuals, thinkers, and artists to Montreal (Austin, 2018; Hastings, 2022). For instance, political theorist and historian, C.L.R. James, provided support and mentorship in the form of organizer praxis development and community education facilitation to engage deeper understandings and critiques of regional and international political organizing across race, class, gender, and other identity lines (2018). Together, this partnership not only contributed to the creation of the "first socialist political vision for African-descended people in the Caribbean" (2009), but also to the continued Black radical tradition that has been foundational to "…rebellious slaves who established autonomous settlements in the Caribbean and other parts of the Americas" (Austin, 2018, p.8). The 60s marked the mass migration and eventual settlement of thousands of Caribbean students, domestic workers, and other labourers, such as those who worked on the railroads, to cities, such as what are now Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and others (Austin, 2007, 2009).

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[16] At times working in alignment with the CCC, the creation of an academic-based group known as the New World which now exists as "the *New World Quarterly* remains one of the finest social, economic, and cultural journals that has ever been produced in the Caribbean or Latin America" (Austin, 2007, 518).

Black Writer's Congress

October of 1968 proved to be a pivotal moment for Black organizing across Turtle Island. Inspired by the Black Power Movement taking place in the United States, Black Canadians and Caribbean migrants regrouped in 1968 with a renewed focus on Blacks located in what is now Canada as the Canadian Conference Committee (Austin, 2007; Hastings, 2022) as opposed to matters occurring in the Caribbean. When the Canadian Conference Committee (CCC) held a gathering on October 4th – 6th regarding the "Problems of Involvement in the Canadian Society with Reference to the Black Peoples", it resulted in the collective call for education and employment support for Black folk by Black professionals, a focused study on Black civil rights in Canada by the Royal Commission, and the creation of a Black national organization that served the needs of Black peoples across the settler colonial state (Austin, 2018). Days following the CCC's conference, Black Canadian and Caribbean students from McGill and Sir George William (now Concordia University) with the inclusion of former CCC members and local Black community members—held another conference, the 3rd Congress[17] of Black Writers: Towards The Second Emancipation, The Dynamics of Black Liberation[18] from October 11th- 14th at McGill University (Austin, 2007; Calliste, year; Hastings, 2022). Dedicated to the late Malcolm X (1925-1965) and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), this four-day conference was a modern radicalizing agent that brought C.L.R James (1901-1989), Stokley Carmichael/later Kwame Ture (1941-1998) and Walter Rodney (1942-1980), amongst others (Calliste, 1995) to Montreal. As regarded by co-chair and later president of Trinidad, Rosie Douglas, not only did these two political events signify a recentered focus from the Caribbean to Canada, but also a movement "from Caribbean nationalism to "black consciousness" (Austin, 2007, p.522).

Learning from SGWA

Nearly three months following the conference held by the Caribbean Conference Committee and the Congress for Black Writers, Black students at Sir George Williams University (which became Concordia University as of 1974 (Enos, 2019) protested experiences of racial discrimination by their biology professor, Perry Anderson (Austin, 2007; Majekodunmi, 2016; Hastings, 2022).Though the protest that eventually occupied the ninth floor of the university took place

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[17] The 3rd Congress for Black Writers was first proposed by Raymond Watts as an extension or as following the First and Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists (in Paris, 1956 and 1959, Rome) that also brought together notary Black thinkers, such as Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, and others from what is now Africa, the Caribbean, and the United States (Austin, 2018).
[18] Also known as "Congrès des écrivains noires: Vers la seconde émancipation—dynamique de la libération noire" (Calliste, 1995).

from January 27th, 1969, to February 11th, 1969, the complaints raised were not an isolated issue nor a random incitement as was largely documented by the press at the time. Rather, the six Black student complainants raise issues of racism years prior—during their "academic year of 1966-1967"— with administration finally meeting with students in April of 1968 (John, 2019).It is thus clear that the student experiences of anti-Black racism were a deep-rooted issue attached so broader systemic experiences of displacement and exclusion by Black peoples (Enos, 2019). This meeting with the university's administration resulted in students being told that they blamed their professor for their inability to handle the learning material—yet, five out of six of the students later achieved either one or more Masters degrees, their Ph.D. or specialized career pathway, such as law degrees (John, 2019). Press (John, 2019) at the time and scholarship (Austin, 2007) depict/ed the occupation as Black-incited violence (Hastings, 2022) necessitating state-driven police force.

Human Rights Conference in Nova Scotia.

Simultaneous and comparable to Black anti-racist organizing during Montreal's 50s and 60s, the late Burnley Jones, known as Rocky (1941-2013) was central to the re/emergence of Black consciousness in Halifax, Nova Scotia as well Black history in Canada and its Civil Rights Movement (Jones, 2013 as recognized by Lawrence Hill. Rocky's anti-racist activism began in 1965 alongside his first wife, Joan, after witnessing white protesters in so-called Toronto demonstrating for Black voter rights in Alabama (Jones, 2013). While Rocky was more public and thus became more well-known for his efforts across literature, Joan's efforts though ""behind-the-scenes" similar to the case of Black women in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States outlined in the previous section, were as essential to their often joint anti-racist resistance.

Unique to his co-organizers from Friends of SNCC, Rocky's investment in racial justice was not fixated on issues of the United States. He did not see anti-Black racism and its resulting structure of racial segregation via the ascension of Jim Crow—though not formally legislated in Canada (Moser, 2021)—as experienced more severely by Black peoples in the United States in comparison to Canada. Alternatively, Rocky saw instant points of connection across borders between Blacks in the United States and Black Indigenous life back home in Nova Scotia. This led to several travels to the Southern United States where Rocky developed organizing relations critical to strengthening understandings of anti-Black racism from African Americans (Jones,

2013), which awoke the importance of local and cross-border Black organizing early in his organizing. As part of Friends of SNCC however, his initial organizing centered racial integration, the assurance of multiculturalism, and multi-racial coalition organizing (Jones, 2013) disavowing the ways in which anti-Blackness operated as a global colonial structure experienced across borders both relatedly and distinctly as opposed to within the settler colonial confines of America. Building a relational politics from his understanding of Black lived experiences led him to propose Black coalitional resistance across borders through the creation of an official SNCC chapter in Nova Scotia as opposed to a dedicated resistance for anti-Black racism in the US. Despite serving as a central Black civil rights activist who's efforts as the "Canada's Own Stokely Carmichael" (Jones, 2013) raised financial resources for the American civil rights movement, this proposal by Rocky was rejected given the concern and refusal of "diverting money from the movement in the South to send it to Canada" by Jim Forman who further argued that "[t]here is no comparison to the struggle that people are having in the Black belt, trying to vote, being beat up, being killed and murdered, and you are trying to integrate some place in Canada… " (Jones, 2013, Location No.414).

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Legacies of Black Power Organizing in Canada

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Congress of Black Women of Canada

Comparable to the Combahee River Collective's organizing in the United States, the Congress of Black Women of Canada (CBWC) was critical to advancing Black radical feminism in Canada. Initially created as the Canadian Negro Women's Club created in 1951 by Black women in Toronto. The CBWC pushed their work further in their local work by addressing racialization, police brutality, class and economic exploitation, and Queer politics and inclusion. Defined by Mills (2015) as a social movement, the Congress of Black Women organized conferences led by Black women in "Toronto (1973), Montreal (1974), Halifax (1976), Windsor (1977), Winnipeg (1980), and Edmonton (1982) was the mechanism or vehicle for mobilizing Black women in Canada" (Mills, 2015, p.416). Black conferences, like early Black conventions, played a strong role in coalescing Black women organizers through the CBWC. Black women created these spaces not only because of the continual void that existed in white women spaces, but because of the persistent erasure of their racialized, gendered, and classist experiences as written by the Combahee River Collective (1977) and in Agnew's 1993 work (Mills, 2015). Regionally, they continued to address persistent anti-Black racism and police brutality, such as their organized

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response to the August 1979 lynching of Jamaican-Canadian, Albert Johnson in his Toronto home by police (Mills, 2015).Their focus on eliminating intersectional oppressions experienced by Black peoples ranged from mobilizing with other women groups to advocate for pay equity legislation based on fair wages and non-discriminatory employment opportunities and challenging heterosexuality by being queer/lesbian positive influencing the recognition of sexual orientation in Manitoba's Human Rights legislation (Mills, 2015). They contextualized their advocacy and resistance across international lines such as in pressuring sanctions against the apartheid state of South Africa (Mills, 2017). Part of their coalitional nature included their intention to work with Indigenous women and creating a coalition with Quebec Native Women's Council (Mills, 2015). The CBWC was therefore critical to Black radical feminist action in what is now Canada as Combahee River Collective was in America.

The National Black Coalition of Canada

The National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC) was formed in 1969 following the computer center occupation at Sir George William University (now Concordia University) in Montreal (Walker, 2014). This was however, not without the interference of siloism. As observed in the prior outlined case of the Caribbean Conference Committee (CCC)'s Black student organizing in Montreal and observed by Rocky (Jones, 2013): newly arrived Black peoples hold political interest in issues within their native land back home while the organizing of generationally settled Blacks is supportive of all Blacks thriving. Re-iterating one of the research participants' experiences during the formation of NBCC, the first secretary of NBCC shared that during the first meeting:

> "...I called them hypocrites because they weren't planning to go back, and they thought they could solve the problems in the Caribbean by remote control. But, 2 years ago, 10 years ago, 15 years before they came here are not the same problems they are having at the moment. That was when we decided that we should have a Black organization in Canada that would look after the problems of Blacks in Canada, who intended to live here" (Expert Interview).

The NBCC was a coalition of 28 Black organizations including church groups, cultural, athletic, community development, and political groups and the first national civil rights organization in Canada that attempted to address the social, economic, and political barriers of the Black

community (Majekodonunmi, 2016). Today, NBCC only exists in Edmonton, Alberta in its original form and renamed in Montreal, Quebec.

Black Radical Congress

With over 2,000 Black individuals in attendance at their conference in 1998, the Black Radical Congress (BRC), pronounced "brick", united the Black left over Junteenth weekend (June 19th - 21st) (Fletcher Jr. & Rogers, 2014; Cha-Jua, 2015; Lusane, 2015). The timing of the gathering alone was significant as it was held during the annual celebration of the end of slavery in the so-called United States (Cotham, 2021) which commemorates "General Order No.3", an order released in Galveston, Texas, which recognized that "all slaves are free" (Cotham, 2021). The meeting "of the original five" (Fletcher Jr. & Rogers, 2014, p.86), African American Studies and Library Science scholar, Abdul Alkalimat; Historians, Barbara Ransby and Manning Marable; Intellectual and activist Bill Fletcher Jr.; Anthropologist, Leith Mulling in 1996 who co-founded BRC, sparked a revival of Black radicalism (Cha-Jua, 2015). Prior to their joint organizing, co-founder, Fletcher and Rogers (2014) pinpointed two events during 1995 that were responsible for the formation of BRC: the Pan-African Congress in Manchester, Britain where discussions for a united Black Left started and concerns regarding the Nation of Islam (NOI) were shared and their collective meeting in February 1997 (p.87). Despite being diverse in political orientation, BRC co-founders united around the need for change through the creation of a Black liberation agenda; this was signed and supported by one hundred community activists, feminists, labour organizers, youth and student leaders, intellectuals and scholars, artists, lesbian and gay leaders, seniors, professionals, and others (Lusane, 2015).

Among many critical topics affecting Black diasporic peoples and communities, the conference, "The Black Radical Congress: Setting A Black Radical Agenda for the 21st Century" addressed intergenerational gaps, coalition work, youth and community organizing and the role of the church; prison-industrial complex and political prisoners; welfare reform, economic justice, and reparations; Lesbian and Gay rights; education Black studies, and more (Lusane, 2015). This gathering coalesced "community activists, students, youth, workers, farmers, activist-intellectuals, and cultural workers" (Cha-Jua, 2015) from "Barbados, Canada, Cape Verde, Cuba, Dominica, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Korea, Nigeria, Panama, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Trinidad, and Vietnam" (Lusane, year) at the University of Illinois in Chicago. Out of this conference was an 11-point policy agenda announced in 1998 on August 12th by a coalition of the

following civil rights organizations, such as: the National Association of African Americans (NAACP), Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Urban League, National Organization for Women, National Council of Negro Women, , and others (Lusane, 2015).

Contemporary Black Resistance: Black Lives Matter

When historicized, a comprehensive analysis of Black historical organizing reveals that Black Lives Matter (BLM) did not unfold without early influences. The continued Black Lives Matter (BLM) Network and movement take root in anarchist resistances to enslavement and survives in "an organic black protest tradition" (Rickford, 2016, p.35) that has (re)surfaced with "African American activism" (Lindsey, 2015, p.232-233). Hence, BLM is a continuation of the resistance that Black peoples have been engaged in since the first slave revolt(s): BLM just exists on a different day, but it is the same movement (Arnold, 2017).Yet, as Robin D.G Kelley addresses "…when we talk about the Black Lives Matter movement today, we somehow go from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Black Lives Matter as if nothing happened in between" (Green II et al., 2016). Robin D.G Kelley, however sheds light to Black organizing groups, such as the Black United Front (BUF) in Halifax, the Organization for Black Struggles (OBS) since 1980 in St. Louis, and the Black Radical Congress ass of 1998 Chicago following Dr.King that shared greater similarities between Canada and the United States during the 80s and 90s that have been erased or overlooked yet align with the resistance work of the Black Panthers and SNCC (Green II et al., 2016). In what follows, this feature on the international Black Lives Matter movement discusses: the formation of the Black global coalition, oppositions to BLM, institutional responses, and the overall impacts of organizing in the name of BLM.

Figure 2.1 Photo provided by one of the BLMyeg organizers from the 2020 Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest in Edmonton.

The Formation of BLM

Black Lives Matter started as a Facebook post—a digital response amongst many, to the acquittal[19] of George Zimmerman, who despite being instructed to stay in his vehicle by 911 emergency personnel, fatally shot seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin to death in Sanford, Florida when visiting his father in 2012[20] (Chase, 2018). When soon-to-become BLM co-founder, Alicia Garza created this Facebook post, friend and BLM co-founder, Patrisse Khan-Cullors' replied with "Black Lives Matter"; this led to the migration and formation of the hashtag, #BlackLivesMatter on Twitter by BLM co-founder, Opal Tometi (Vesely-Flad, 2017).

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[19] The lynching of Trayvon Martin on February 26th 2012 (Celestine and Martin-Breteau, 2020, p.291) resulted in a jury verdict of the *State of Florida v. George Michael Zimmerman/ State v. Zimmerman,* No 12-CF-1084-A (Fla. Circ. Ct. July 13, 2013) as referenced by Chase (2018).

[20] This was not the first or most recent lynching in Sanford, Florida. Three years prior in 2009 also in Sanford, Florida, where Trayvon Martin was murdered: Oscar Grant, an eighteen-year-old Black youth was killed by a white police officer (Vesely-Flad, 2017).

This is how those three uncompromising words quickly shifted to a hashtag (Szetela, 2020, p.1359). Vesely-Flad (2017) however reports that ""Black Lives Matter" did not expand beyond a small circle of activists until August 9, 2014, when Michael Brown was killed by Darren Wilson" [and] "the number of #BlackLivesMatter hashtags skyrocketed to 52, 288" (Freelon et al, 2016). When "the hashtag leapt from social media "into the streets" (Rickford, 2016, p.35); it effectively transformed "Black Lives Matter (#BLM) from a "moment to a movement" (BLM, 2016) (Mayorga & Picower, 2018). Thereafter, three Black Queer women, Alicia Garza, community organizer with National Alliance of Domestic Worker, Patrisse Cullors, artist and prison-reform activist, and Opal Tometi, Nigerian-born community organizer against domestic violence started BLM as an organization in 2014 (Rickford, 2016; Biesecker, 2017; Linscott, 2017; Booten, 2019).The movement grew with the killings of other African Americans at the hands of the police: Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri (August 2014) and Freddie Gray in Baltimore (April 2015) which led to mass uprisings[21] in both cities (Celestine and Marin-Breteau, 2020, p.291-292) and "increased membership" in BLM (Chase, 2018, p.76).

Historical Roots of the BLM Movement

Undeniable to Black peoples and communities is that Black Lives Matter is an affirmation of, and for Black love: it highlights the community's commitment to protecting and loving all Black lives (Bailey & Leonard, 2015). And so, BLM is increasingly used as an "an umbrella term with which many concerned with justice for Black people globally identify, regardless of any formal connection to the specific organization or coalition" (Mayorga & Picower, 2018). Though BLM is often confused with the Movement for Black Lives, they are different. The Movement for Black Lives "serves as a coalition of over 50 organizations, of which the Black Lives Matter Network is one member" (Mayorga & Picower, 2018). BLM branches or groups—organized across respective cities—organize and resist using a variety of methods: occupying and reclaiming space such as "highways, intersections, sporting events, retail stores, malls, campaign events, police stations, and municipal buildings" (Rickford, 2016, p.36); grassroots community organizing that brought "…marching in the streets, interrupting presidential candidate speeches, creating art, and facilitating study groups (BLM, 2016) (Mayorga & Picower, 2018); creative disturbance with "die-ins…as a means of dramatizing routine attacks on black life" (Rickford,

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[21] Celestine and Marin-Breteau (2020) note that the uprisings in response to the killings of Brown and Gray were "the largest since the 1992 acquittal of the police officers involved in the videotaped beating of Rodney King, a black motorist in Los Angeles" (p.291-292).

2016, p.36). While much of the scholarship on Black Lives Matter presents a focus on the oppression of Black folks across the so-called United States, "the Black Lives Matter project is not limited to the United States alone" (Celestine and Marin-Breteau, 2020, p.296-297). Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a decentralized network of local organizations that "blossomed from a protest cry into a genuine political force" (Biesecker, 2017). "Since its inception in 2014, BLM has grown into a national network, part of the broader movement for Black Lives that includes more than 50 organizations with a shared vision and platform for Black liberation and an end to police brutality" (Mundt et al., 2018).

Opposition to BLM

Since its inception in 2014 and to date, both the existence of Black Lives Matter as "an anthem, slogan, hashtag, and straightforward statement of fact" (Schumer, 2020) coupled with and intensified by the growing movement have been controversial. Various responses to Black Lives Matter, the network, its organizing, and the greater movement continue to define the attitudes of the public (CBC News, 2016). Opposition in the form of #AllLivesMatter find "the concept [of Black Lives Matter] offensive because it does not express the importance of valuing all lives" (CBC News, 2016). The All Lives Matter perspective argue their perspective as being more inclusive; their reasoning stems from the understanding that all lives are important; and therefore, specific identity/social groups should not be singled out (CBC News, 2016).While ALM appears to propose a unified approach when the assertion that All Lives Matter is made, it is communicating that even though Black lives are disproportionately and uniquely experiencing state-sanctioned violence and death at the hands of the police with rare repercussions to police officers, other identities must be prioritized whether or not they are experiencing oppression. This not only pushes aside the unique experiences of policing Black peoples have been expressing for centuries since its inception used to restrict movement of enslaved Africans across Turtle Island, but recenters other social groups who may not experience policing to these extents and (re)silences the lived experiences of Black peoples. Essentially, the movement for ALM validates Afropessimist perspectives that realize and problematize the pervasive erasures of Black death by non-Black peoples.

Locally, in what is now Edmonton, there have been many references in opposition to BLM from "WhiteLivesMatter" to "DrunkWivesMatter"[22] in 2021 alone. During the Summer of 2021, Glendale Golf and Country Club publicized an Instagram picture of four white women "who wore shirts at a golf tournament that "Drunk Lives Matter" repurposing the Black Lives Matter slogan". Public outcry in response to their "mockery of an entire Black activist movement post-George Floyd is inherently racist, period" (Patricia, 2021). Hence, public accountability as a collective response to discrimination including anti-Black racism, such as this case has become an integral tool since the emergence and rise of the digital age. While it forced accountability via a public apology and recognition that their actions were problematic, it is a consistent cycle that businesses and public persons "use this opportunity to reflect on [their] actions", as the Glendale Golf and Country Club stated. On the same side of the coin, #BlueLivesMatter, supports police and policing in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. Both #AllLivesMatter[23] and or #BlueLivesMatter, however, derive not only out of a shameless sense of apathy coupled with a defensiveness to the centralization of Black lives, but in effect actively erase the experiences of oppression that Black ongoing and continued efforts including the BlackLivesMatter movement strives to address and tackle. This is not the first or only time that Black movements for racial equity has been appropriated for use by other identities. Arnold (2017) points to how "Well-intentioned POC [people of color] groups have attempted to insert their own ethnicities" (p.12). Much like the civil rights movement inspired the later adoption of organizing practice and strategies of resistance on an international scale during and after the movement, BLM has also inspired the organizing practice and strategy of other/non-Black social groups. Offshoots inspired by BLM, such as #BrownLivesMatter and #MuslimLivesMatter (Booten, 2019, p.183) have indeed attached—but not always aligned themselves and their community organizing and or digital resistance efforts with the concerns of Black lives centered by the movement they actively co-opt to make their political concerns visible. Not only are these co-optations practiced by replicating the BLM hashtag, but messaging used in protests are often in comparison to anti-

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[22]Collective accountability took place in this case: questioning the ability of the four golfers to enter without consequence, such as following dress code and being required to change by Sarah (@SawrasaurusRex; July 27th, 2021); calls for their commitment to anti-racist education, donation to Black charity, supporting local Black-owned businesses, and updated policy on DEI made public (Farha Shariff) (Patricia, 2021). General Manager, McGary responded with the promise of a thorough investigation into the incident, gender bias, diversity and equity training no later than Sept 15th to maintain their employment at the Glendale as well as a review of HR policies to ensure incoming employees also undergo the aforelisted training (Patricia, 2021).

[23] Remigio Pereira of The Tenors "was heavily criticized …" when he altered and replaced the original lyrics of the Canadian national anthem, "O Canada" with "all lives matter" during his performance "…at the Major League Baseball All-Star Game" (CBC News, 2016).

Blackness. And so, while Black lives are at-risk of hypervisibility, non-Black groups are able to, and take advantage of the hypervisibility of the question of Black lives and continued assertion of mattering.

Impacts of BLM

One of the most critical—and arguably *the* greatest contributions of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement since its inception circa 2014 are the various ways its formal network, the greater movement, and related digital and community-based organizing have re-energized and increased Black radicalism, or at least, made radical Black resistance more accessible. Echoing the rest of this chapter, this section revisits the persistence of historical Black radical thought, organizing, and action that precede the formation of the Black Lives Matter national network and the greater global movement. It further asserts that the modern re-emergence of Black radicalism via BLM has had rippling effects that have resulted in positive and negative social change with note-worthy lasting effects. The era of Black Lives Matter from 2014 and continuing not only revived Black radicalism within Black community organizing, it embedded pockets and possibilities of radicalization that impacted social change across other groups and communities, inspired the emergence of countless organizing groups—radical and reformist in nature. Though it may not have dismantled targeted institutional structures, such as the justice and prison system, it has laboured institutional sectors, such as post-secondary institutions, municipalities etc. with the task of (at least) addressing racism and various oppression. I propose that the lessons learned from BLM are meaningfully present in the ways that local, regional, and global Black community organizing is being practiced or at question within this thesis while at the same time raises the question of cyclical restructuring by structures of oppression that must be named and learned from to be addressed and resisted trough revolutionary actions for social change. Indeed, BLM is the culmination of, and manifestation of Black radicalism and anarchist praxis.

Digital Organizing

The use of social media has created a distinct power in organizing. As former Black Panther organizer, Hodari Davis reflects, "the Panthers didn't have hashtags. […]They weren't able to Tweet their story." Still, he says, the phrase "Black Lives Matter" reminds him of Panther slogans like "Black is Beautiful...(Arnold, 2017). Mundt et al. (2018) address the role of social media in organizing by highlighting that social media is used by collectives and coalitions to strengthen and expand their movement work and further enabling them to form coalitions. The advancement

of technology has, of course, made us more dependent on our digital devices—particularly our phones, but the use of our phones and its role in (re)defining our digital and essentially global presence is increasingly becoming part of our daily routine from the ways we communicate to the way we resist systemic oppression. Hashtags are therefore more than tools of online politics, they are objects of political discussion or protest (Booten, 2019). While this is not across the board in practice, there is an overwhelming transition from upholding one's "freedom of speech" to the understanding and expectation that every person shares a sense of responsibility in addressing and confronting oppression. Experiences of systemic discrimination are increasingly recorded as they are being experienced and shared across digital platforms, like Facebook, Twitter, and more recently, Tik Tok. This is routinely followed by the identification of people(s) who have harmed others, locations where the harm has occurred e.g., schools, united calls for systemic changes to policies and practice, acknowledgement of harm, improvements through (re)training and consequences such as the termination of employees responsible for violence inflicted.

Measuring BLM's digital footprint has involved quantifying the number of tweets, Facebook posts, and hashtags used by people, organizers, and organizing groups globally. The digital impact of BLM is not sufficiently explained by a record and analysis of statistics. Rather, it can be seen in the influential effects that have created digital spaces of protest, discussion, learning, and dissent across platforms. Black Twitter, Facebook groups, and Tik Tok not only challenge experiences of everyday racism, but galvanize individuals and groups to protest racial discrimination.   On the one hand, the digitalization and resulting increased access of research, video footage (especially as shared across social media platforms), and initiatives that gather and produce data that *prove* the racialized social realities and conditions of state-sanctioned violence and anti-blackness has independently and entirely transformed the discourse of racial justice. The capacity to broadcast the evidence(s) of Afropessimism: "Black people have said for decades that police officers lie, they brutalize us. But there was never any proof…But now] the world can see we are not lying. That's the difference in social media, people getting the cell phones out and recording it" (McNair, 2019, p.294). On the one hand, the digitalization and resulting increased access of research, video footage (especially as shared across social media platforms), and initiatives that gather and produce data that prove the racialized social realities and conditions of state-sanctioned violence and anti-Blackness has independently and entirely transformed the discourse of racial justice.

CHAPTER 3 BPR LEARNINGS FROM BLACK THEORIZING

Inseparable from Black Anarchist and Afropessimist theory alike is the praxis of Black abolitionist organizing. Whereas Afropessimism offers a theoretical foundation that deepens our understanding of anti-Black racism, abolition is the basis of radical action that can effectively re/shift us towards Black liberatory futures. The theoretical foundation of this dissertation is grounded by Black radical theories, which have shaped the development of both Afropessimism and Black Anarchism. This thesis puts forward that both Afropessimism and Black Anarchism are key pedagogical pathways to supporting resistance work for social change that move beyond past failed strategies of short-term reform and generally inadequate responses to anti-Black racism that hinder the making of alternative realities. As Ervin (2021) explains, "We need to go beyond protest to ungovernability, and then build neighbourhood general assemblies to take us onward to libertarian socialism. If not, we'll be trapped in conversational politics and reform" (p.68).

Our earliest BPR conversations on Black organizing for Black liberated futures with our BPR team specifically defined the ways in which Black life is structured: initially by social death, as rooted in Afropessimism and coupled with our collective insistence to surpass the limitations of abolition towards rebuilding alternative realities, as reasoned by decades of critiquing Black historical resistance and encompassed by Black Anarchist praxis. And so, our objective of informing Black radical coalitional praxis realizes a much-needed commitment to upholding political critiques as a central part of Black Anarchist strategy in working towards Anarchist visions and ultimately, true visions of Black freedoms. This chapter therefore engages a discussion that involve relevant theoretical principles, political logics, and methodological strategic orientations related to Afropessimism and Black Anarchism that underpin Black community organizing across settler colonial Canada. Though this project was predominantly framed by Afropessimism and Black Anarchism, this research also draws upon Decolonial Praxis and Black Radical Feminism. Our focus group discussions were also influenced by, and leaned on the Black Radical Disability Framework, which played a necessary part in critiquing the emergence and continuance of racial capitalism, specifically in relation to the oppressive ways in which Black organizing is structured by racial capitalist relations of Black labour that exhaust and necessitate continual organizing and resistance work.

Building Political Education for Alternative States of Mind and Ways of Life

Anti-Black racist organizing not only requires the cultivation of Black consciousness through the dedication of political education, but it also includes continued impositions of Blackness, or what Fanon has referred to as "lived experiences" (Fanon, 1952)[24]— what can only be possible as one navigates life while Black. While both processes, learning to organize and cultivating Black consciousness—are not essential to one's survival, they are however active and essential to developing a critical understanding of the anti-Black world. As inspired from the work of Du Bois and phrased by Gordon (2022), "being born black does not entail knowing, in social scientific terms, what it means to be black (p.50). Black consciousness is therefore not guaranteed with one's shared or related lived experiences amongst Black peoples. Gordon (2022) explains further how a multiplicity of what is considered Black identity means that "...one's personal black story is a black story, but not all black stories are the black story" (p.50). What also remains true is the reality that many Black folks resist anti-Blackness while also reproducing internalized experiences of anti-Blackness towards others: "even [B]lacks, as the Black Panthers said, must become Black" (Ibrahim, 2019, p.15). Demonstrating the distinctive ways in which Black peoples experience Black life, participants illustrated how Black identity is further complicated as it intersects with categories such as gender, disability, sexuality, class, among other social relations. This is relevant in realizing anti-Black racism is also intersectional because "[a]ll Black people are not demonized equally or identically" (Maynard, 2017, p.13).

Though the experiences of Black peoples are foundationally shared through experiences of anti-Blackness, they are compounded by overarching and interconnected systems of settler colonialism (neocolonialism and neoliberalism), patriarchy (queerphobia, transphobia, misogynoir), colourism, and tribalism. To cultivate a Black consciousness that is both individually and collectively resistant to anti-Blackness, participants revealed the importance of learning, developing, and exchanging critical theories and historical knowledge alike as they relate to Black resistance. Hence, participants prioritized opening space for political theory to generate anti-colonial pedagogies which would in turn, create opportunities for a well-informed and well-positioned organizing praxis, as described by participants when rethinking Black organizing practices and strategies that may replace the oppressive, suppressive, and siloed

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[24] In this 2017 interview, Mignolo speaks to Fanon (1952) chapter regarding "L'expérience vécu des noirs' — the 'lived experience of black people…Fanon theorized about this from his lived experience of being Black.

ways in which we interact, organize community, and mobilize around issues of anti-Blackness. Now that we have discussed how we arrived at our selected methodologies and explained the defined role of reinvesting in building political education for Black consciousness, the origins of Black consciousness are detailed in the next section.

Historical Emergence of Black Consciousness

Emerging in apartheid South Africa during the 1960s (Ndaba et al, 2019), the Black Consciousness movement arose out of everyday resistance of daily and global anti-blackness. Comparable across Black resistances, as the Father of Black consciousness and prominent South African anti-apartheid activist, Steve Biko notes that Black consciousness was initially assumed to be "a platform for misguided black malcontents, deviants, misfits, and dropouts" (Mkhabela, 2019, p.xviii). Biko redefines Black consciousness as "...an attitude of the mind and way of life" (Sharp et. al, p.xviii, 2019): "the realisation of the need to rally together around the cause of oppression, to rid ourselves of the shackles that bind us to perpetual servitude" (Ndaba et. al, 2019, p.xxi). Sharp (2 019) adds that Black consciousness "…seeks to infuse the [B]lack community with a newfound pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life" (p.xxi). Similarly, Gordon defines Black consciousness as "a political consciousness" (2022, p.14) further specifying that Black consciousness not only introduces a reclamation of Black identity, but "...addresses the choking contradictions of antiblack societies" (2022, p18,19). Comparable and foundational to the Negritude movement, the predominant Black critical thought and movement of the 1930s captured by Cesaire, etc., Negritude is "the consciousness of the value of black identity (Ndaba et. al, p.xxxvii, 2019). Building on Fanon, Gordon goes further to differentiates black consciousness, with a lowercase b, as "... [the] most affected and sometimes immobile" while Black consciousness with an uppercase B, as "...effective and active", or "...the need to become actional, to fight against oppression…" (2022, p.19).

With reference to the numerous ways Fanon associates anti-Blackness with notions of "breath" and "breathing" as has been linked to more recent echoes by Eric Garner in 2014 and George Floyd in 2020 as well as countless others who form a "collective struggle to breathe" (2020, p.15), Gordon's Black consciousness takes up the ways in which Black peoples cannot "breathe under such circumstances" of anti-Blackness. He recognizes that both types of consciousnesses are "feared in antiblack societies" but argues that Black consciousness is feared

more (2020, p.19). This fear, as argued by Austin (2013) is linked to and defined as biosexuality, the "primeval fear of Blacks that is based in slavery and colonialism and the recurring need to discipline and control Black bodies…" (p.xix). Austin (2013) further argues that this fear is "... connected to both a fear of Black rebellion and self-activity, or self-organization" (p.xix); in the same vein, Gordon (2020) describes this fear as "suppressing not only black possibility but also political life" (p.18). Together, they recognize this is a fear of Black mobilization, organizing and ultimately, Black resistance. As a result, Gordon (2020) identifies anti-Black societies as,

> anti-political and anti-democratic – because they are devoted to blocking black people's access to citizenship – and thus fight also against their own members who fight against black disempowerment. This struggle reveals a feared truth of black empowerment: the fight against antiblack racism is ultimately a fight for democracy (2020, p.18-19).

The outcome of our sessions confirmed my initial assumption that Afropessimism could serve as a useful methodology for the thesis project. It became clear that other Black organizers, Black organizing groups, and Black individuals could benefit not only from building a Black consciousness, but also use Afropessimism as a critical lens to understanding intergenerational experiences of global anti-Black violence. More broadly, Afropessimism eternally avows and critically affirms that we are not alone in either our experiences of anti-Blackness or our efforts of resistance within local, regional, and or global spheres of Black life. When used alongside a critique of settler colonialism Afropessimism offers a strong understanding of one of the several way Black bodies have and continue to be used for the continuing settler colonial project across Turtle Island. On a more personal scale, Afropessimism refutes the continued denial of Black experiences, achievements, and successes of peoples of African descent who preceded ours— what I refer to as, the fallacy of firsts, which compliments the "Doctrine of Discovery"[25] and the assertion of terra nullius.

Despite centuries of imperialism, continued colonialism and resulting displacement, the Doctrine of Discovery erases pre-colonial generations of sovereignty, peoplehood, and

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[25] "In 1493, in response to a request by the King and Queen of Spain, Pope Alexander VI issued a "papal bull" or solemn declaration from the Vatican. Known as the Doctrine of Discovery, it was used with the concept of terra nullius to justify colonial nations' right to claim land "discovered" by their explorers. It granted Spain the right to conquer any lands its explorers discovered, and it stopped non-Christians from owning land" (Stinson, 2016, p.3). While working through this chapter, Pope Francis visited what is now Canada to provide a formal apology; one of the requests from Indigenous Peoples, scholars, and Elders is that the doctrine of discovery is publicly rescinded (Cindy Blackstock, July 25th, 2022)

governance, such as "[the] thousands of distinct societies that formed hundreds of nations with languages, cultures, systems of governance and trade relations unique to them" (Stinson, 2016, p.3), the continued survival and presence of Indigenous Peoples "…for thousands of years [who were] hunting, trapping, fishing, travelling, and more" (Stinson, 2016, p.3) and disregards the Royal Proclamation of 1763[26]). And thus, the "doctrine of discovery" ignores the fact that Indigenous Peoples have existed and lived off the land for millennia and counting to colonize Indigenous land for capital extraction. Specific to peoples of African descent, the fallacy of firsts erases the existence and arrivals of peoples of African descent maintaining the dual-toned assumption that Black peoples either arrived by way of the United States via enslavement or are newcomers who recently arrived. Both doctrines, the doctrine of discovery followed by the fallacy of firsts, fuel the settler colonial project's mission to populate Turtle Island for what European colonists argued was for "productive" use, such as the cultivation by the settler colonial states of so-called Canada and the United States. Descendant of local Black Pioneers and co-founder of Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots (SCMR), Debbie asserts that this notion that Black newcomers as "the first" must be addressed because as she says, "everyone came from the roots"; she advocates that Black newcomers must "know the roots…new groups that…formed since the 60s, they think they are the first, you know. They have no idea." Hence, this doctrine is not only vital to the elimination of Black roots and generations, but also severs shared experiences of anti- Blackness and whites out Black accomplishments, successes, challenges, gaps of collective improvement and the overall intentions of liberated Black futures. Black erasures do not erase Black experiences of life: rather, they erase our genealogical memories of resistance. As a result, possibilities of informed and collaborative resistance across Black communities and organized groups equipped with organizing strategy and other information is limited—also limiting the capacity to improve the daily material conditions of Black peoples. This is achieved via global cognitive warfare, this colonial tactic is what Fanon describes a "colonization of the mind" and structures Black life as either resisting anti-Blackness or adopting whiteness as a means of surviving while Black. Given the ongoing need to persist anti-Blackness and the internalization of anti-Blackness, it is also important to recognize the ways in which

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[26] Treaty "first with the British Crown….then Canada" (p.3) confirming "in constitution law that Indigenous nations have title to their lands as well as sovereignty and self-government" (Stinson, 2016, p.3).
According to the Royal Proclamation of 1763, "both sides agreed that treaties (agreements) were the only legal way for Indigenous [P]eoples to release control of their lands" (Stinson, 2016, p.3).

Black consciousness is not a point of arrival or achievement, but a psychological tool and space that offers alternative mindset and logics for surviving and living in this anti-Black world.

Informing Black Anarchist Radical Praxis

While there are multiple ways of actioning resistance, critical reflections of political theories and concepts are central to the practice of co-creating all platforms of resistance. The upcoming sections describe the ways in which Black Radical Feminism and Decolonial Praxis informed our Black Anarchist praxis.

Black Radical Feminist is Anarchist

Black feminist thought and action is often cited as emerging out of the rights movement during the 60s and 70s (Roth, 1999; Thompson, 2002, as cited in Johnson, 2015). Black feminism however roots back to the antebellum period (Johnson, 2015) —specifically, "the abolitionist or anti-slavery movement of the 1800s" (Johnson, 2015). Black feminists learned that both white women and Black men did not understand their struggles of being racialized as Black and gendered as women, nor were their experiences reflected in organizing taken up by women or Black men. It was not only that white feminists did not see themselves as equal to Black women and thus undeserving of the civil liberties that they were seeking, but that their feminism did not see Black women as deserving of human rights since the emergence of anti-slavery movements by enslaved Africans. Black radical feminism alerts us to the importance of reconsidering how spaces dedicated to working towards social change is occupied.

Decolonial Praxis for Internal Critiques

Settler colonial critiques are helpful in addressing the ways in which Black diasporic peoples contribute to securing and advancing the settler colonial state of Canada at the expense of Indigenous Peoples. At the same time, however, decolonial praxis offers an avenue for Black settlers to see themselves through allianced perspectives that may reframe some of their experiences as shared with those of Indigenous backgrounds across Turtle Island—namely, imperialism, and in some cases, settler (neo)colonialization. Decolonial praxis encourages the use of African/Indigenous knowledge systems to resist the loss involved through forced migrations and displacement urging critical considerations of the following historical, but ongoing relations and tensions between Black and Indigenous Peoples. Unfortunately, "rather than building communities and solidarities, many colonized bodies often spread tremendous efforts either occupying space of innocence or claiming how our own colonial oppressions are more foundational to understanding global anti-colonial struggles" (Dei and Lordan, 2016, p.xi).

Shared relations and understandings of kinship and communal being is critical amongst both Indigenous and Black peoples as it reminds us of who we were and how we lived, as collective, communal peoples, prior to colonization.

Learning from Afropessimism

From the consistent ways it reciprocates and responds to both historical and simultaneous individual and collective organizing and manifestations across generations and eras, Black resistance continues to reflect its eternal nature. Throughout this project BPR organizers and I engaged with this fear and realization that Black resistance is eternal or unending. In doing so, we came to the common sense that there is no way out of anti-Blackness within our lifetimes or any lifetime while situated in this anti-Black world. Considering the added structural perspective that Black lives continue to sustain this system while also fighting for Black survivals and liberation, by the end of our discussions we saw the ways in which Black life equated to Black death as understood by Afropessimism. These shared understandings also confirmed my initial assumption as the researcher that Afropessimism would serve as a useful methodology for the thesis project. The use of Afropessimism demonstrated great possibilities and benefits from not only reigniting Black consciousness, but also using Afropessimism as a critical lens to understand intergenerational experiences of global anti-Black violence.

Coined by Frank Wilderson, Wilderson (2010) poses that the question of being Black revolves around two fundamental thoughts, "What does it mean to suffer?" and "How does one become free of suffering. Afropessimism provides a critical framework for understanding anti-Black racism by equipping us with anti-Black centered racist logic that seeks to interrogate binaries including the ways in which Black peoples and experiences of racism are distinct from the experiences of People of Colour (POC). Jared Sexton proposes that 'people-of-color-blindness' assumes a homogenous experience between Black and POC within the structure of White supremacy (Day, 2009). Afropessimism builds on the multitude work of Black experiences as archived by a range of scholars, such as Hortense Spillers, Frantz Fanon, Orlando Patterson to name a few and studies that may not necessarily identify as Afropessimist but put to paper the continual nature of Black life as social death. While Afropessimism directly refers to the African Descendants of Slaves (ADOS), it also recognizes the ways in which other peoples of African descent have and are enslaved and made Black bodies through what Sarah Hamilton (2008) refers to as the "afterlife of slavery". Afropessimism is therefore useful for all Black peoples while

recognizing the diversity of Black experience including the ways in which "there is a centering of the Black male voice with the female voice being unthought…this erasure is the very thing Afropessimism is talking about" (p.61).

Contextualizing Anti-Black Racism

#BlackLife, as we increasingly see digitized and archived across social media platforms, is conditioned by global anti-Black racism and experiences of unbelonging. Central symptoms of anti-Blackness include the pervasive expressions of anti-Black racism by non-Black and Black peoples coupled with the resulting inescapable experiences of unbelonging experienced by Black peoples. Activated by white supremacy, anti-Black racism is a collaborative and global affair. Specifying the inclusion of all people of colour (POC) and Indigenous Peoples, Wilderson (2020) proposes that "people of color and White women who are targets of White supremacy and patriarchy, [are] respectively, and, simultaneously, [also] the agents and beneficiaries [or what he terms as "partners"] of anti-Blackness" (p.146). When reproduced by white settlers locally in the settler colonial West (Canada or the United States etc.) or elsewhere, it is the inherent and inequitable expression of structural racism built on the basis of the "doctrine of discovery" and (re)generative "predominantly white institutions" (PWI)s. Inversely, when used by non-Black peoples—specifically Peoples of Colour (POC) — it not only strengthens the casteist nature of settler colonial societies built upon anti-Indigenous and anti-Black systems of racial capitalism, it substantiates the vast reaches of anti-Blackness that extend prior to the arrivals of settlers of colour who remain undeterred by the ways in which they too, share colonial relations of Euro-Western subjugation both in their native lands as well as with anti-Black conceptualizations that are also brought across the Diaspora, such as the Indian caste system or anti-Blackness across the East that also pursued the colonization of Africa and undertook the enslavement of Black African peoples prior to the transatlantic slave trade.

Masked as counter-hegemonic responses to racial oppression, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) reproduce anti-Blackness as a means of surpassing states of survival across heteropatriarchal and capitalist dominant settler colonial societies, in which they are situated. Endemic formations of racial exclusion and isolation, everyday racism and microaggressions, intersectional oppression via racial capitalism, and suppression via Black erasures are cyclical—transcending borders, generations, and eras; and therefore, inescapable rendering Black life eternally unsafe and perpetually migrants (living in exile). Not immune from

76

the impacts of white supremacy, adoptions of white power in the form of anti-Blackness are also exercised within and across Black communities locally and globally. Demonstrating the immeasurable extent in which white supremacy consumes Black bodies, creating agents, acquired to continue the settler colonial project by implicating themselves in settler colonial oppression via continued Indigenous dispossession as well as their own dispossession via displacement and disenfranchisement despite also being colonized peoples.

Afro-pessimism therefore reminds us of the ways in which anti-Blackness and anti-Black racism is manifested between Black individuals and communities. Internalized anti-Blackness within and across Black communities materializes as: colourism, prioritizing and privileging lighter complexions and Euro-centric features while overlooking and excluding Black features; suppressing and rejecting depictions of Black/ness, sometimes as this applies to the self; overcompensating for Blackness by upholding and acting on behalf of settler colonialism by reproducing white supremacy in the form of anti-Indigeneity. The trifold structures of relations engaging in continued anti-Blackness may be experienced, as Christenson lists (2009): on a macro-level, by ""imagined" communities" referencing nations, religions, and cultures; meso-level, referring to organizations, such as non-profits, organized groups, social movements, and political parties; and micro-level, "in relation to everyday life including within families, local communities…". On an individual level, we are addicted to the possibility of achieving capitalist notions of success. Often referred to as a 'growth mindset': it is rooted in the commitment to "work hard", expanding conditions of productivity for the ultimate accumulation of capital–for immediate and, or generational wealth. On the one hand, Black diasporic peoples are led to believe that they must "work harder to get twice as far", as Key Informant and NBCC co-founder, Dorothy said in her interview. POC are determined to work harder or "get farther" than "the slave", who they consistently envision as (descendants of) enslaved Africans. And thus, internal, and external experiences of anti-Black racism operate as sociopolitical strategies of hegemonic control in active competition for belonging. While Butler and Spivak (2007) credit understandings of belonging and unbelonging as defined by nation-states, the work of both Yuval-Davis (2006) and Christenson (2009) assert that analyses of unbelonging must apply intersectional perspectives. Hence, the ways in which non-Black peoples minoritize Black bodies are dependent on their relations to one another as determined by race, ethnicity, and culture;

class, gender, and sexual orientation–and thus, their proximities to whiteness, cis-gendered, settler experiences, and positionalities.

Afropessimist Foundations for Black Coalitional Paradigms

Afropessimism critically affirms that we are not alone in our experiences of anti-Blackness or efforts of resistance within local, regional, and or global spheres of Black life. By refuting the continual denial of Black experiences, achievements, and successes of peoples of African descent who preceded ours, this assumption—or what I refer to as the fallacy of firsts compliments the "doctrine of discovery" and assertion of *terra nullius* erasing pre-colonial generations of sovereignty, nationhood, and governance as well as the continued survival and perseverance of Indigenous Peoples despite four centuries of imperialism, colonialism and resulting displacement. While the "doctrine of discovery" rejects and neglects the fact that Indigenous Peoples have existed and lived off the land for millennia and continuum to colonize Indigenous land for capital extraction, the fallacy of firsts erases the existence and arrivals of peoples of African descent maintaining the dual-toned assumption that Blacks either arrived by way of the United States via enslavement, or are newcomers, who recently arrived. Together, both doctrines fuel the settler colonial project's mission to re/populate Turtle Island with what European colonists argued for "productive" use and settler colonial states of Canada and the United States as a result, continue to cultivate the empty "land of milk and honey".

Descendant of local Black Pioneers in Alberta and co-founder of the Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots (SCMR), Debbie asserts that this notion that Black newcomers are the first must be addressed because as she says, "everyone came from the roots"; she advocates that Black newcomers must "know the roots…new groups that…formed since the 60s, they think they are the first, you know. They have no idea." Hence, this doctrine is not only vital to the elimination of Black roots and generations, but also severs shared experiences of anti-Blackness whiting out Black accomplishments, successes, challenges, gaps of collective improvement and the overall intentions of liberated Black futures. Achieved through global cognitive warfare, this colonial tactic is what Fanon would refer to as "colonization of the mind" where we find ourselves reproducing whiteness sometimes emerging from "learned helplessness" that may see Black life as void of resistance or weak when in fact, what presents us is a period of perpetuating exhaustion by virtue of the destruction of Black peoples on a global scale. Despite global resistance efforts ranging across local and regional lines, it serves the need to convince all

peoples that Blacks have not and will not resist conditions of anti-Blackness. A historical analysis of Black resistance demonstrates the ways that our resistance efforts have not only inspired direct action, but also unified our experiences across borders and distinct cultures of African descent. In the same way that Black suffering and revival is reciprocal, Black organizing, and Black fatigue or exhaustion is also cyclical.

Black Anarchist Theory: Misconceptions and Core Principles

Anarchist political philosophy, praxis, and futures are associated with as well as assumed to result in absolute disorder. William and Samudzi (2018) directly acknowledge this by dispelling that anarchy does not equate to "chaos" nor is this the intended outcome of anarchist praxis towards free and autonomous societies. On the other hand, Anarchism has been dismissed as "unrealistically utopian, ill defined, and an extreme violence bent on an extreme form of individualism" (Cully, 2016, p.36). And while core principles between Anarchist political thought and Black Anarchism may be shared as I detail below, Black Anarchism is distinct from other Anarchist traditions. Therefore, as Anderson (2021) phrases, Black Anarchism should not be forced to fit into European Anarchist traditions nor should it be confused with similar or related formations, such as African Anarchism.

Emergence of Black Anarchism

The Anarchist movement was originally white and European (Williams, 2015; Ervin, 2021) with "no ties or solidarity to the Black population in the USA, the UK or the colonized people of color in the Third World" (Ervin, 2021, p.7). Though Anarchism is recognized as officially preceding the Black Anarchist movement, the latter "did not originate within anarchism, but external from it" (Williams, 2015, p.679). The Black Anarchist movement emerged in critical response to past Black organizing during the 60s and 70s—specifically the Black Power Movement (Williams, 2015). During this period, seasoned Black organizers from the liberalized civil rights movement and subsequent Black Power movement, such as "Ashanti Alston, Kuwasi Balagoon, Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, Ojore Lutalo, and Martin Sostre" (Williams, 2015, pp.679-680) "moved towards anarchist positions" (Williams, 2015) after their disillusionment with the Black Panther Party (BPP) and its leadership style (Anderson, 2021 in Foreword, p.x). By 1994, Ervin formed the Black Anarchist Federation in 'Atlanta, Georgia', which produced local chapters across ten other cities across the globe (Ervin, 2021).

Black Anarchism: Safeguarding Black Liberatory Futures

Anarchism is commonly equated to its opposition towards the nation/state. While this may pose a challenge for Black resisters who fear outward forms of resistance to power, Black Anarchism is particularly helpful in rethinking current and future Black diasporic organizing and organized resistance to local anti-Black racism given its unyielding orientation to compromising meaningful social change towards Black liberatory futures. As previously noted in this thesis and recognized by Hartman, peoples of African descent have always been Anarchists (Anderson, 2020); to be specific, Black identity is innately anarchist and as such, "Black people have been engaged in anarchistic resistances since our very arrival in the Americas" from "networks of mutual aid, maroon societies, Harriet Tubman's removal of enslaved peoples…history explains how we have arrived at anarchism" (Anderson, 2020). Centering abolition as a continuum defined by both immediate and long-term strategy, Black Anarchism critically counters the limitations of liberalism which continues to inadequately respond to historical and continued experiences of anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness. Whereas "liberalism considered the problem of racial inequality to stem from mere intolerance or exclusion (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001), Black Anarchism broadens our understanding of how neo-liberal addresses of anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness co-opt and re-contextualize calls for safety and humanity for capitalist consumption. Black Anarchism is described according to four principled practices: 'mutual aid', which involves solidarity, shared labour and responsibilities across organizers; 'education' to enhance collective political, economic, scientific, and technological knowledge, 'unity' based on cooperation and a shared dedication for the collective's well-being, and action, which refers to the political actions taken up by the group (Ervin, 2021).

Black Anarchism as Harm Reduction: Avoiding Cyclicality

Black Anarchism makes space for internal Black organizer-oriented critiques as a means of avoiding the cyclical nature of past organized resistance issues. Black Anarchism is therefore solution driven. Though its roots can be traced prior, when rooted in praxis Black Anarchism has contributed to advancing analyses that recognize the recurring harmful and violent ways in which both the cooption and commodification of Black individual and organized resistance violently perpetuates conditions of social death for Black peoples.

  Past Black Anarchist critiques are especially helpful when looking back at the civil rights movement of the 50s-60s, coming out of the Black Power movement in the late 60s, and

continues to offer important opportunities for the deconstructive critique of contemporary organizing resistance strategies and movement building, as has been done when looking at BLM for example. Central to the critique of historical organizing against anti-Black racism is the reminder that meaningful social change will not result from "mimicking what didn't free us before" (Anderson, 2021, p.xiv). Not only does the use of a Black Anarchist lens help us rethink Black community organizing, but it also demystifies the romanticization of historical resistances such as the civil rights movement and the Black Power movement. It deconstructs ancient and medieval references of pre-colonial existence that perpetuate neo/colonial structures and politics such as nationalism. As a continuation of Black radical thought, Black Anarchism reaffirms the need to prioritize our Black selves, communities, and futures. As Anderson (2021) states that "Black lived experiences remind us that we don't deserve nothing less than a revisioning of politics that centers us" (p.70) It also upholds the importance of centering community-driven efforts as one of the principled strategies of Black Anarchism to avoid the evident failures of individualism. Black anarchism, as defined by Ervin (2021), values coalition formation through propping up federalism, a key "part of anarchism in which self-determining groups freely agree to coordinate their activities…[i]t is the joining of groups and peoples for political and economic survival and livelihood" (p.80).

Across countless spaces and various conversations is the intended goal and vision of contextualizes 'the alternatives'. Black Anarchism offers a realistic and principled sketch of alternative ways of relating, organizing, re/building communities can look like in practice privileging autonomous communities that are non-hierarchical and non-authoritarian in nature. Black Anarchist non-hierarchical organizing structure has reaffirmed the need for a paradigm shift from leader-centered organizing that has been dominated by principles and representations of cis-heterosexuality and patriarchy and movement orientations towards non-authoritarian organizing standards of practice where possibilities of radical cooperative and collaborative individual and collective organizing relations are prioritized. It confirms the need to recreate different models of care through the key strategy of dismantling for institution rebuilding to privilege horizontally structured spaces where decision-making is shared through consensus building practices. On a more personal level, Black Anarchism sees beyond state formation, which has aided me in rethinking Eritrean nationalism. Because Eritrean/Indigenous connection to land is integral nor is it disputed by the political directions offered through this political

thought, Anderson's (2021) take on Black Anarchism has helped me extend this commitment to "new thinking, new language and new societies" (p.14) could look like in the context of a fully liberated "back home" from neo-colonization.

In studying the continuum of Black organizing in the first part and our methodological framework, this chapter has learned from past and contemporary Black organizing and resistance efforts, emphasized their impacts, and outlined some of their challenges. The second part of the chapter discussed the ways in which Black Anarchism and Afropessimism informed our understandings for future Black coalition building and used other Black radical theories that were useful in seeing the intersectional nature to both theoretical foundations.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Prior to pursuing this master's program, I was certain that I wanted to research local Black organizing efforts that we, Black organizers and greater Black communities could learn from for the immediate and future benefit of our organized resistance efforts. Continued conversations while organizing alongside co-organizers in local Black organizing groups activated the significance and need for Black coalition building as a possible research inquiry. My first reading of "The Combahee River Collective" (1979) during my introductory semester in the program alerted me to the following three realizations:

1) **Black organizing is inherently and generationally cyclical**—that is, almost every individual resistance and collectively organized effort has previously been attempted both across borders and time periods.

2) **Black communities continue to organize in silos** reproducing silo formations in theory and practice that neither serve our immediate, nor our future needs for liberated Black futures.

3) **Black radical efforts are crucial** to affect social change that is comprehensive in collective benefit and long-term.

During this time, I realized that the "alternative" resistance and organizing work we were engaging in was not so original. That said, I understood that Black organizers and organizing groups across Turtle Island and beyond have, with and unwavering determination, resisted similar and shared experiences of anti-Blackness while refusing to reconcile liberal over radical politics and envisioning Black liberatory futures in a settler colonial context. As Lorde (2007) phrases it, "[t]here are no new ideas, just new ways of giving those ideas we cherish breath and power in our own living" (p.143).

The introduction to the critical work of the "The Combahee River Collective: A Black Feminist Statement" (1979) as part of one of my thesis courses re-affirmed the understanding that while prior Black coalition efforts have generally been attempted, revised and re-contextualized formations of Black coalitional politics and practices are still always necessary as part of a perennial process of Black liberation. Black radical coalitional politics must therefore be revisited in truly alternative ways to directly challenge internal and external barriers that prevent the coalescing of Black organizations, whenever desired as per mutual determination. The Combahee

River Collective reasserts coalition work as an organizing priority by re-conceptualizing what decolonial anti-Black racism praxis should look like.

In addition to my personal interest in conducting this research study this BPR was envisioned by myself and related others through prior organizing engagements as a community-focused project that involved the politics, understandings, interests, and intentions of local Black community organizers. With this in mind, individual interviews and focus group discussions with participants always started with a conversation that considered everyone's respective interests and especially their considered involvement in the potential development of a local Black coalition. Our BPR Team (the co-facilitators of the focus group sessions and co-analyzers of the data generated—more on this below) and I initiated the first focus group session by asking, "what brings each of you to this project of building Black coalition building?"

In response to this question, according to Karis, one of the co-facilitators,

> I think all of us, as organizers, have the experience of just being frustrated in the process of not knowing who you can learn from, not knowing what support you have…and that's why we've always thought about some form of coalition building because there's no need for all of us to reinvent the wheel every time we want to work on the community. But if we're able to tap into all our resources, all our knowledge, then it kind of makes it a little easier, I guess, for us. And that's why I'm really interested in this project" (BPR Member, 1st Focus Group Session).

Expanding on this, Kwame, another co-facilitator, added that they were particularly interested in,
> "…disrupting colonial structures, such as…separation…and things that disrupt intergenerational, like learning: like healthy mentorship, healthy community building…" (BPR Member, 1st Focus Group Session).

This conversation not only acknowledges but also affirms the reality that "interest-free knowledge is logically impossible", as originally stated by Reinhartz (1985) in Lather (1986, p.63). As such, assumptions will also inform our BPR methodology.

Black Participatory Research (BPR)

Uncovering Black historical truths is integral to resisting anti-Black racism and the individual and collective preservation of Black peoples. One of the main strategies of resistance shared by peoples of African descent are the various ways we keep record to recover and reclaim historical and contemporary erasure and its ongoing effects. In addition to documented archives that remain significant is the "…long tradition of oral history; stories passed down through song, folk-tales, sermons, poetry, and personal histories" (Hamilton, 1994, p.13) by African-descended

peoples across the Black Diaspora. While this study does not have the space nor capacity to demonstrate all these forms, it still recognizes these forms of Black historical knowledge, among other mediums as sites of reclamation, when centering narratives of Black resistance and survivals of African-descended peoples across the settler colonial project of Turtle Island. BPR was therefore deemed to be a fitting if not appropriate research approach since it would help regenerate prospects for the development of local Black coalitions as part of a strategy of radical resistance under the direction of local Black organizers and the BPR team.

The scope of BPR emerges as an offshoot of participatory action research (PAR) (Drame& Irby, 2016) and is characterized by: (1) researchers who self-identify as Black persons, (2) prioritizes Black experiences and perspectives while decentering whiteness in this regard, (3) privileges peoples of African descent "…for Black empowerment, healing, and liberation, and recognizes that (4) the normative underpinnings of PR are suspect and subject to cultural and political critique" (Drame & Irby, 2016, p.7; Lenette, 2022, p.29). BPR's capacity to maintain active conversation limits the risk of re-instating structural violence via cultural imperialism (hooks, 2015) while creating space to exchange and enable the unfolding of understandings of intersectional anti-Blackness. At the same time, BPR affirms "learning how to stand alone, unpopular, and sometimes reviled, and how to make common cause with those other identified as outside the structures in order to define and seek a world in which we can all flourish" (Lorde, 2018, p.34). BPR heeds Lorde's advice (2018) "…to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (p.35).

Adopted in order "to understand and improve the world by changing it" (Lenette, 2021, p.1), PAR is an openly political (Jordan, 2003; Kapoor & Jordan, 2009) research strategy that has roots in social movements in the "Third World" going back to the 1960s (Kapoor & Jordan, 2009) and is thus concerned with "'world making not 'world mapping' " (Baldwin, 2012, p.468). Emerging in the 1970s out of a critique of historically extractive research (Lenette, 2022), PAR is based on an ethical commitment to working *with* as opposed to *on* people (Baldwin, p.467), who are "subordinate, marginalised, and oppressed groups [seeking] to change their circumstances" (Jordan, 2003, p.189; Kapoor & Jordan, 2009). PAR, is a research methodology "not only of the margins, but of the marginalised" (Jordan, 2003, p.198).

There is a "broad spectrum of approaches to participatory research" (Jordan, 2003) within the sphere of PAR as it emerged as "a blend of a broad range of research approaches and

epistemologies that include participatory research, action research, feminist praxis, critical ethnography, aboriginal research methodologies, transformative education, critical and eco-pedagogies, and popular and community education" (Jordan, 2009, p.16). As such, there is no one type or way to approach PAR (Jordan, 2003; Lenette, 2022; Jordan & Kapoor, 2016). On the subject of coalition building, PAR is valuable "as a network-building methodology as in the case of stimulating the development of anti-dispossession or anti-colonial networks of subaltern movements engaged in a trans-local politics addressing neoliberal projects of rural dispossession" (Jordan & Kapoor, 2016, p.136). With similar racialized and casteist contexts of dispossession in mind, Kapoor (2019, p. 87) defines an "anticolonial participatory action research" (APAR) as being "informed by an oppositional politics addressing colonial continuities pertaining to place/land/territory, labor/bodies, culture/knowledge/racialized identities and production/social relations, actively working towards extending the potential for flattening hierarchical social relations of knowledge/cultural and material production." Additionally, "APAR research relations augment socio-political efforts towards the increased commoning and collectivization of research knowledge production and its utilizations, emphasizing collective usage for the immediate socio-political productivity of the struggle at hand" (p.87).

Institutionalized and formally academized PAR, however, falls short as a methodological approach when seeking to engage Black participants in collective and collaborative discussions on Black organized resistance for social change. More importantly, "academic PAR" (Kapoor, 2009) fails to realize the complexities of anti-Blackness caused by anti-Black racism that remain susceptible to being replicated through traditional qualitative and PAR research alike. Furthermore, PAR does not account for the ways in which "*researching while Black"* (Drame & Irby, 2016, p.5) is a distinct experience. As organizers and researchers who prioritize and attempt to live through anti-oppressive praxis, BPR provides a useful framework that restructures normative research frameworks towards a praxis which restructures non-hierarchical practitioner-participant (racial) dynamics. BPR is a research approach where research participants investigate and re/produce knowledge as co-researchers in a collaborative relationship (Baldwin, p.467) to improve their lives (Lenette, 2022).

As Black research practitioners who strive to hold anti-oppressive praxis when conducting research alongside Black participants and communities, we must consider some of the following priorities. First, we need to be aware of the role of Black researchers as "cultural brokers

or "bridges" between White-dominated institutions and marginalized Black communities" (Drame & Irby, 2016, p.1) that are inequitably accessible—especially and often by groups or peoples who are typically made subjects/objects of research. Research practitioners, such as myself therefore hold a responsibility to share access to this archived knowledge that needs to be actively streamed out of higher education (Drame & Irby, 2016) towards individuals and communities prone to only being researched and no more.

Second, the use of BPR, PAR, or other anti-oppressive research approaches does not safeguard or eliminate the pervasive nature of anti-Black racism within Black communities: it is still important to be cautious and responsive to the reality that even when a Black researcher is involved, the abuse of power, privilege and access is still conceivable. Taking this into account, BPR places the responsibility on Black research practitioners to "attend to positionalities, power differentials, personal biases, and the racial oppression inherent in academic research [which] risk reproducing the very forms of oppression that participatory approaches seek to disrupt" (Drame & Irby, 2016, p.3).

Finally, as an "explicitly antiracist and decolonial" (Lenette, 2022, p.29) research methodology, it is in these ways that BPR uniquely responds to the ontological realities experienced by Black peoples who embody insider-outsider relations. hooks (2015) describes this coupling of knowledge and experience, or 'lived experiences' as a "mode of seeing" that understands that our existence "…in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body" (p.xvii) while also recognizing that "our survival depended on an ongoing public awareness of the separation between margin and center and an ongoing private acknowledgment that we were a necessary, vital part of that whole" (p.xvii). BPR in the final analysis then offers the space to participate in all or some aspects of the process, including research design, data collection and analysis, and reporting and dissemination (Lenette, 2022).

By generating insights with local Black organizers regarding anti-Black resistance, this research project used BPR to co-investigate various prospects of Black coalition building as a form of anti-Black resistance that could serve as an effective tool to resist anti-Black racism together.

As such, this research project was guided by the following research questions which were developed a-priori and during the BPR process (emergent) collaboratively:

(1) What is the historical legacy and context of Black migration, anti-Black racism and anti-racist Black organizing in Canada?

(2) What can be learned from contemporary cases of anti-Black racist organizing to

inform Black organizing and coalition building?

(3) How might Black theoretical traditions and Black anti-racism education

inform organizing and coalition building?

(4) What are the perspectives and analyses of contemporary Black organizers and coalition

builders regarding anti-Black racist organizing?

(5) What are some key platforms that can or should inform and guide organizing and

coalition building work?

(6) What is the role for anti-racist education in anti-Black racist organizing?

Research Design and Process

The BPR process engaged a total of 10 Participant Organizers (representing 5 organizing groups) for a duration of 14 months from February of 2020 until the conclusion of data analysis in June of 2021 and subsequent member checks and joint discussions or thesis draft readings since. The research took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, with short and long-term impacts on Black organizing. This BPR was also simultaneously situated within the Black Lives Matter (BLM) era which was re-invigorated by the murder of George Floyd in late May of 2020 sparking mass local and international protests.
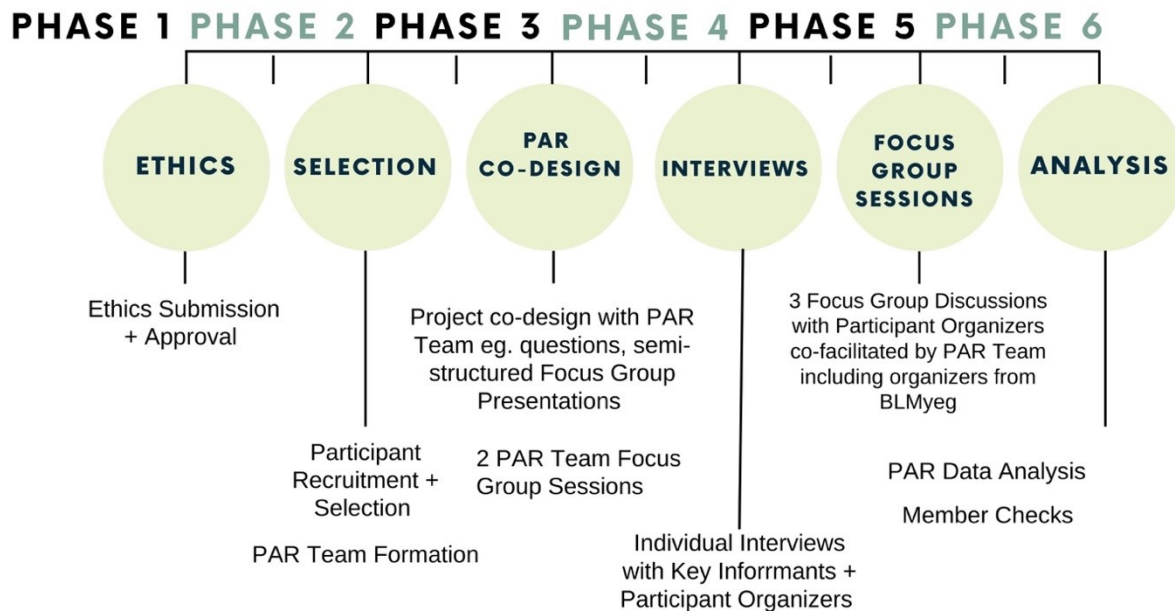
Figure 4.1 6 Phases of Research Process. Please note that work that overlapped across stages are demonstrated by description overlap detailed under each stage/phase.

Designing the research project was a cooperative, collaborative, and coalitional process. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the question of Black coalition building has been on the minds of Black co-organizers I have worked alongside for years. While many barriers including the hegemonic nature of historical Black community groups/organization that prevented the exploration of what this could look like in practice prior to starting this project, this research opportunity presented an avenue for a comprehensive study outside of our local situation to improve Black organizing/coalitions on an individual, collective, and ideally beneficial on a community-level. This research project was completed in 6 stages: (1) ethics project design, submission, and approval; (2) participant recruitment and selection for Key Informants, Black organizers, and BPR members and simultaneous (3) co-development of the project design, which included co-drafting questions and developing semi-structured focus group presentations that we would later co-facilitate; (4) conducting individual interviews with Key Informants, co-facilitating focus group discussions with BPR members and Black organizers, and (6) and collectively analyzing focus group discussions as a BPR team while conducting member checks with participants, as needed.

We were initially unaware of the pandemic's continual impact. Fortunately, I had not yet begun individual interviews and focus group discussions along with the research participants at this time. Changes to the research site and setting from in-person to teleconference was therefore discussed and decided with my thesis supervisor. Hacker (2013) sheds light to the reality that the environment of research is prone to change; priorities and the people involved in the community may shift or change altogether. In our case, the research setting was shifted to take place digitally via teleconferencing, which included the use of videoconference and phone. Individual interviews offered the choice for interviews to be conducted over the phone or through videoconference depending on the participant's comfort with technology as well as their personal capacity at the time considering the transition from school, workdays, and other aspects of "regular life" from in-person to teleconferencing platforms, such as Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and FaceTime, and others. According to Dr.Bailensons's study featured on Stanford News (Ramachandran, 2021), the transition towards teleconferencing platforms such as the above listed are responsible for causing "Zoom fatigue". Out of 11 individual and joint interviews, 2 interviews were conducted via phone as opposed to with the use of videoconferencing. All focus group sessions

were conducted via teleconference. Participants were offered the opportunity to have their cameras on or off with the understanding that these engagements were not only within their private homes but potentially laborious engagements after already long digital work/school days. While all participants started and ended every interview with their cameras on, they fluctuated with their use of their cameras during the focus group interviews.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

Given that the research project was located during the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, participant recruitment was solely engaged through digital and referred networks. Two strategies employed included contacting prospective groups digitally as well as via word of mouth between organizers which redirected local Black community organizers of interest to myself. Considering the inherently relational nature of community organizing, it was challenging to connect with groups digitally at a time when the world slowed down due to the implementation of safety restrictions. Upon the mutual agreement of a handful of research participants who agreed to serve as BPR members, these organizers and myself mapped local Black community efforts based on our existing knowledge coupled with digital searches of recent and currently active Black community organizers. Despite the barriers and limitations that arose while approaching Black community organizers during the pandemic, sketching out different areas of community reach, networking across past and current Black organizing channels within and outside of Black community, such as within BLMyeg were helpful recruitment strategies that enabled a wider reach into the local Black community.

Participant Selection. Participation selection criteria was limited to research participants who: (1) self-identify as Black in addition to their respective ethno-cultural identities; (2) were actively committed to local community organizing that centered anti-Black racism resistance; and (3) held a current and ongoing interest and commitment to Black coalition work. Despite these parameters, the environmental scanning and recruitment process was a lengthy one. We therefore prioritized organizing groups that could potentially best create strong foundations for prospective local Black formations. As a result, 4 BPR Team members (including myself) and 5 organizing groups from the ages 18-40 as well as 7 Key Informants were selected as the research participants of this research study. One prospective research participant who communicated interest in the research project was not selected after communicating that they do not self-identify as Black despite being

of African descent. In addition to meeting the selection criteria, I noted additional details that were voluntarily disclosed by participants, such as their ethno-cultural, gender identity, religious and spiritual, past, and current community involvement and relations to better identify a range of intersectional perspectives, experiences, and politics that could be specifically considered during this project. An indication of the breadth and diversity of inclusion of participants became clear when Participant Organizers voiced observations that they did not know each other and nor were they familiar with each other prior to the first focus group session co-facilitated by the BPR team and myself. While two Key Informants had generational roots to Turtle Island via forced migration of the transatlantic slave trade and familial ties to Indigenous Peoples here, it is important to note that though recruitment efforts were attempted, Afro-Indigenous persons were not involved in this project. We hope that the action-oriented nature of participatory action research and coalition building will create a space for the future inclusion of Black and Afro-Indigenous Peoples beyond this project.

Overview of Participant Contributions and Demographics

Research participants were divided into three cohorts: 7 Key Informants, 10 Black Organizers from 5 organizing groups, and 4 BPR members with the inclusion of myself. As previously noted, a combined total of 20 research participants took part in this research study.

Participant Type	Organizer Name	Organizer Group	Identity Context
Key Informants (7)	Chantel she/her	Ebony (no longer exists)	Caribbean
	Bashir he/him	BLMyeg co-founder, digital organizer	Somali
	Darren he/him	5Artists1 Love and Ebony	Caribbean
	Deborah she/her	Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots (SCMR)	African American: descendant of Black Pioneers
	Dorothy she/her	NBCC, Elder	Caribbean
	Jennifer she/her	E4A	Black
	Leander he/him	Elder, descendant of Black Pioneers	African American: descendant of Black Pioneers
BPR Team (3)	Amanda she/her	Past student groups, local groups	Nigerian

	Karis she/her	Past student groups, local groups	Nigerian
	Kwame they/them	BLMyeg	Sierra Leonian
Participant/Black Organizers (10)	Abby she/her		Eritrean and Ethiopian
	Amina she/her		Somali
	Timiro she/her		Somali
	Dakarai he/him	Black Teachers Association (of Alberta)	Black
	Celine she/her	Black Student's Association (UofA)	Afro-Brazilian
	Marvin he/him		African American
	Dulu she/her	South Sudanese Youth Canada (SSYCAN) and (SSYEG)	South Sudanese
	Olga she/her		South Sudanese
	Ihsan she/her	BLMyeg and BLM High school	Somali
	Sabannah she/her		Somali and Russian

Table 4.1 This table provides an overview of all participants and aspects of their identity they were willing to share. All Black Organizers except for 1 was completing or has completed their undergraduate degree.

BPR Team

In addition to their role as Black Organizers, the 3 community organizers who made up the BPR Team: (1) supported the initial and progressive direction of the research study; (2) co-facilitated focus group discussions/sessions alongside myself; and (3) collaboratively analyzed research data (transcribed interviews, discussions, and relevant literature). Before the selection of participants or holding 3 focus group discussions with Participant Organizers, BPR Team members and myself held 2 of our own focus group discussions. These sessions supported our understandings of past Black resistance and coalition work, the complexities of organizing on Indigenous Land, and Black radical theories that informed our understandings of Black diasporic organizing while strengthening the direction of the research project.

Key Informants

Seven participants served as experts and knowledge keepers on the topic of historical and contemporary local Black organizing and coalition building efforts. They were therefore selected to share their experiences, knowledge, and rich perspectives to inform current and future Black individual and organized resistance efforts. They included elders and current and past community organizers and leaders.

Black Organizers

A total of 10 Black Organizers were interviewed individually or alongside their co-organizer within their shared organizing group. As previously mentioned, this study involved extensive dialogue with community organizers prior to its commencement. Various exchanges discussed interest in participation, possibilities and challenges of coalition formation, respective organizing commitment and contributions across community groups, and capacity for research involvement. Upon selection of participant organizers, those who communicated greater capacity for involvement were offered the opportunity to support the project within the BPR Team.

<div align="center">

Data Generation

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The data collected throughout this research study was co-designed and engaged as a process of knowledge production using individual and focus group interviews. Our process of co-producing knowledge together consisted of four parts where we shared a multiplicity of perspectives informed by our lived and organizing experiences during: (1) 2 semi-structured focus group sessions as the BPR Team, (2) individual interviews with 7 Key Informants, (3) 4 individual or joint interviews with Participant Organizers from shared organizing groups, and (4) 3 semi-structured focus group discussions co-facilitated by members of the BPR team with Participant Organizers for up to 90 minutes each.

Audio recordings were taken during all interview sessions held over the phone whereas video and audio were taken to capture accurate records of teleconferenced individual interviews and focus group sessions. Following all these engagements, these sources of data were transcribed from voice and video recordings. Field notes during each session recorded comments and questions for member checks, as necessary. This process of data generation was not one-dimensional and thus involved: silence and discomfort between participants when discussing practices of siloism, disagreement through the exchange of conflicting ideas, excitement regarding coalition formation, and shared experiences of anti-Black racism and other interactions with systems of oppression. All of these aforelisted experiences nurtured a sense of Black epistemology that affirmed, questioned, and expanded our personal understandings of "how we know what we know".

As discussed in Chapter 1, the onset of the pandemic limited possibilities of conducting individual interviews and focus group sessions with participants. Because of this, initial plans to connect with community organizers across community and organizing sites were not possible. I recognize that this prevented organic meetings between emerging and disconnected organizers that

may have broadened the study's diverse participant range. Time was a huge factor. This project was conducted during a period where the world froze while simultaneously sped up globally extending the productivities of school and work at home. This further contributed to stretching and exhausting community organizers whose labour was already spread thin. On the other hand, while digital communication proved to be very efficient and effective during the ongoing pandemic, it had challenges. One of the many limitations posed by videoconferencing was constant and consistent digital communications considering that participants were digitally active throughout their work and school days. And even though participants were very active in their contributions both individually and collectively in sessions, we learned that digital participation does take away from the relational advantage of organizing in person or in real life, IRL, as typed digitally.

BPR Team Focus Group Sessions

Semi-structured sessions with the BPR Team were the first focus group sessions. As a start to the data generation process, BPR team members and I first sketched out what focus group sessions with Participant Organizers would look like during our own 2 focus group discussions held prior to meeting collectively with Participant Organizers. These 2 sessions provided a shared space to co-define the direction the groundwork of the research project wherein we: (1) discussed the topics of focus and exchanged ideas for open-ended questions for our discussions, (2) semi-structured the upcoming 3 focus group discussions with Participant Organizers, (3) and developed open-ended questions and reviewed the construction of visual tools for sessions. In addition to planning during our sessions, BPR team members and I prepared for focus group discussions by holding what we called "political study" sessions. After we read the following selected work independently, each of us presented a focused summary and analysis that guided our collective discussions in response to the literature. The literature selected for the two sessions were: off our backs inc.'s record of the "combahee river collective: a black feminist statement" (1979), Byrd's "Weather with You: Settler Colonialism, Antiblackness, and the Grounded Relationalities of Resistance" (2019), Amadahy and Lawrence's "Indigenous Peoples and Black People in Canada: Settlers or Allies?" (2009), and Calliste's "Influence of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movement in Canada" (1995).

These preliminary sessions amongst us coalesced our organizing experiences and expanded our understanding of past local and regional Black resistance and coalition work, the complexities of organizing on stolen and occupied Indigenous Land (Turtle Island), and Black radical theories that informed our understandings of Black diasporic organizing and strengthened the direction of

the research project. These sessions also contributed to the development of the project's structure, developed the topic foci of the upcoming focus group discussion, and catalyzed the study's methodological approach. By the second BPR session I was conducting individual interviews with Key Informants and Participant Organizers.

Focus Group Discussions

Though we initially planned and attempted to hold 3 sessions with Participant Organizers (not including one with BLMyeg organizers) to be co-facilitated by the BPR team, we decided to hold 2 due to limited time and capacity available during the window of ethics. As such, both groups of participants (Participant Organizers and the BPR Team) engaged with the following 5-6 open-ended questions listed in the table below:

Focus Group Sessions with Black Organizers co-facilitated with BPR members

Session One *Black Coalitional Building* **Selected Work:** "Combahee River Collective: The Black Feminist Statement" (1979)	The first session sought to: • provide a comprehensive overview of the thesis/research project, • introduce Black Participatory Research (BPR) as the research methodology, • spark discussion with regards to Black historical organizing	1) Session One addressed the following guiding questions: 2) What are historical examples of Black organizing for social change? 3) Why does historical organizing matter? 4) Which historical examples of organizing best inform our organizing strategy towards coalition building? 5) What is anti-racism?
Session Two *Defining and Strengthening Alliances for Black Coalition Building* **Selected Work:** Reagon, B.J (1983). Coalitional Politics.	The second session sought to: • (re)define coalition • discuss prospects and expectations of coalition • engage participants in mapping current local Black organizing	1) Session Two raised the following: 2) What is coalition building? 3) Why should we build coalition? 4) What are the prospects of coalition building? 5) What are the ways that we organize together? Collaborate? 6) What are the ways that we are currently in an alliance as Black organizers? 7) What organizing groups are affiliated with one another?

Table 4.2 This table provides an overview of the 3 focus group discussion questions and relevant literature with Black Organizers and BPR members.

Black Lives Matter: BLMyeg on Praxis

A focus group discussion was also held with a group of community organizers from BLMyeg's Praxis working group. Apart from some of our personal involvements in the local chapter, this project recognizes the inclusion of BlackLivesMatter for many other reasons:

▸ We were cognisant that we exist/ed in the so-called BLM era that has contributed to catalyzing digital organizing

- The re-emergence of BLM on a local level was a critical turning point in local Black resistance that brought together Black organizers (and non-Black organizing efforts)
- Global and local 2020 protest(s) not only brought together 15,000 peoples in local response to the murder of George Floyd with resistance to police brutality against Black and Brown bodies, but also achieved a local shift, widespread conversation(s) amongst non-Blacks that (re)considered institutional violence caused by policing in schools/school resource officers, carding and policing overall. The School Resource Officer program was removed from Edmonton Public Schools as a result. The reality that this program lacked any evaluation[27] since its inception was prioritized as a huge concern.

In conclusion, the following overview demonstrates the ways in which data was generated in relation to the research questions:

Research Questions	Key Informants	Participant Organizers	BPR Team	Focus Group Discussions	Observations & Member Checks	Reports
▶ What is the historical legacy and context of Black migration, anti-Black racisms and ARBO in Canada?	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
▶ What can be learned from contemporary cases of ARBO to inform Black organizing and coalition building?	✓	✓	✓	✓		
▶ How might Black theoretical traditions and Black Antiracism education inform organizing and coalition building?		✓	✓	✓	✓	
▶ What are the perspectives and analyses of contemporary Black organizers and coalition builders regarding anti-Black racist organizing? ▶ What are some key (identifiable) platforms that can/should inform and guide organizing and coalition building work? ▶ What is the role for anti-racist education in anti-Black racist organizing?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Table 4.3 This table demonstrates the ways in which each this project's research question were addressed according to the research methods utilized.

Data Analysis

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[27] Resistance to policing in schools across Edmonton Catholic schools is still a concern. Dr. Alexandre Da Costa and Bashir Mohamed continue to address this via "The Edmonton SRO Research Project" (SRO Research Project (n.d), where they have provided a Critical Analysis of the ECSD SRO Program.

Working through data generated from individual and group sessions not only confirmed the need for Black coalitional spaces as well as affirmed the need for enclosed Black spaces despite and because of this anti-Black world. Though our organizing work in solidarity and active alliance with other causes, our work was directed towards anti-Blackness. Participants did not centre their conversations around the need for anti-racism. Rather, they responded to questions of anti-racism by sharing their individual and collective efforts against anti-blackness. Data analysis was undertaken in two ways throughout this research project. Relevant literature pertaining to Black coalition building was first studied and analyzed by 3 members (Amanda, Kwame, and Karis) of the BPR Team. Using literature selected after identifying key areas of the research project, we first studied the selected texts independently and then analyzed the literature drafting our understandings, assumptions, and questions for further collective discussion. We then came together to facilitate political study on selected literature to develop the foundation of our program of action. I started this final stage of the research project by completing transcribing the audio and video-recorded interviews while applying pseudonyms for names and locations where applicable to protect those who requested anonymity.

Member-checks informed data analysis as I took up numerous opportunities to clarify details, perspectives, and discussions with participants individually and as needed. I then reviewed all transcripts from individual and focus group interviews at length sketching the following codes and themes by applying thematic coding: (1) Black organizing strategies, (2) agents of resistance, (3) sites of resistance, (4) barriers, risks, harms of anti-Black organizing, (5) mapping Black organizing, and (6) Black-Indigenous decolonial praxis. As mentioned above in the data generation section, data was also collectively developed from focus group discussions where Black Organizers and the BPR team co-created data based on personal and generational organizing experiences gained and in relation to literature sources provided in advance for reflection and excerpts displayed during 2 focus group sessions co-facilitated by the BPR Team and myself.

Catalytic Validity and Trustworthiness of BPR

In what follows catalytic validity, transparency, equitable participation, privacy, and confidentiality are discussed to explain the ways a commitment to ethics was considered and prioritized in this BPR project. Though emerging and disconnected organizers and organizing groups may have been missed, the selection of organizers through referral from organizing groups and organizers I have made organizing relations with, were already involved in the project

was very beneficial as it ensured an existing sense of trust and familiarity. While this project involved participants who were ethnically and partly generationally diverse, participants were not diverse across gender and sexual identity.

As developed by Lather (1986) and cited in Reason & Rowan (1981) and Brown & Tandom (1978), catalytic validity can be recognized with the use of triangulation, reflexivity, and member checks that attempt to privilege the participants as knowledge holders of the topic of discussion through what Freire (1973) calls the process of "conscientization". Together, these practices served as strategies to initiate and build individual and collected trustworthiness. Member checks were helpful in various and differing ways; this practice was performed by: 1) privately revisiting conversations, comments, and behaviours that were observed during focus group discussions; 2) verbal confirmation and echoing reiterations of responses throughout individual and joint interviews as well as focus group discussions to confirm sound interpretation and application prior to analysis; 3) sending highlighted areas, discussions, and or images/schemas, as requested or needed to ensure parallel translation of discussion to application mid- and post-analysis. As charted in the table above (in the Data Generation section), a dependence on various data sources and methods demonstrated convergence and counterpatterns across in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, reviewing researcher field notes, and reports, such as census data.

Ethical Considerations

Transparency, Inclusive, and Equitable Participation

Prospective and selected research participants were introduced to ethical standards and commitments as it pertained to this research at several stages during this project. During the recruitment stage, each prospective participant was introduced to this project's unique nature with an explanation of its commitment as a community-informed research study and associated ethical requirements that would support my personal fulfilment of a master's program in educational policy studies. Upon confirming their participation during the selection process, participants received an email enclosed with the research outline and interview questions prior to participating in their individual and focus group interviews to prepare their thoughts and perspectives prior to the scheduled discussion. Throughout the project participants were provided the flexibility of changing their name and identifiers, removing any information they shared, and withdrawing from the research project at any point upon their request.

Prior to data review and analysis with research participants, I worked with each participant to ensure clarity and anonymity in their responses by removing their names and any other identifiers prior to sharing excerpts with the BPR Team. During the final stages of the research, participants were provided the opportunity to review the research project. Despite achieving a sense of diversity in participant selection, equitable participation will always be a dynamic concern: participatory research can always be more equitably representative of the participants it aims to work alongside. I am of the understanding and belief that neither me nor the 13 participant organizers can represent the whole Black community/ies—including within their own locale. Foundational to this understanding is the fact that diverse representation does not equate to equitable representation. As alerted by (Kincheloe, 2009) "[e]ssentialist tendencies must be questioned in critical PAR—a questioning that allows for a rigorous and genuine dialogue between researchers coming from diverse places in the web of reality. Essentialism constitutes a fetishization of democratic inclusivity that undermines theorizing and action that understands the sociopolitical construction of all perceptions (p.112). Diversity therefore serves a starting point for discussions. Unequal Diasporic/ "back home" relations and settler relations must therefore be taken seriously to work towards collective power. While local community organizing across community groups is somewhat diverse in cultural representation of peoples of African descent, this is an active effort that must be attempted in silos, joint organizing, and coalitional work given the recycled nature of organizers and—for different reasons—organizing groups.

As discussed in further detail in the Program of Action of Chapter 5, one of the many challenges of community organizing is that in many ways this work is taken up or shared by the same or recycled community organizers across different community spaces. We see this when there is a saturation of community organizers from the same ethno-cultural diasporic regions and or ethnocultural/religious identities; generalizations are more likely to be linked to Black identities despite being one of the most diverse continents to exist. Considering this, I strongly attempted to bring in community organizers who were not the same across different organizing groups. Not only would this be a concern for equitable representation of local organizing, but for the confidentiality of organizers who were involved in this project.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Concerns of Cooption and Fear of Consequences

Many participants expressed a fear of material consequences such as discrimination in their field of work and a loss of employment that could result from their involvement in the study. Despite

the façade of thousands of individuals, groups, organizations, corporations, and settler colonial governance structures that publicized their newly found anti-racism with the rise of Black Lives Matter (BLM) in response to the murder of George Floyd in June of 2020 (Kundnani, 2023), participants adamantly communicated the importance of their anonymity. Their places of work may publicly declare outward stances of "diversity, inclusion, and equity" or "anti-racism" displayed in social media posts, committee names and events, departmental title change, and or policy implementation with claims of standing with Black peoples and communities. The work conditions of these participants as employees, however, remain at-risk if they oppose true commitments of white supremacist, settler colonial and capitalist ideals with the aim of producing meaningful structural changes. It is for this reason that some participants want to de-identify their public involvement in resisting anti-Black racism and anti-Blackness. Data protection was therefore one of the most important considerations of ethical practice. While Lennette (2022) recognizes that "[i]n some contexts, visibility of co-researchers is the most important research outcome at a personal or communal level" (p.81), the identity of co-researchers cannot be compromised and wishes to protect their identity and identifying factors are ethical principles that contribute to greater safety when attempting to archive Black counter narratives. During the early stages of the recruitment and selection process, prospective participants were informed that the privacy of their identity and any personal identifiers would be protected if and how they desired. To do so, participants were offered the option to create or select a pseudonym that could be used upon their agreement throughout the research project to ensure their anonymity. Participants were also asked if there was any other information that they wanted to make private, such as details regarding their profession/career, past or current employment, the name of organizing groups that may be disclosed during individual and or focus group discussions. In the case that participants also did not want to risk their identity being exposed to other participants, every research participant was offered the opportunity to refrain from joining focus group discussions to ensure that their identity remained concealed and their work confidential. Participants who requested that their participation be anonymous were referred to with their pseudonym across all transcriptions. With recognition to the changing nature of everyone's lives, participants were asked if they were still comfortable with maintaining their chosen name and data provided during their interviews at various stages throughout the research project. And lastly, participants were offered a review of

their written transcript with excerpts intended for use in the dissertation for their review. These approved excerpts were only used for co-analysis co-analyzers and myself.

CHAPTER 5 LEARNING AND LIVING ANTI-BLACK RACISM AND THE WORK OF RESISTANCE THROUGH BLACK PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH (BPR)

Grounded by Afropessimism and Black Anarchism as joint theoretical orientations that evolved out of our earliest BPR exchanges, this project co-investigates the nuanced ways in which Black organizers and organizing groups respond to continued anti-Black structural violence both locally and regionally. By engaging BPR methods at the heart of our study, we analyze personal, generational, and historic organizing and resistance experiences to consider future possibilities of local/regional Black coalition formations for collectivized action.

Participants recounted past and current organizing efforts for social change to offer a collective inquiry of local and regional community organizing and coalition experiences to inform anti-Black racist resistance and education throughout this chapter. Our BPR process started with 2 preliminary sessions wherein the BPR Team including myself initiated the knowledge generation process. Simultaneous to these sessions were individual interviews I conducted with Key Informants while separately engaging individual or joint interviews with Black Organizers from shared Black organizing groups. After respective engagements with the BPR Team, Key Informants, then Black Organizers, the BPR Team and myself co-facilitated 2 combined focus group sessions with Black Organizers.

Critical to the BPR process was the co-analysis of perspectives, knowledge, and experiences shared by local Black organizers (including the BPR Team). Out of this BPR process were three significant lessons for contemporary and future anti-Black resistance ordered in this chapter as: (1) anti-Black racism and the labour of anti-Black resistance, (2) Black Organizers and anti-Black organizing praxis, and (3) continuing BPR Conversations for Anti-Black organizing and coalescing.

In the initial phase, BPR members and I held two BPR focus group sessions. This digital space served as an opportunity to plan for upcoming combined focus group discussions we would later co-host for Black Organizers. In doing so, several outcomes were achieved as it offered us the opportunity to: (1) co-produce knowledge together as we drew from our distinct and shared organizing experiences, (2) engage in 'political study' (study, reflection, and critical analysis) through the study of selected relevant literature and (3) co-define individual interviews and co-develop the thematic structure of focus group discussions we would later have with Black Organizers which in turn activated theoretical and conceptual directions for the overall research project.

After our independent reading of the following four texts we took up during our political studies, we came together via teleconference to collaboratively investigate and broaden our understandings of: the complexities of Black-Indigenous relations on Turtle Island using Amadahy and Lawrence (2009); anti-Blackness grounded in Indigenous perspectives with Byrd (2019); historical Black coalition organizing by NBCC across Canada as archived by Calliste (1995); and Black radical coalition efforts that struggled to intersect gender and sexual oppression in the United States with the Combahee River Collective (1979). Each member selected one article from the above-mentioned four texts to lead discussion by addressing the same six questions I posed during individual interviews and joint interviews with Key Informants and Black Organizers. The subsequent pages delve into the ways in which these four texts strengthened our knowledge of Black historical organizing and coalition work in Canada and the United States enabling us to reflect on contemporary organizing experiences while enriching our settler colonial analysis. In summary, our two BPR sessions put 'political study' to reflexive practice while nurturing the direction of our overall research study. As we exchanged interpretations of the above four texts, we took seriously the question of Black freedom when asking ourselves if we, as Black peoples will ever be free if Black existence/survival is dependent on never-ending Black struggles.

Confronting the nature of Black resistance in 2020 through BPR sparked a collaborative process that generated three fundamental conceptual components that were useful to our greater study of what can be considered, as a continuum of Black resistance. Our first arrival embraced the reality that Black resistance is central to Black life and therefore Black survivals. In this sense, surviving Black life through individual and organized resistance has become inherent to our ways of life. The next notion that grounded our exchanges was the structural reality that Black lives continue to be uniquely and universally exploited within this racial capitalist settler colonial system reproduced by Negrophobia both *because of* and *despite* enduring Black struggles or what Gordon (2022) conceptualizes as the "fear of Black consciousness". This understanding was intensified through linking Wilderson's concept of 'social death' (2020) with our initial musings of what we echoed in our conversations as 'Black death'. The final and most significant point that defined our dialogue traced how capitalism is structurally attached to racism with respect to Black individual and organized resistance. In doing so, we considered the ways in which the partnership between racism and capitalism systemically hinders opportunities and prospects of

Black radical consciousness and revolutionary action including abolitionist and anarchist projects of destruction for alternative paradigms and world making centered in liberation and justice.

Out of this coalesced understanding we co-developed, we understood that individual and organized anti-Black resistances are on the one hand irrevocable from our daily lives and imperative for the ultimate determination of Black persons and communities. At the same time, resistance has become formulaic to the perseverance of Black peoples and societies. Put differently, the collective discussions we had equipped us with the perspective that Black resistance and Black life are essentially reciprocal in design. Using a structural analysis that relies on our ongoing decolonial praxis deepened the above understandings by situating the interdependent dynamics between Black life and resistance within racial capitalist and settler colonial continuing projects. Deconstructing our understanding of Black life and resistance further, BPR members and myself forward the schematic understanding that individual and organized anti-Black resistance is not only necessary for the survival of peoples of African descent, but also structurally *necessitated* through iterative processes of racial capitalist consumptions of Black labour that cyclically exhaust and fatigue Black life, anti-Black resistance, and possibilities for abolitionist to-/and anarchist attempts of destruction to live freely. Building on these initial BPR discourses are the ways that we collectively take issue with the commodification and exploitative nature of Black labour for anti-Black resistance. Our discussion as members of the BPR Team provided in the excerpt below is used to address the systemic and universal ways Black life is occupied by (the labour of) Black resistance that is effectively structured by racial capitalism and settler/neo-colonialism:

Belen …what does free even look like? Is it ever possible [for us] to be free?

Kwame A discord that is dedicated just for Queer Black people … that in itself is rebellion. To be having this work done where they can fully exist liberated, not have to hide themselves and how they express, that can be so revolutionary. There is a person in the chat who [shared that they've] never been able to exist.... being surrounded by Black folk who are not immediately homophobic, transphobic, and violent…that was a space for freedom for them I would argue.

Belen Yes, definitely. I can see pockets of power or pockets of liberation or freedom, but to say we can be free in a realistic way?

Karis I feel like what you said in the beginning: for us to get to that point of freedom, we have to destroy everything. Freedom, I don't think should be each person's definition of

freedom. [All vocally agree] Community building right now, what we are working towards, is our own individual definitions and experiences of freedom. [All vocally agree]

Belen And even back then, what we look to as "freedom" was not freedom…There are so many pockets of oppression that if we went back, we wouldn't want to be there. [All vocally agree] But I think like all of the stuff that we're talking about in terms of like what coalition-building could look like, what we're learning from in terms of historical organizing or people's politics, that is the only way for us to move forward, whatever that looks like.

Amanda What is the goal…what is the point? Does it ever stop?

Kwame I don't think it does at all.

Amanda Then, if it never stops, then the concept of freedom then cannot exist. What are we working towards?

Belen So, this idea that [we are at] right now [is] Afropessimism: the idea that Black life is [structured by] Black death. That's where I am.

Amanda Yes, that is the reality for right now, but then—

Belen When are we planning to live?

Amanda If we're going to say that we have to be intentionally working forever. That's a lot.

Belen Yes, working to death.

For us, Black life was therefore comprehended as sustained by a life of individual, collective, and generational resistance to anti-Blackness and 'social death'. Structured by and reproduced through the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2008), the survivals of peoples of African descent are cyclically dependent on Black resistance, and vice versa: the resistances of Black peoples have always been necessary for the continuation of Black life since the first anarchist resistances to chattel slavery by enslaved Africans to be specific. With this and other forms of anti-Black resistances in mind, it is important to note that neither our engagements nor this greater study identifies one type or set ways of personal and collectively organized resistance, but rather sees that Black peoples continue to resist in a myriad of ways because surviving this anti-Black world via what can be understood as "the spectrum of resistance" is bound to our existences. And although this dissertation does not study all the different ways Black peoples respond to anti-Blackness, it does alert us to the complicit and conflicting ways that some strategies and tactics serve individual benefits at the expense and respective detriment of Black and Indigenous

Peoples. That said, this project is more concerned with the ways we can collectivize to destroy the current neo/colonial structures to create alternative futures that do not reproduce these ideologies, logics, and or systems of oppression.

Central to our critique was the unsurprising realization that emerged during our broader focus group discussions with Black Organizers: most of the organizers involved in our research project were Black women, Queer, and or gender non-conforming as has been the case in our comprehensive organizing experiences. This demonstrated the gendered, sexist, ableist ways Black organizing labour is taken up within and across our communities. Reflecting on our experiences, it was clear that Black labour is very much divided depending on the energy, resources, and experiences of Black women and Black Queer persons. This effectively suppresses and subordinates the efforts and visions of some identities over others. We recognized the ways in which organizing has often been on the backs and at the expense of Black women and Black Queer persons and collectives that were predominant actors for social transformation yet were and remain unrecognized via Black erasures both in text and narratives of anti-Black resistance. It is for these reasons that we prioritize an intersectional anti-Black racist critique while also proposing the need for intersectional Black organizing. What we consider as 'intersectional anti-Black resistance' recognizes, affirms, and responds to the interwoven ways Black peoples are structurally oppressed and made vulnerable including along gendered, sexist, ableist lines as critical to informing the ways we can organize better. This is comprehensively articulated by Kwame who describes,

> …I have a personal stake in my collective liberation on multiple layers that are inherently Black; like how I am disabled is inherently Black […]. It is not the same as like a white person who is Queer. All of my intersections are very, very, very connected to my Blackness so it's like I have a personal stake in that collective liberation. Some of the other people who might be in the space, they might be Black, but they might not have a personal stake in disability liberation and disability justice. They might not have a personal stake in Queer justice and Queer liberation and look at things in gender expansive ways: validating intersex people, validating people who exist outside of the gender binary. They don't have a personal stake and they're not challenged to unpack how they can have power in those ways. Even myself, like and even challenging myself to see how I can have power in different ways. So I think those spaces are actually—like unless they're like facilitated by people who are intentionally prioritizing that you can, like, not exist in those spaces. And I think that's very dangerous to like all the youth who could come into these places or are the people who can come into these spaces who have those different intersections and they're not actually like validated and they're erased and it's like back to like the awakening and the flattening of Blackness that I find so it has been so

revolutionary and like radically changing how I view my like how I want to be doing this work and how I think this should be done. (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Discussion)

By the end of our second session together, BPR members and I reiterated the fact that there is no way out of anti-Blackness within our lifetimes and especially within a world that is structured by racial capitalism and neo/colonialism. As initially expressed by Fanon (1963) then explained by Warren (2015),

> "Black emancipation is world-destructive. Pulverized black bodies sustain the world – its institutions, economic system, environment, theologies, philosophies. Because anti-blackness infuses itself into every fabric of social existence, it is impossible to emancipate blacks without literally destroying the world" (p.219).

Anti-Black Organizing Pedagogy: Learning from the Past for the Present

Education is inseparable from resistance work: learning how to resist anti-Black racism while Black is both relational and reciprocal in practice. Anti-Black organizing as pedagogy is however not restricted to what is mutually exchanged between co-organizers (persons who organize together within shared spaces). As expressed by local Black Organizers who took part in this study, learning resistance also occurs amongst community organizers who mobilize across different local organizing groups at times transcending beyond regional borders and continental boundaries while spanning generations and time periods. Akin to, and part of anti-Black organized resistance is fugitive resistance, which is described by Garvin (2021) as more than "isolated acts of what some call everyday resistance or infrapolitics" (p.15), but rather "an overarching set of political commitments sustained by black institutions and shared visions of freedom and societal transformation" (p.16). As drawn from the insights provided by participants during individual and focus group discussions, learning to organize for social change as well as *while* pursuing social change can be understood as occurring in 4 unique yet interconnected ways—intergenerationally, institutionally, personally, and historically. In a similar and connected vein, the technological age is a fifth or additional mode that has accelerated and facilitates learning from *and* for Black organized resistance across all four of these methods enabling Black organizers to learn from each other through digital archives and archival efforts. Internet—from social media, to digitalized historical film, photos, and print continues to increase access to past and contemporary information or evidence of the continuity of anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity. The digital age we are in is distinct in that it also offers a channel for immediate communication of information that can describe urgency, spark, and expand movements in real life or 'IRL' and hold accountability in radical ways that media has not yet been able to accomplish.

As a starting point, "intergenerational learning" is nurtured throughout ones' life by senior organizers through mentorship and modeling practices, as identified by Choudry (2015) within and outside of family, such as within cultural communities or elsewhere. Often emerging during early schooling, "institutional learning" plays a role in one's upbringing typically encouraging neoliberalized understandings of community work via volunteerism, leadership, and community and international development—all co-options employed for the broader project of white saviourism. Likewise and secondly, institutional lessons are not separate from intergenerational learning. Pedagogies of resistance also occur within family and community channels, such as the growing realization of school communities. As such, familial and greater community groups alike support neoliberal notions of organizing that do not serve liberation, but rather neoliberal and thus neocolonial visions. As explained during one of our BPR sessions, Kwame expands on how their experience of institutional learning occurred for them,

> "I have to admit: I feel like I came to Black organizing—which makes sense—in a very juvenile way, in a very young way, in a very unexperienced way […]. I started organizing in high school or junior high and […] I did Black student groups and […] and I created [the first Black] one in my high school, but like from there I feel like I've actually grown a lot. And I have to say that comes from finally acknowledging my experience and my being more open to me knowing what I can do, what my needs [are], and what I can actually offer to community. I think it came from a place […] of self-work and I'm really happy I'm starting to learn [how to be…] healthy and having an authentic relationship and doing authentic coalition building with other people. Because I think without that, you can do it in really performative ways and you can do it in ways that can actually be more harmful to your communities or the communities you connect to…I'm actually learning that I'm now moving towards coalition building that is really outside of the institutional." (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Session)

The third way we learn to organize against anti-Black racism is through "personal" learning that is sparked by one's individual experiences of oppression which results in a spectrum of surviving Black life in daily resistance to white supremacy and neo/colonialism. Amanda recalls her upbringing as influencing her diasporic organizing upon her arrival,

> "We started in 2014 since moving to Canada…with how we were raised by my family: like my mom always supported youth-led initiatives so I knew when I was moving to Canada that I wanted to do the same sort of work…I met this random girl one day in the mall and she told us about this, youth collective called 'YEGthecomeup' and I think that's really where my thought of how rebuilding Canada works sort of troubled because my first experiences with rebuilding here was with the come up. So basically, we obviously have spaces where we were able to discuss experiences, discuss you know life in Canada because a lot of us….folks were international students…,immigrants, refugees to this country…We also became a space to create better community for ourselves, whatever that meant. And

that meant coming together and learning our culture[s]. That meant coming together and figuring out, like, better representation for ourselves what that meant, coming together to share their struggles with our collective or other people as well. And that's just sort of what we did." (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Session)

Building on Black legacies of resistance is the last mode, "historical learning" takes place across multiple avenues. Related to this, Choudry (2015) explains that learning to organize can be understood as a continuum of formal to informal learning where components of formality exist in informal settings and vice versa depend[ing] on the "process, location, setting, and content" (p.83). Kwame offers that,

"So much of Black activism has been connected to people coming together to study together… even the Black Panther Party, they studied together, they build together. We are like forgetting about our roots that are like more than just like—action looks different. And this is like even connected to disability action because…certain bodies cannot be on the front lines, but certain bodies and abilities can be put to like praxis in different ways. So I think this is like expanding how we even look at what is action" (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Discussion)

As illustrated thus far, historical lessons of anti-Black resistances are inherited genealogically and socio-culturally while also transmitted through the process of 'becoming Black' (Ibrahim,2019) upon arrivals to the Black Diaspora and therefore requires ongoing political historicized studies of Black individual and organized resistance as a critical strategy for continued Black survival. When considered collectively, it is through these four learning processes—intergenerational, institutional, personal, and historical processes—as indicated across participant groupings that neoliberal organizing strategies infiltrate the radical potential and full extent to which we could and should resist anti-Black oppression for long-term social change. And while organized resistance may be strategized and actioned by Black individuals and groups in differing ways as well as for competing motives, resistance for Black liberatory visions continues to be shared across Black communities globally. In a collective effort, we looked inward to identify four strategies to combat the overarching issue of cyclicality that perpetually prevents Black radical resistance, and by doing so interrogate the ways we currently struggle towards Black survivals. In the subsequent sections, this chapter demonstrates how: (1) coactively learning from Black historical resistance, (2) unearthing an intersectional Black praxis, (3) mobilizing beyond what I call, "rhetorics of resistance", and (4) countering hegemonic projects of assimilation while organizing, serve as personal and collective lessons for better anti-Black resistance as well as counters the settler colonial and white supremacist and capitalist projects of Black erasures.

Coactive Historical Learning for Black Organizing.

To quote Karis, one of our BPR Members during our first focus group session with Black Organizers and thus used to position our Methodology's "Collective Rationale", this research study seeks to combat the cyclical tendency of contemporary Black organized resistance to "reinvent the wheel". This systemically cyclical process is mapped out in the Literature review's wide-ranging study of Black coalitional and trans-Atlantic resistance as well as in this chapter where participants individually, jointly, and collectively reflect on the ways in which they have learned from each other or adopted similar and/or shared resistance strategies despite not engaging or learning from the past work of other Black individual resisters and organizing groups. Mirrored responses of Black organized resistance are evident across Black organizing attempts to reinvest in past organizing strategies, structural formations, resistance tactics and remains problematic when we consider its short-term and lasting outcomes of ineffective social change.

The following pages engage the perspectives and experiences conveyed by Black Organizers (and the BPR Team) who propose that activating legacy work to strengthen community-based knowledge of Black historical resistance for broader praxis, is essential. As we have already noted, there are many ways to engage in legacy work. Exclusively reviewing Black history to celebrate or commemorate past efforts and successes of Black organizers and organizing groups however evades possibilities for collective critiques that can be useful for current and future organizing. With this considered, Black Organizers and the BPR Team were introduced to a working digital timeline that sequenced early Black resistance into a visual tool that I developed while working through the thesis project's literature review as an opening to our focus group discussions. They were also informed during this first session that the timelines shared were initial drafts that were limited to critical points throughout the past 400 years and continuing resistances that were taken up by Black diasporic peoples predominantly across Turtle Island in Canada and the United States. Starting in the early 1600s it pointed to the first documented arrivals of peoples of African descent to Canada pausing at 1968 to mark the rise of Black Power.

EARLY RESISTANCE

1526
First Slave Revolt on Turtle Island - Carolinas (NS)
1527
1st Muslim (Moroccan) in Florida as guide to Spaniards.

1608

1st Black Persons | Olivier and Mathieu Da Costa

Arrival of Enslaved Africans to Jamestown, Virginia

Marie-Joseph Angelique
Hanging of "Enslaved Black woman accused of setting fire to the house of her "owner" in Montreal."

1738
Santa Teresa Mose in Florida become s1st free Black town in Turtle Island (NS)

1734

American Revolution Began Blacks fight for both Loyalists and Patriots.
Black Loyalist Exodus
Migration back to Africa (Sierra Leone)

1792

1830
National Negro Convention **Adopted Convention of Colored Men (1)**

Nat Turner leads 2 day rebellion in Virginia. This resulted in many southern states forbidding blacks to preach.

1832
1st Negro anti-slavery conventio held at Philadelphia June 4 183 condemned the West African colonization scheme; advised colored people not to emigrate to Liberia or Hayti and endorsed Canadian plan(1)

Petition of Free Negroes in pursuit of shared Black community versus displacement amongst white people

1810-1850

1804
Haitian Independence declared Slaves in Haiti kill their masters under the leadership of Toussaint L'ouverture.

1812
Uprising of slaves in New York (1)

Underground Railroad
Network of Black peoples and allies who supported the escape of enslaved Africans from US to what is now Canada

Figure 4.1 The first Power Point slide shared with the first focus group discussion.

The timelines were further developed as a research tool for data generation and analysis throughout the study. Contextualizing the thesis' first research question, "what are examples of Black historical organizing for social change?", I shared information gained from the process of conducting my own political and historical study thus far. Referring to the timeline digitally displayed for the collective's view I explained that Black coalitions did not only exist in "Canada" and "the United States" but also across colonial borders,

> "For example, the NAACP was rooted in what is now Canada…, started in Ontario…by Du Bois…there were international movements, like the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) or the building of the Canadian League for the Advancement of Colored People [(CLACP)]…I found that to be really important because they link (referring to CLACP) really closely with the NAACP…" (BPR Member and Researcher, 1st BPR Focus Group Discussion)

If anti-Black racism is considered a crucial part of lifelong learning, then the use of legacy work that recognizes, reflects on, and actively critiques the political and historical realities of Black organized resistances can also realize the fundamental contributions of knowledge mobilization. Knowledge mobilization with respect to re/building or re/thinking organizing practice and strategy is hence essential to effective anti-Black racist education and action for community organizing and or coalition building. This does not suggest that there is only one type of legacy work nor proposes that the development of linear timelines is the most effective tool for mobilizing knowledge as this

is only one of countless ways. Rather, we take issue with the ways in which Black organizing is made cyclical—or repetitive.

Our discussions found that Black organizing that does not make nor have time for what Kwame referred to as "political study" as part of "legacy work" as an active feature is susceptible to contributing to the recurring issue of "reinventing the wheel". This refers to the impression shared by organizers that we are organizing in cyclical ways while under the assumption that we are resuming, supporting, and or correcting prior efforts of Black resistance. Instead, we are for the most part starting from scratch when we resist individually and organize collectively without considering historical, social, and cultural relationality to current and future Black resistance work. And while learning about Black organizing from our community/organizing groups or immediate and extended family members active in/across community is crucial and an integral part of Black community organizing, these arguably provide limited snapshots of learning. If experiences, lessons, and strategies shared do not engage a broader systems analysis, apart from strengthening their understanding and connection to culture, identity, and land back home, local Black organizers do not benefit from the legacies that ought to be shared. Learning from organizing practice, strategy and overall experiences of prior generations Black across Black diaspora could provide a more comprehensive understanding that could strengthen current and future Black organizing. When collectivized as political learning within and across communities, this mobilization of political knowledge in the form of Black histories and practice combined can contribute to a necessary Black consciousness and applied towards social change. Overall, a review and analysis of the digital timeline affirmed that Black peoples were not only present across Turtle Island but have and continue to resist intersectional oppressions driven by anti-Blackness.
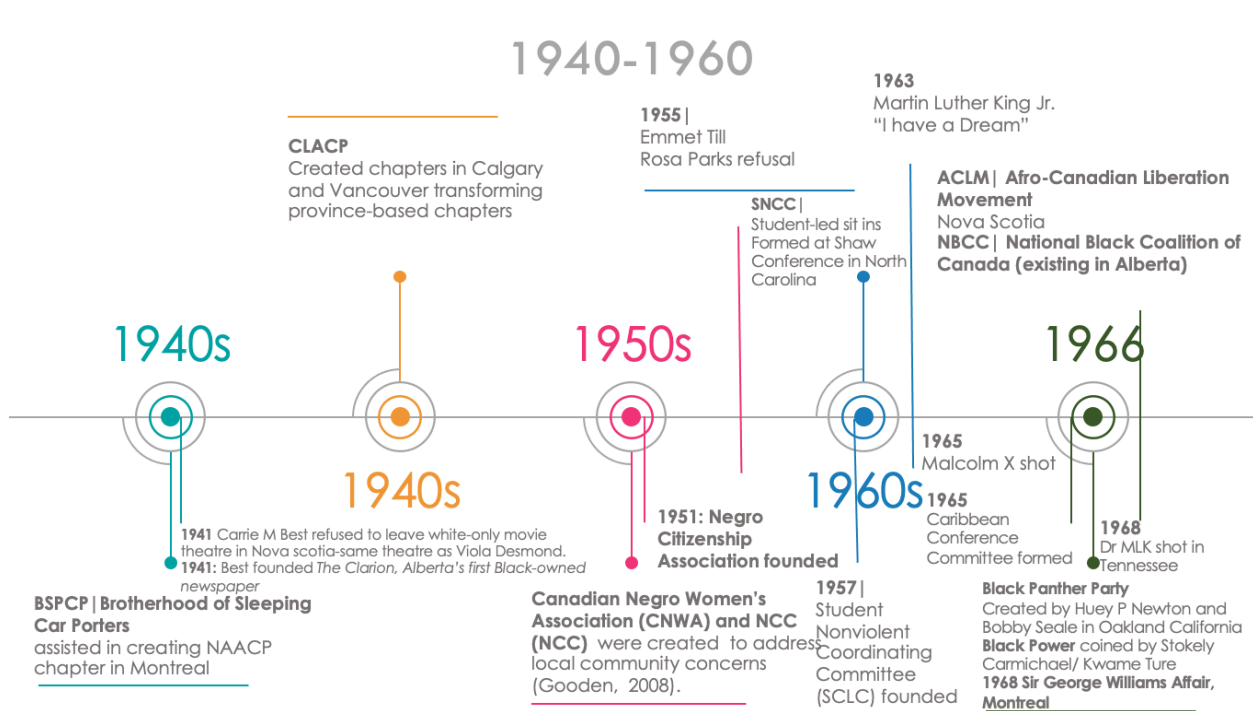
Figure 4.2 The second timeline shared with the first focus group discussion.

This discussion offered Black Organizers and BPR members with a preview of the thesis' foundation . Starting the session with a practice of critically reviewing Black historical resistance through the timeline slides actualized an example of collectivized exchange and critique amongst organizers despite our varying identities, experiences, positionalities, and political understandings. As communicated by Dulu, a Black Co-Organizer from SSYC, "the timeline was very helpful [as] it was informative to know that before the Martin Luther Kings and Malcolm Xs, there were different organizations and coalitions created here in Canada". Dulu's observation shifts our focus from a dependence on individual leadership as an ideal component of movement building to the robust and endless collective work that made these very individuals successful in their resistance efforts elevating them to date. This discussion also demonstrates that while the participants may not be well-informed regarding the intricacies of past individual and or organized trans/Atlantic resistance, learning about historical Black organizing deepens individual and collective understandings of local, regional, and global Black resistance. Commenting on the timeline displayed, BPR member, Amanda reflects that,

> "…between then and now, there's been a narrative that… "Oh, it's a thing of the past", oppression is not like before…like a slavery thing. And because it's very real for us…we see these things…[as] constant and ongoing and not different at all from how they were before. We're having to resist in a different kind of way because the person doesn't believe that they're doing anything wrong in a sense". (BPR Member, 1ˢᵗ Focus Group Discussion)

113

BPR member, Kwame refers to Frantz Fanon to ask,

> "Like cognitive dissonance? ...there's more cognitive dissonance and normalization of what is going on now while before there [was] like an active presence in the white consciousness that they were anti-Back, that they were antagonistic instead of like how currently we're in a state of multiculturalism that gaslights the current anti-Black infrastructure in so-called Canada". (BPR Member, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

Considering the persistent reality of Black erasure, uncovering Black historical truth continues to be a critical part of Black organizing. It survives as political, cultural, and spiritual work that supports Black activists as individuals while informing Black organizing groups and their collective resistance efforts. On a greater scale, it validates Black communities during their learning, unlearning, and relearning of Black legacies of resistance. As raised by BPR Member, Kwame,

> "…when you do, like historical study and legacy work, I think that in itself is something that is so quintessential to Black organizing and Black Radical Theory as a whole….like about legacy work and like disrupting colonial structures, such as….separation and such as…things that disrupt intergenerational…learning, healthy mentorship, healthy community building, that really targets how vulnerability can happen on dynamics of age and vulnerability can happen on dynamics of like disrupting that coalition, disrupting and knowing how like systems of oppression are affecting other black communities and it also leads to a kind of corrosion of solidarity work and comradery that inherently would benefit the Black community as a whole". (1st Focus Group Discussion)

Understandings of Anti-Black Racism and the Question of Purpose, Objectives, and Strategies for Organizing/Coalitions

Unearthing Intersectional Legacies of Black Radical Resistance.
Virtually all Black Organizers and BPR Members in the first focus group discussion were in vocal or visual agreement (via teleconference) when asked if this digital timeline served as a helpful tool to aide in the visualization of historic moments and movement work. Upon further review of the timeline displayed during the first focus group discussion, two participants emphasised that an expansion of the timeline should be made to ensure the inclusion of political theories to unveil the multi-erasures of Black women and Black Queer peoples. Austin (2009) similarly writes that that theory is far from being abstract: it "[…] can bring years of accumulated knowledge to bear on a particular issue or cause and help to prevent strategic mishaps" (p.17). This is further explained by Choudry (2015) who writes that "theory and theorizing are in fact crucial to the ways in which learning happens in movements. BPR Member and BLMyeg

organizer, Kwame specifically took the opportunity to address the limited exposure to Black Feminist theory and the absence of Black Queer theory, resistance, and organizers within the current timeline:

> I think that there could definitely be more around like Black Queerness and like Black Feminism as a whole and like Black gender self-determination and …like examples of Stonewall and other examples of Black people also being at the forefront of those movements. (1st Focus Group Discussion)

Olga, one of the organizers from SSYC added,
> …especially the third wave of feminism: when they added the concept of intersectionality, that was huge in terms of social change and the shift in what feminism became from what it was and who it was centered around to who it was, or who it should be about and what it should be about. (Black Organizer, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

In disagreement, Kwame suggested,
> ...I think Kimberlé Crenshaw actually doesn't link intersectionality to third-wave feminism, especially because I think third-wave feminism in itself is something that is very Western-centric, especially if you understand conversations of like gender, like who in these waves are centered as being like heads of movement. Even if you look at the suffragist movement….have been exclusionary to Black and racialized gendered world. I think in her 1999 paper she makes it very clear that intersectionality is not something that she's coining, but something that has always been happening, and she makes like historical cases of examples of intersectionality…I think intersectionality would be in the school of thought of Radical Black Feminism rather than like third-wave feminism. (BPR Team, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

As recognized in the Methodology chapter, it is significant that research participants guide the methodological approach of a Black Participatory Research (BPR) project with the inclusion of the theoretical and practical ways that we think about seeking alternatives to building or strengthening Black coalition politics. Contributions by BPR Member, Kwame and Black Organizer, Olga affirmed that the research project should be rooted in Black critical theoretical traditions, such as Black Radical Feminist praxis. While in exchange with one another regarding the importance of recognizing the ways in which patriarchy and Queerphobia suppresses, pushes aside, and erases Black women and Black Queer identities, their dialogue demonstrated the need for decolonial reflexive praxis that encompasses Black Radical Feminism as two foundational theories not only for this project, but necessary foundations for Black organizing.

Keeping in mind that "[the timeline] by no means reflects all of our histories" as discussed in this session, Kwame and Olga remind us that to produce comprehensively inclusive work—including the research required for this research project, it's tools and its other developments, it must explicitly reflect the foundational contributions made by Black women and Queer folx. And while

Kwame and Olga disagreed on specifics related to their interpretations of political theory; their exchange demonstrated the reality that within coalition models, or the interaction of different perspectives and understandings, there will be disagreement or contestation that will continue to involve the pedagogical exchange of historic and contemporary experiences. Not only does the gathering of multiple and differing ideologies and experiences strengthen our individual and collective knowledge, but it also addresses gaps and misconceptions through joint political study or exchanges contributing to the expansion of or enhanced "tools" in an organizer or an organizing group's "toolbox".

Mobilizing Past Rhetorics of Resistance while Identifying Cooption.
When reflecting on Black identity formation and representation, participants raised questions regarding the politics of race, belonging, and resistance. Weaving an interconnected thread, they specified the centralization and visibility of Black identity as critical components of anti-Black organizing. Participants across all research cohorts vocalized that Black identity formation with respect to community organizing should be a semi-structured process. Given that racial identity is socially constructed: Black identity has not been static, but fluid. With respect to community organizing, they specified that Black organizers should be able to define the ways in which their Black community groups collectivize to organize, as practiced by the groups interviewed. Participants raised the need for Black organizers to re-define and/or re-assert individual and collective interpretations of Black identity within Black communities as is the case when all intersections of African descent are included based on shared experiences of anti-Blackness. Secondly, participants spoke to the different ways that Black visibility is a critical response to Black erasures. Black Organizers argued that enclosed Black spaces operate as critical spaces for organized resistance that serve as sites of collective and greater communal safety within anti-Black locations or broader anti-Black society.

Black Organizers observed that Black organizing is widespread across Black Diaspora who are dispersed across settler societies as well as on a global scale. Across generations, participants voiced the importance of seeing their interests of creating access to support services that would advance the personal and collective needs defined within their separate organizing groups as Black organizers within Ebony during the 80s) within their greater communities, as described by co-organizers of SSYCAN (circa 2015 - continuing). The progression towards the prioritization of closed Black spaces was also evident across personal organizing experiences shared by participants. Enclosed Black spaces were described as integral to the individual and collective

116

survivals and futurities of Black peoples. Ebony, a Black-led student group in the 1980s and South Sudanese Youth Canada (SSYC) both maintain an organizing purpose of increasing Black representation in 'Edmonton'. For Ebony, it was important that Black young peoples saw positive role models that encouraged a variety of life pathways and careers. Darren, alongside co-organizers, students and members of Ebony were specifically concerned about the ways in which negative stereotypes affected Black persons and influences that may contribute to limiting their future and opportunities,

> "...There was a time where if you saw somebody in the media that was Black… [they were] portrayed a certain way: they were either athletes, musicians…criminals…you know, the stereotypes. And we sought to shatter that…to open the door and say, "Yep, that's what they're telling you…these are your options...and there is so much more". (Darren Jordan, Key Informant: previous organizer of Ebony and Founder of 5Artits1Love, Individual Interview)

Organizing more recently than Ebony with their start in 2015, SSYC on the other hand, brought together South Sudanese young peoples to increase eliminate silos within the greater local South Sudanese community as a means of increasing interpersonal school, career, and life supports locally and regionally as well as in-person and within the digital spaces that they create. They identified that,

> We have to take the risk and start believing in ourselves and start believing "Okay, I can do this. And it doesn't matter what the colour of my skin is like, I am capable of doing this simply because I'm putting effort in. (Dulu, Black Organizer, SSYC, Joint Interview)

Comparable to SSYC, Darren detailed that local Black-led and student-centered programs in the 80s encouraged the growth of Black students by addressing anti-Black stereotypes and introducing positive examples of Black professionals, who would act as mentors. Darren described Ebony's mentorship and leadership program to involve:

> …Black doctors and lawyers and business people…[who] would come in…at various times [and] they would talk about their experience…what I love about it is it just opened its doors for a lot of people who probably thought they would be pigeonholed into a particular career or they had to emulate a certain type of persona when they were around other people. They could be themselves and they could live and learn that. You want to be a baller? You could be a baller. You want to be a rapper? You could be a rapper. You know what else you could do? You could be a therapist, or you could run a business, or you could go into law. In junior high and high school, for you to sit in a room and you're looking at a lawyer that looks like you. It was in the 80s, that sort of thing wasn't very...people weren't very woke…". (Key Informant, Ebony/5Artists1Love, Individual Interview)

In addition to their local and regional Black coalitional organizing, the National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC) gained international recognition in the 60s when they were selected by the Canadian settler colonial government to represent Black Canadians at the 2nd World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture held in Lagos, Nigeria. Dorothy stressed that since the organization's emergence, the work of NBCC valued the recognition and visibility of peoples of African descent at micro-levels representing their organized groups, individuals, and communities of relation at a local and regional/national level. However, this international opportunity that resulted in the first return of many peoples of African descent including herself to Africa and demonstrated the assertion by recent Black Canadians that there was in fact a distinction between Black Canadians and African Americans when they were grouped with the delegation coming from the so-called United States. Given this priority, they required and achieved their own representation.

Defying "Diversity and Inclusion": When will *all* Black Lives Matter?
An overall review of the organizing experiences shared individually and collectively confirm that Black representation continues to be an integral strategy to support Black diasporic individuals within Black organized groups. Historically, this was seen in early Black Pioneer communities, such as the case of Debbie's father, who as the first electrician in what is now Alberta, mentored and "paved the way" for incoming Black young persons who looked for alternative career pathways to working on the railways, as she explained. Both Ebony during the 1980s and SSYC over the past 5 years demonstrated the progression to which Black organizing prioritized closed spaces for Black persons. While Ebony started as a Black-led student group that was open to participation by other ethnic and racial backgrounds, SSYC in greater community as well as BSA and BLM in educational constituents stressed the importance of creating and maintaining closed Black groups. Still, BSA and BLM especially experienced institutional pressure to open their Black student groups to be what their schools argued was "inclusive". Black organized groups today comparatively seek safe spaces where they not only learn from each other and other Black persons, but also need a space to simply exist together when every institutional and colonial effort continues to be made to divide our communities to silos.

Karis stated,
> I also did some Black coalition building at Kings, which is where I went to university
> […]: we led this group like a student club […]. With the nature of King's you can't really
> make things for Black folks you know? When we first started out because we used to be
> an African club but then shit happened and they [referring to King's administration] were

118

like "No we need to have it more inclusive" and whatever—(BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Discussion)

Kwame echoed,

> That is a tactic that happened to me in high school […]. I feel like a lot of Black people have been faced with that. Like we're always told there's never like us where we are not to say that. We're always forced to share ourselves to everybody else when no one prioritizes ourselves. And like it is inherently harmful that we were told in our own self-preservation or self-healing that is exclusionary and harmful to other people around us. (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Discussion)

Karis concluded by saying,
> And then I've since after graduating, I just continued working with Black communities also where I work, because really, where else can you be 100 percent yourself and just be happy? (BPR Member, BPR Focus Group Discussion)

Participants exchanged various understandings of Black identity during their focus group discussions. While all research participants self-identified as Black as per the research project's eligibility criteria, they were in contestation when identifying and navigating monoracial, multiracial, and multi-ethnic identities or essentially deconstructing Black identities. Black Organizer and Black Students Association (BSA)'s President (2020-2021), Marvin expressed limitations that are carried with identifying as Black because when we are "... defining [ourselves] as Black, now we're putting our people under the definitions that were Caucasian constructs" (Session Two Focus Group Discussion). BPR member, Kwame pointed to the existence of "… a deep, long history of Black scholars and Black community talking about how to define Blackness" and problematized,

> ...[the] dichotomy of … what white people think of Black people and what Black people think of Black people. And I think that, like in talking about this, it can sometimes get into a place of, like, really centering Western perspectives on the racial dynamics. (BPR Member, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Neither Marvin nor Kwame rejected the racialized process of social categorization that continues to reproduce us as Black both individually and collectively. Their divergence spoke to the importance of semantics while their critique and rejection of Western colonial impositions of Black identity was shared. Kwame cautioned against Western-centered interpretation of Black identity,

> I think even the understanding of being mixed…that's something that is very central to like a Western Eurocentric framework of how people identify themselves because on the continent, there are: multi-ethnic people, there are people who face like relationships of having multiple different identity points and like focal points [of] experience but identify as being Black. And I think sometimes if we center the mixed experience of just being mixed "outside", like being mixed in the [West], [it] can further a race like actual diversity

119

of thought around Blackness that exists in most of the rest of the world. Because I don't know if people know there's only like nineteen percent of enslaved Africans who went to the US. Like so many more people of African descent, like Belen mentioned were like in the Caribbean and Central and […] Latin America. So, I think that, like, again, if you like hyperfocus on just centering the West, it actually is in a way kind of like centering Western though and that's something that I guess is really big and like divesting from. (BPR Member, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Likewise, Marvin sees the conceptualization of identity as critical across the board, but specifies that we must consider the difficulties posed to mixed Black persons, who experience pressure to navigate the colour line between white and Black identities. Not only do bi/multi-racial people experience prejudice laterally as partially Black persons, but they also experience anti-Black racism by their other ethnic, cultural, and racial identit(ies) in turn, experiencing social exclusion from the community groups from which they originate (Ho et. al, 2020). This was further explained by Marvin as follows:

> I am African American: I am mixed, and so I understand the need to define us but, the second someone doesn't meet a criteria to be "Black" but identifies as Black is the second that isolation turns into an identity crisis for that person because they are too Black for white kids and too white for Black people where there's a person who is just saying what doors can you open and get into without being ridiculed — scrutinized is probably a better word. (Black Organizer, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Using what Kwame referred to as a "...global and internationalist view", Kwame related the aforementioned challenge raised by Marvin to the obligation and pressure that Black spaces experience to be what is considered "inclusive":

> …Black people aren't a minority, but they're a majority. So…continuing to center Blackness and limiting it to just the West is kind of a downfall to continues to work from a place of scarcity and continue to not see how like organizing work has historically always actually had an internationalist line…African American organizers literally went to Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa…to work on Black liberation movements. So, this whole idea that it's like something foreign is like erasing that there's actually always been the foundation of Black liberation movements is to see blackness in like an internationalist line. (BPR Member, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

BPR member, Kwame reminds us that anti-Black experiences have resulted in responses of local and cross border Black resistances. Shared experiences of racial discrimination have forged social identity that has been applicable on a micro-level by bringing individuals racialized as Black together while morphing communal relations when creating Black local and diasporic collectives and communities on a macro-scale. This has, in turn, (re)connected and at times, coalesced

individuals and or groups across the Black Diaspora who continue to be separated by (neo)enslavement and (neo)colonialism.

Organizing efforts, however, continue to be forged given the reality that peoples of African descent differ in experience(s) of anti-Blackness, origin(s) of African or other descent and intersecting identity formations (including tribal, cultural, linguistic conceptualizations) that are inclusive to and complicated by other hegemonic understandings of identity and physical conceptualizations of belonging). As evident locally with the creation of Black organizing groups, such as BLMyeg and the formation of Black student groups, there has been a shift from location-specific diasporic organizing towards collectivized organized responses unified by broader categories of race. If we are to look at campuses in what is now Edmonton, this can be seen in the gradual transition from African Student Association (AFSA) to the creation of Black Student's Association (BSA) at the University of Alberta, new formations of Black Student Alliance (BSA) after the closure of the African Caribbean Student Alliance during the COVID-19 pandemic (MacEwan University, 2023) and the creation of the first Black Student Association (BSA) at Concordia University to name a few examples.

In a parallel comparison to Montreal's Black student population, the African Student's Association (AFSA) served as a central Black space for students of African descent prior to the formation of BSA. The student group's members and organizing work was motivated by creating a space for African international students. The creation of BSA in 2019 (McMaster, 2019) however addressed the erasure of peoples of African descent who may not identify as African by virtue of their physical (and generational) separation from Africa as well as linked shared and differing migration and settlement experiences between recent (e.g., International students and often economic migrants) and prior migrants from Africa to what is now Canada. As a result, the creation of BSA created a more inclusive space for all Black students on campus but also served as a more relevant space during and post-Black Lives Matter (BLM) era.

Returning to the question of who can organize against anti-Black racism. Since our discussions were not concerned with non-Black peoples, our conversations concluded that all Black peoples could collectively organize against anti-Black racism with recognition to anti-Blackness as a shared but differing experience depending on the intersectional dynamic carried by the individual. Referring to BSA's mission of serving "all Black students", Marvin spoke to his experiences of organizing with Black Student's Association (BSA),

…that's why I'm always hesitant because there is a need to define, but within the Black community, especially maybe with the Black Student's Association, we just kind of, "if you identify, just come join." But that does lead to your first initial point: do all products need to be for white offering and not where we kind of draw that weird line…it's an unpopular opinion. I just see it hurting more of our Black people than kind of creating safer spaces for us. (Black Organizer, President of UofA's BSA, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

According to Amanda, "it is impossible to have fully Black spaces". Similar to Marvin's perspectives, Amanda argues that Blackness, like other intersections of identity, cannot be quantified without the risk of being exclusionary. As one of the most recent migrants within the focus group, Amanda shared,

I think part of the issue with this is how Black people are so nuanced because like, I'm Nigerian so when you grew up in Nigeria, everyone is fully Black. There's very little nuance in the Blackness there. So, when you come here, there's a lot of people who are mixed: some people who are part this, or [that], or Black, but grew up in a white family. There's so much; there's so many levels to it that to have a fully Black space in reality is very rare. Even if it [is] all physically Black people who are there, we can't determine their experiences, their upbringing, their influences; there's always going to be a portion of otherness there because we are in a different society…effects like colonization, racism... (Amanda, BPR Team, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Resonating with Johnson's text (1983) on coalitional politics she echoed that in any context— university or otherwise weighed in as the VP of UofA's Black Students Association (BSA, 2020-2021),

…it's extremely difficult to have entirely Black spaces…I think that there needs to be space for people to fully feel comfortable within themselves. And I don't see that being a possibility if you're not surrounded by people who are like you. And that goes not only for race, but that also goes for religion and sexual identity and all that. When you're around people who are like you just put it simply you feel more at home and you kind of understand things differently and you are able to fully feel safe within yourself. And I think that's really important to human development and just the way that we operate (Celine, Black Organizer, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Kwame raised,

…historically Africa has had… multi-ethnic people, but like a relationship to that is not the same as mixed people in the West. And I guess also the Caribbean and like even African Americans, like on a basis have a lot of mixedness. But even then, how has that, like socially and politically influenced what we think about blackness, especially if you think about blackness within the superstructure of racial capitalism. (BPR Member, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

> "We've pretty much come to the end of a time when you can have a space that is "yours only"—just for the people you want to be there. Even when we have our "women-only" festivals, there is no such thing. The fault is not necessarily with the organizers of the gathering. To a large extent it's because we have just finished with that kind of isolating. There is no hiding place. There is nowhere you can go and only be with people who are like you. It's over. Give it up. (Reagon, 1983, p.358)."

Figure 4.3 Slide 10 from the first focus group discussion with Black Organizers co-facilitated by BPR Members.

When reviewing the above quote, initial responses contended that exclusively Black spaces were critical in organizing and overall coalition building,

> I like it. It just makes me think we can't liberate Black people with white people in the room. (Amanda, BPR Team, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Marvin adds to this concern by sharing their experiences within the Black Student's Association (BSA):

> …because we work out of the school environment, we've had to expect a lot of our audience to not only be Black. We've had to offer different products…or offerings assuming that not everyone is Black. And I think my case in point, we're doing a debate tonight and a lot of our questions, although very focused on Black situations, we realize we have to expand just in case people aren't [Black so] they aren't excluded for certain things. (Marvin, Black Students Association (BSA), 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Olga considers the role of non-Black peoples in Black organizing by offering the following analysis:

> I remember reading a quote where Frederick Douglass said … if you add both of these at the same time, one's going to get overshadowed, which it did: the whites of movement got pushed further and the Black rights movement got pushed backward. So, I think it is important to acknowledge situations like that…it's very important to talk about every aspect of it. (Black Organizer, SSYC, Joint Interview)

According to Amanda, "it is impossible to have fully Black spaces". Similar to Marvin's perspectives, Amanda argues that Blackness, like other intersections of identity, cannot be quantified without the risk of being exclusionary. As one of the most recent migrants within the focus group, Amanda shared,

> I think part of the issue with this is how Black people are so nuanced because like, I'm Nigerian so when you grew up in Nigeria, everyone is fully Black. There's very little nuance in the blackness there. So, when you come here, there's a lot of people who are mixed: some people who are part this, or [that], or Black, but grew up in a white family. There's so much; there's so many levels to it that to have a fully Black space in reality is very rare. Even if it [is] all physically Black people who are there, we can't determine their experiences, their upbringing, their influences; there's always going to be a portion of otherness there because we are in a different society…effects like colonization, racism... (Amanda, BPR member, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Countering Hegemonic Projects of Assimilation During Black Organized Resistance.
Discussions with participants defined learning/education spaces in dialectic terms. The formal school curriculum delivered to students was problematized by all participants—Key Informants, Participant Organizers, and BPR members alike, who expressed their cross-generational experiences with the various ways in which schools sustain a project of erasure that deny the histories and existence of peoples and histories of Africana descent. It was therefore argued that Black communities must continue or re/create their own spaces for un/learning for peoples of African descent as a form of resistance that privileges community-based knowledge mobilization. Participants however also maintained that curriculums that structure formal schooling must teach the local and diasporic histories and knowledges of peoples of African descent, as Black organizers and scholars have prior argued. Co-founder of NBCC and Key Informant, Dorothy identified the continued issue with the education system during the 1960s, "...we're not in the history books. No, no, we just came out of thin air." (Individual Interview). This is echoed during our first focus group discussion by SSYC Organizer who asserted that the role of formal education should and must provide better opportunities for students to learn about early Black history,

> It shows how much of a disservice our school system has done for us not educating us on our Canadian history, of our Black Canadian history…it's not surprising…but very saddening that we weren't educated on this sooner. (Black Organizer, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

Black Teacher's Association (BTA) organizer, Dakarai responded to these shared experiences as "intentional" practices in order to: ... "dismiss, hide, or eradicate that information…" eluding to the

124

reality that, "...if people know how to organize themselves", minoritized peoples would not only be aware of their oppression, they would be connected, and united in their resistance against colonial domination. Building on Dakarai, Kwame raised that "schools, as institutions of our white supremacist settler state, are something that has…"skin in the game"[28] when it comes to not actually educating people about the violences that are happening….". Considering the systemic nature of colonialism and ongoing impact formal education has on our daily lives, I raised that,

> ...it is natural to expect that from educational institutions…we've been going to school since we were so young. Whether that's institutional or not, we expect learning to come from there while it comes from the community…throughout our schooling in high school and junior high, the main themes of like slavery, colonization, etc., instill this inferiority and anti-blackness for sure. But I definitely think in terms of like the expectation…it's natural for us to hope for…Black education in school. (Belen, BPR member and researcher, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

A simultaneous issue to consider is the absence of Black educators across every level of education that continues to have critical implications for Black (and other) students. In agreement Kwame added that without seeing people who look like us and by seeing us would have the same interests in not only ensuring we are self-aware of our histories but are safe in anti-Black spaces, such as schools is critical, there are other possibilities that must also be explored:

> I barely—never had a Black teacher…but what does it mean to be taught this by people who look like us in a grassroots and communal way? Like what would that look like? And why is it that you've been socialized to think that we would get it from an institution and a school that has continuously destroyed us? **(**Kwame, BPR member, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

Expanding on Kwame's queries, I referred to local examples of community-based and driven learning spaces that exist across Black communities, such as,

> ...summer camp, whether that's through the Africa Centre, I think NBCC had one, and JANA had summer camps as well, and probably still does. I think the space is important, like where it's coming from, alternatives, and investment in community learning is important. (Belen, BPR member, 1st Focus Group Discussion)

In fact, Dorothy, co-founder of the National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC), discussed challenging exactly this in Quebec during the early 1970s:

> …we formed what was called the Quebec Board of Black Educators. We provide role models to the Black kids…and we hired the Black teachers to teach in what was called the Summer Program so that Black kids would learn that one of the compulsory subjects they had to take was Black history. So that they would know where they came from, why they

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[28] It is from this discussion with BPR Member, Kwame, that the first part of this thesis' title "Skin In The Game" was adopted.

came…, where they came from, how they came and what was the benefit of us being together and what was the benefit of remaining in school for your own personal growth and development. Well, that started in the early 70s. And to this day, the Quebec Board of Black Educators still runs a summer program. (Key Informant, Individual Interview)

Kwame further suggested, "Maybe it is not that our school system has to teach us, but what does it mean that there aren't continuing elders and grassroots and community-centered … threads of knowledge that are being passed down?" (Kwame, BPR Member, 1st Focus Group Discussion) This discussion mirrored countless dialogues that were framed as discussing "organizing strategy" amongst community organizers. These deliberations however propose dichotomous avenues of organized resistance for social change. In the case of Black resistance in school spaces, participants suggested that organizing continues to be an either-or option. On the one hand, reforming the school system calls for an increased presence of Black education, Black educators, and school leadership so that students learn beyond limited and overwhelmingly Euro-centric anti-Black curricula across education spaces. On the other, there is a focus on (re)turning to Black communities to create alternative learning spaces and opportunities. Ultimately, this deliberation consistently returns to a development of an effective organizing strategy for social change. And thus, a closer analysis of existing community-based education is critical, especially considering that historical organizing has and continues to essentially reform anti-blackness experienced in regular and daily cases by Black students and their families.

While the alternative proposed was to create our own possibilities for community-based education, this requires organized efforts for collective education as there are countless organized groups that offer different types of education that is not accessible. Thus, the development of widespread and interconnected historical knowledge is integral to equipping organizers with an array of tools to effectively mobilize and collectively resist. Topics of these critical pedagogic and andragogic exchanges between elder to young adult, young adult to child, child, and parent, etc. include but are not limited to: local and regional histories (community successes, challenges, needs, goals, and visions), pre-colonial and familial histories that root peoples of African descent to their lands of origin, the development of political theoretical understandings that may guide political analysis, and an overview of organizing strategy. As described below by Black student and teacher organizers, there are many risks, harms, and barriers to organizing while Black in school spaces. Black Teachers Association (BTA) organizer and high school teacher communicated many issues

regarding Black organizing in school spaces. He detailed the creation of the first Black student group at his high school:

> Our youth, unfortunately, had to go through some unnecessary barriers, which others may have thought was policy. There [is] a lot of work that needed to happen in our school in order for Black Lives Matter to exist (Dakarai, Black Teacher's Association (BTA) Organizer, Individual Interview).

Co-organizers of their high school's Black Lives Matter (BLM) student group, Ihsan and Sabannah described how school spaces uphold public images of multiculturalism and diversity. Yet operated in countless ways that contradicted the countless experiences of their co-organizers. Sabannah shares the institutional hypocrisies/dialectic experiences as a Black high school student:

> School X credits itself on being a culturally diverse school without respecting what cultural diversity means. It portrays as being accepting by making everyone feel accepted and taking away individual experiences. (Sabannah, Black Lives Matter (BLM) HS student group, Joint Interview)

Comprehensively described as "anti-Black spaces" by participants, schools employ a variety of tactics to prohibit the mobilization of Black students in particular. One of the various conditions imposed required that these spaces were not closed spaces or solely served Black students and were thus inclusive to non-Black students and non-Black teachers. During our joint interview, Ihsan and Sabannah explained that though they did not create the BLM student group at their high school, they were part of the group's organizing work in their first year. They noticed that continuing the group's efforts from its first year of existence to its second was more difficult. As vocalized by Sabannah, "a lot of teachers at the school were "hostile to the idea…and made it very vocal". Both shared, "When we took over [after the first year of the student group's existence], our biggest challenge was getting teachers on our side". Teachers at their high school were generally not supportive of their efforts since BLM's emergence at their school. Their teachers and administrators took issue with political conversations held amongst Black organizers in their private meetings as well as at school-wide events. At one of their events, in particular, teachers communicated discomfort regarding,

"…who can use the N-word, [which] led to graphic words used and intense conversation. Because of that, they assumed every meeting would be [like that] ...that is what led us to be[coming] radical". (Ihsan, BLM high school student group co-organizer, Joint Interview)

Dakarai, one of the high school teachers supporting the BLM student group, shared that his high school attempted to change the name of the Black student group during the first 2 years of its existence. It is important to acknowledge that the role of the Black educator in Black student organizing is distinctly difficult as they serve two different purposes while working in Predominantly White Institutions (PWI)s. On the one hand, they are not only one of the only representations of Black leadership in school spaces, if not the only one. Therefore, they inherently have a sense of responsibility to support and protect Black students in particular, who are not safe, let alone adequately supported in school spaces. In Dakarai's case, he was not only one of the only Black teachers at the high school he worked at, but he was also one of the only teachers who had a genuine interest in and actively supported Black students in organizing their student group. On the opposing end, as employed representatives of the school, they are required to observe, monitor, and report back to school administration regarding any cause for concern—Black students organizing was a big one. Dakarai refused to allow the administration to force the students who were part of organizing Black Lives Matter (BLM) to change their name. He, alongside his white colleague, persisted that, "using Black Lives Matter is how they represent themselves". While most teachers and administration perceived BLM as aggressive given that "All Lives Matter", Dakarai created a central space for BLM reclaiming his classroom by naming it Wakanda for Black students who access the entire school. Dakarai continues to support Black organizing efforts at his school in the form of a renamed Black Student's Association (BSA). Explaining the perspective of student organizers, Ihsan and Sabannah, concluded our conversation with thanks and grace towards the two teachers who supported their student organizing, their white teacher and their Black teacher, Dakarai. In their case, their student organizing was not limited to the school; their organizing called for a local protest in response to the murder of George Floyd inciting 15,000 residents and re-invigorating the re-emergence of the local BLM chapter.

Figure 4.3 Photo provided by one of the BLM organizers illustrating protesters in attendance at BLMyeg's protest in response to continual police brutality, but specifically the murder of George Floyd.

Figure 4.4 Photo provided by one of the BLM organizers of BLMyeg organizers and volunteers at BLM protest in Edmonton.

Contradictions and Challenges

In the preceding sections we have (1) contextualized anti-Black racist organizing critically highlighting the cyclically inherent and inseparable nature of labour attached to resistance work and Black survivals using BPR not only as an introduction to our thesis project but this chapter; (2) recognized anti-Black organizing as a pedagogical process that is defined by intergenerational, institutional, personal, and historical learning; (3) urged for the organizing to move beyond rhetorical attempts by recognizing and divesting from projects of erasure, diversity and inclusion, and cooption; and (4) shared tactical experiences taken up by Black Organizers to avoid erasure, cooption, and essentially assimilation. In broad terms, we have made sense of how Black resistance efforts are necessary forms of survival while problematizing ensuing projects of erasure and cooption. While Black community organizing as resistance is a necessary, positive,

and integral part of Black life, Black community organizing in the name of resistance or otherwise can also be self-destructive and unsustainable.

Various Black scholars take note of the immediate, historical, and continued impacts of European settler colonization of Turtle Island since 1492. In doing so they link what Alfred (2005) has phrased as "the interference" with the restructuring of Indigenous worlds and onto-epistemologies in Turtle Island using racial capitalism with the forced migrations of Black bodies for slave labour and continuous exodus of peoples of African descent. Also concerned with the "interference of coequal relationships", Alfred (2005) raises issue with the negation of *Kaswentha,* the Two Row Wampum Treaty (1613), one of the many broken contractual agreements shared between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Peoples (initially European and Haudenosaunee/Iroquois Peoples). Building on the joint work of Black and Indigenous scholars who problematize the continuation of settler colonialism, the following discussion outlines the contradicting barriers, risks, and harmful strategies that both internally and externally disrupt Black Diasporic organizers and organizing groups from working together to not only resist anti-Black racism on a local, cross border, and global scale but also against settler colonialism across Native lands that we occupy.

Key Informants and Black Organizers identify what we can also consider as three "interferences" that make Black individual and organized resistance self-destructive and unsustainable while also inhibiting radical possibilities particularly: (1) horizontal violence enacted between Black organizers and organizing groups, (2) institutional and community gatekeeping that serve to integrate, assimilate, and contain the resistance of Diasporic peoples, and (3) the ideology of siloism that in turn reproduce Black silos as organizing spaces.

Horizontal Violence

Darren alerts us to the reality of horizontal violence within Black community organizing when sharing,

> There's a lot of people that don't tempt you to want us to succeed or have any kind of strength or agency. They don't want that. You wait for this. (Key Informant, Founder of 5Artists1Love, Individual Interview)

bell hooks (2017) takes issue with precisely this wen proposing that,
> We need to examine the function of critique in traditional Black communities. Often it does not serve as a constructive force. Like we have that popular slang word "dissin'," and we know that "dissin'" refers to a kind of disenabling contempt— when we "read" each other in ways that are so painful, so cruel, that the person can't get up from where you

131

have knocked them down. Other destructive forces in our lives are envy and jealousy. These undermine our efforts to work for a collective good" (p.40)

Black women and non-binary participants push this further when they vocalize how their experiences of sexist oppression are suppressed while organizing in Black community in addition to systemically experiencing patriarchy outside of community. Pointing to the ways Black men monopolize organizing spaces especially leadership roles, they took issue with the resulting ways their voices and thus issues of gender and sex are often pushed aside while also realizing the complex ways in which we, as Black women also decenter our voices.

Olga describes this as,
….between us and men and organiz[ing]…. they're not ever brought up because I feel like there's just this assumption most of the time when we're doing this work that it's not about any of that. that's not what we're here for…people just kind of push through it and it never really gets addressed. (Black Organizer, SSYEG, Joint Interview, Jennifer) similarly shares,

> I think a lot of Black men sometimes don't recognize their level of privilege that they
> hold in some of these spaces. And I think a lot of the time they act as an obstacle to
> other Black women. And I think it's very disheartening because I come across it one
> too many times where Black men want to be the gatekeepers of any type of
> movement or they want to be at the front lines of it when I think a lot of women have
> been fighting this battle for so much longer and have been suffering in this battle
> much longer and continue to suffer after. (Key Informant, E4A, Individual Interview)

Olga best describes our complicity in sexist violence through erasure during current organizing work as,
> I think that building and working with Black men has been fine and easy, so to speak, but
> not because we have addressed these, but rather because we have not. And it's just
> like…much easier to ignore than it is to talk about them. (Black Organizer, SSYEG, Joint
> Interview)

The perspectives shared by Olga and Jennifer are reiterated across many Black struggles from anti-colonial struggles to both the Black American and Canadian civil rights movement. The practice of suppressing the political interests of Black women despite their organized action alongside men or leadership during revolution is consistent and reflected in the requirement of Black women to take steps back (often post-movement) so men can facilitate what justice and better possibilities for the future look like after the storm is described by many and prevalent across Black social movements globally. This is relevant to the contextual analysis I provide within the literature Overview whereby Black women organized at the forefront in countless ways while simultaneously experiencing life as the target for perceived increased claims to power.

Jennifer illustrates this in how we have learned to "play it safe and not trying to ruffle feathers" further describing Black life under the "white gaze",

> I think we have been very safe and guarded in how we navigate things and how we say things and have tried to package it in a way that I think that I guess would be nice. For example, [for] white people to see.

Dulu names this pressure as being rooted in 'respectability politics' as often observed from senior organizers and community leaders who found that the older generation is more fearful "disturbing the peace" she further detailed,

> [Because]…you're coming into the space that's mainly just like white people then people of colour, [but] you're one of the few South Sudanese people so your experiences may not be similar. (Black Organizer, SSYEG, Joint Interview)

Despite holding two separate conversations first with Jennifer then with Dulu and Olga, the generational practice of suppressing issues of sexism remains a generational practice to prioritize collective organizing. At the same time, the sexist experiences faced by Black men must be recognized. As argued by Jennifer from E4A,

> And it's not to diminish their experiences like Black men go through a lot. No, when I'm not trying to undermine anything that happens and anything of if I go through that, I think what needs to be taken into account is the amount of emotional physical labour that Black women do and that we continue to do, you know? And I think that needs to be acknowledged more. (Key Informant, E4A, Individual Interview)

Looking forward however, Jennifer argues,

> …we don't need to do that anymore. I think the whole notion of just being nice and being kind about our experiences and explaining it in a way that makes sense and having that very I think fake persona… I think we need to just be straight up about things. I think that is something even I have to do. I don't feel like I need to be kind about the negative experiences of what I have gone through and that does not necessarily mean it is a personal attack on you, but it does mean that it happened. Right? So I think just as a whole we have this level of political correctness that doesn't need to exist when it comes to our experience and our trauma. No one knows what we've gone through the way that we do. No one knows the trauma that we've gone through the way that we feel so because of that, we're allowed to speak on it in any way, shape, or form that we want. I think it's that simple, you know? And I think a lot of people don't want to don't offend people. (Key Informant, E4A, Individual Interview)

Community Gatekeeping

Many barriers impact the formation, building, and strengthening of Black diasporic communities. The second obstacle discerned from participant dialogues during this research project pertains to

133

practices of 'community gatekeeping' encountered during individual and collective responses to projects of erasure, integration, and assimilation as members of the Black Diaspora navigate Blackness upon their arrival and settlement. Generally, this practice that is also referred to as 'gatekeeping' and used to define incidents, experiences, and interventions that prevent access.

More recently the topic of gatekeeping has included 'the concept of *Gatekeeping Blackness*' (Walker, 2022) which studied the ways in which Black journalists circumnavigate reporting while Black. Similarly, gatekeeping is identified as a form of protection, preservation, and survival in relation to Black culture (Milon, 2021). With consideration to political action, hooks (2018) asks, "What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy?" (p.31).

In response to this, hooks (2018) recognizes that "They [the master's tools] may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support" (p.35) and resolves that "[i]t means that the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable" (p.31).

In the world of community organizing gatekeeping is described by participants encompasses the struggles of living and working within various including conflicting roles while Black, using gatekeeping as an organizing strategy towards non-Black peoples in this anti-Black world including when considering how much tot openly share and document within this thesis project as articulated by Kwame, BPR Member, as well as considers the limited ways social change has been possible. Related to the proposed issue of gatekeeping are strategies of reform that are prioritized during Black organizing efforts which not only reproduce systemic erasure, integration, and assimilation, but also contain possibilities of Black radical resistance.

Despite the depth of Black radical thought and action that continue to sustain generations of African-descended peoples on a global scale, organized efforts for social/racial integration through claims of institutional change and superficial state recognition—actualized via Indigenous and Black erasures as well as the integration and assimilation of African-descended migrant generationally—have also been historically influential and impactful for contemporary organizing. By centering reform through efforts that embody a politics of recognition and integration, these projects not only redirect and coopt organized efforts towards maintaining the status quo and hierarchical settler colonial order, they effectively reinforce white supremacy,

racial capitalism, and cis-heteronormativity. Black organizing in this way therefore distorts generational radical resistances by Black individuals and communities who continue to struggle for divestments from the settler colonial capitalist system in efforts of liberatory futures that are non-negotiable and opposed to improvements or minor changes to the existing world we live in. Of critical recognition by participants is the institutional impact of gatekeeping increasingly active throughout the non-profit sector that both monopolize off and claim to take up community work. Rodriguez (2017) highlights *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* by Robert L. Allen who was early to pinpoint, explain, and critique "…how liberal white philanthropic organizations…facilitated the violent state repression of radical and revolutionary elements within the Black liberation movements of the late 1960s and early 70s" (p.23). Rodriguez (2017) furthers Allen's 1969 work by arguing that the

> "… emergence of a white liberal hegemony over the non-profit industry during the 1970s was an explicit attempt—in fact, an authentic conspiracy of collaboration among philanthropists and state officials, including local police and federal administrators—to dissipate the incisive and radical critique of US white supremacist capitalism, the white supremacist state, and white civil society that was spreading in the wake of domestic Black and Third World liberation movements" (p.35).

In what follows, these foundational critiques by Allen (1969) and Rodriguez (2017) are extended to demonstrate how systemic efforts of hegemonic repression are multiregional, affecting Black organizing efforts across the 'US' as well as 'Canada'. A closer look at their work also makes evident the continuation of repressive white supremacist strategies beyond the 70s that not only maintain settler colonialism, but further entrench anti-Blackness. In our case, 4 key institutional gatekeeping methods utilized by non-profit organizations emerge from our discourses: the adoption of hierarchical structures as routine practice, an overrepresentation of white executive leadership, the intensification of settler colonial dynamics, and the reinvigoration of silo-oriented ethos, ideology, and practice.

Institutional Gatekeeping: Non-Profit Industrial Complex and it's Complex Continuities

Emerging out of BPR discussions is the reproduction of hierarchical structures replicated across non-profit organizations as the first? contradictory systemic challenge faced by Black organizers and groups. Employing this strategy fundamentally neglects to recognize and practice decolonial community-driven governance and collective decision-making systems. Neither of these alternative prospects are effectively possible within the confines of the non-profit industrial complex system which effectively thrive from hierarchical representation systems and procedures that advantage certain structures, namely registered organizations/corporations over organizing

groups. These structures ensure the mainstream organizing practices are replicated through government-funded surveillance and perception of limited funding sources sought out through competitive means between similar and like-minded groups. The unfortunate reality is that a multitude of non-profit organizations that take up community work not only limit community work to be conducted in particular ways but are funded to and require the members they serve to engage and organize in specific colonial ways—namely non-resistant to settler colonialism and anti-Blackness but rather performative and synonymous with what we have referred as 'rhetorics of diversity and inclusion'. Hence, despite the impossibility for justice in a capitalist engine such as the non-profit industrial system, the conversations and efforts are also absent.

Non-Black Individualist-centered Leadership: Integration versus Social Change.
The next issue problematizes the overrepresentation of white executive leadership despite community calls for and organizational claims of diversity and inclusion efforts that are largely limited to a frontline (coordinating and organizing) level. Hierarchical organizational structures largely uphold white executive leadership despite their claims of representing BIPOC individuals and communities. This is particularly the issue with local settlement-centered organizations that employ BIPOC representatives—largely at a frontline capacity—who offer settlement and other supportive services to aid the arrival and settlement of refugee and immigrants while ensuring that varying leadership levels represent or replicate whiteness. In organizational structures where this is not the case and leadership represent the populations they claim to serve, accountabilities are still dictated by government funders prior to the groups of focus. While non-profit work range in representation enabling organizations to claim efforts towards diversity and inclusion, these organizations and their workers employed to carry out this work directly and indirectly affect potentials for Black coalition building in the following ways. Integration-driven (often government) funding received by these organizations do not always require, value, or work towards reconnecting newcomers with their respective ethnic community groups as well as long-term Black organizing efforts. And when they do, these groups or organizations are often similar recipients that are also neglectful of additional responsibilities we have to this land as settlers. Newcomers are either supported in creating their own non-profit organization/organizing group, or they are encouraged to create a group as part of the greater mainstream non-profit organization. So while the promotion and support of autonomous organizing, capacity building, and mentorship is essential to successful community organizing, when deep-rooted organizations support newcomers to form new groups without efforts that seek out relational or coalition work,

they are actively encouraging the cyclical nature of "starting from scratch" and individualism that Black diasporic communities continue to face despite generations post-arrival and adopt as their own organizing practice as well as plagues Turtle Island. Not to mention, these "parent" organizations benefit off the work these groups are doing on behalf of the greater organization. On the one hand, the greater organization may accept funding on behalf of the new group and on the other, the greater organization can claim to doing the organizing work the group is labouring around. Thus, they not only appear to be organizing "with" these groups, but they are also able to access funds that often increase their own administrative funds by making like-minded and groups of shared identities compete for funds that address shared issues, concerns, and challenges.

Settler Colonial Dynamics of Non-profits
Our discussions thirdly note that non-profit organizations actively reinforce settler colonial dynamics not only between newcomer communities and Indigenous Peoples, communities, and Nations, but also between shared diasporic identities reintroducing tribal and ethnic divisions. In effect, this recreates and expands siloed ideologies and relations which is the fourth issue communicated by Black organizers. And so, silos are reinforced by strengthening tribal and diasporic community borders, but they do not nor are they required to ensure responsive knowledge of historical and contemporary conditions of settler colonialism, settler-Indigenous partnerships or working relations, and or treaty knowledge to respect and ensure they are not working against the sovereignty of Indigenous Land. In the end, Black Diaspora—whether newcomers or long-term find themselves at opposing ends with each other. In terms of Fanon's caution in this regard (1961),

> "The colonist keep[ing] the colonized in a state of rage…which he prevents from boiling over [and this] periodically erupts into bloody fighting between tribes, clans, and individuals. This repressed rage, never managing to explode, goes round in circles and wreaks havoc on the oppressed themselves. In order to rid themselves of it they end up massacring each other, tribes battle one against the other since they cannot confront the real enemy – and you can count on colonial policy to fuel rivalries" (p.xi).

Together, these institutional gatekeeping strategies imposed across Black communities instill reporting for government-driven surveillance that do not support the needs Black radical resistance and rather ensure the suppression of radical efforts by BIPOC populations. Acknowledging this, it is important to ask what is lost through these gatekeeping strategies that prevent and deter Black coalitional work. First and foremost, authentic, and comprehensive

capacity building that enriches individual and collective skills of newcomers—most of whom, arrive with prior (personal and historical/generational) mobilizing, organizing, and leadership experience that is largely unrecognized or unused given the rejection of radical organizing. Second, individual and community access to resources that are beneficial community wide. Next, skills developed and learning experiences gained by individuals are never brought back to the community or communities post-separation or succession given the complexities of life in general. And lastly, resources and supplies purchased or received via funding are gained by the agency despite the organizing group's initial efforts and needs. As fleshed out amongst BPR Members, non-profit organizations reinforce the formation and continued structure of diasporic silos through the following cyclical process:
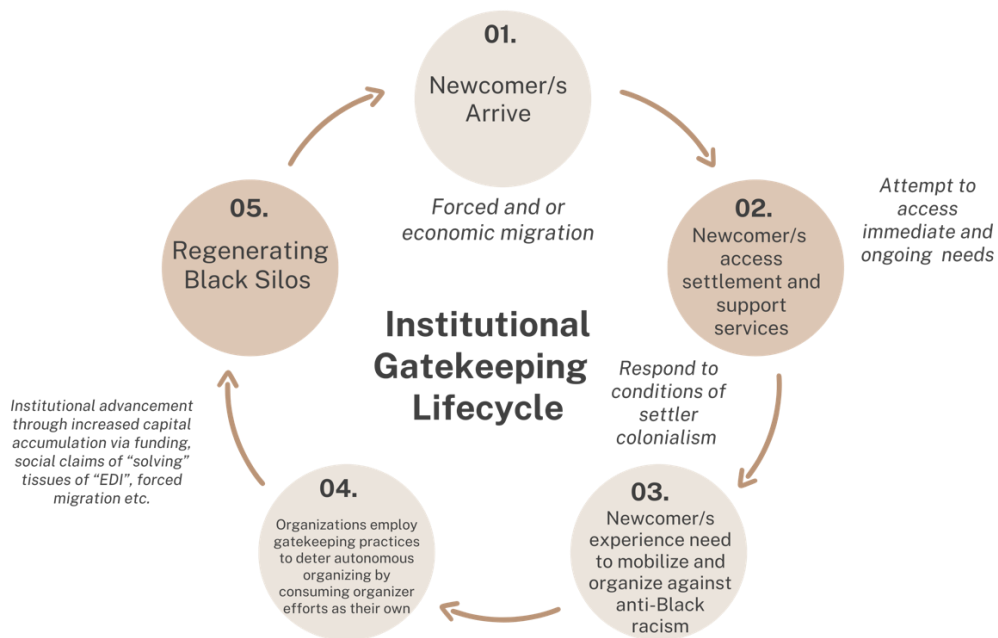
Figure 4.5 Explanation of Institutional Gatekeeping Lifecycle

During one of our focus group sessions, Ihsan, Black Organizer (BLMyeg organizer and previous high school Black Lives Matter (BLM) co-organizer) raised that the collective and "collaborative development of a blueprint based on multiple experiences of organizing" as a critical tool would provide the opportunity to connect and strengthen other organizers and organizing groups with shared experiences and challenges. To further this idea, BPR member, Karis, added that equally important to increasing access to lessons from current organizing and resistance experiences is gaining "access to historical knowledge and access to information".

Mapping Black Organizing and the Question of Black Coalition

The second focus group session with Black Organizers co-facilitated by BPR members set out to bring our perspectives and experiences of organizing to our discussion of considering Black coalition by: (1) contextualizing coalition building politics as an organizing practice, (2) differentiating other organizing relations, (3) and charting current organizing work while co-analyzing our past and current organizing. To carry out this conversation BPR members and Black Organizers were asked to read "The Combahee River Collective: The Black Feminist Statement" (1979) and "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century by Bernice Johnson Reagon (1983)" so that we may engage their work in our collective discussion on "Defining and Strengthening Alliances for Black Coalition Building" [PowerPoint slides]. Following this BPR member, Kwame and myself prepared and presented informative slides on Black radical disability justice to inform our first discussion that called for the revolutionary affirmation of Black disabled peoples while organizing by bonding historicized political study and practical (praxis) to take seriously the intersectional relations of oppression experienced by Black disabled persons.

Understanding Coalition Structures.

Both the Combahee River Collective's 1979 piece and Reagon's article from 1983 intensified my understanding of historic diasporic Black coalition work. As a practical introduction to coalition, we introduced coalition using additional literature, BPR members and I presented coalition and its structure as,

What is Coalition?

Scholarship tells us that :

- "… coalition consists of individuals who, despite their persistent differences, work together to pursue a mutually beneficial goal (Murad & Mithani, 2020, p.171)."
- "serve as catalysts within community where members take actions to effect change (Aguilar et. al, 2010, p.428)."
- "…stands somewhere in the middle of "solidarity" and "intersectionality" as an active practice and a theoretical tool of working across certain identarian boundaries " (Pinto, 2020, p.48)."
- "[is]… a model of thinking" (Pinto, 2020, p.50).

Characteristics of Coalition

- Grassroots focused and relationship-based
- "ignores internal differences but only as long as the potential for gains surpass the costs of subjugating self-interests (Harris & Bromiley, 2007) (p.172)."
  - "political in nature" (p.172) and therefore, "…both the source of and at the heart of conflict" (Murad & Mithani, 2021, p.172)
  - "not just reflections of conflict and compromise" (Murad & Mithani, 2021, p.173)
- "collaborative networks"; "…unions of people and organizations working to influence outcomes on a specific problem. Moreover, they involve multiple sectors of the community that come together to address community needs and solve community problems (Berkowitz & Wolff, 2000). These groups join together to collectively address a broad range of goals that are unattainable by one person or organization (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Figure4.6. Slides 3 & 6 from the second focus group discussion "Defining and Strengthening Alliances for Black Coalition Building" [PowerPoint slides] presented to Black Organizers by BPR members (including researcher).

Of significant importance to our consideration of local or regional Black coalition was our comprehension of other seemingly alike and regularly mistaken or interchanged organizing relations. Deciphering various organizing relations enabled us the space to rethink and contextualize distinct organizing strategies and tactics used across anti-Black resistance. At the same time, it was equally important that we made ourselves aware of concurrent relations that took place in addition or alongside to coalition bonds. It was particularly important to avoid absorbing distinct organizing into coalition strategy. For this discussion we asked BPR members and Black Organizers,

> "Is there a differentiation between any of the following organizing relations: (a) being in alliance, (b) being in solidarity, (c) collaborating with/being in collaboration, (d) being an affiliate of/having an affiliation, (e) being in coalition/coalescing, (f) being an accomplice or co-conspirator" (as specified by Kwame)? (Belen, Researcher, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

In preparation for this conversation BPR members and myself co-developed our understanding of the ways in which we understood these organizing tactics/strategies differing. Depicted below is a comprehensive distinction:
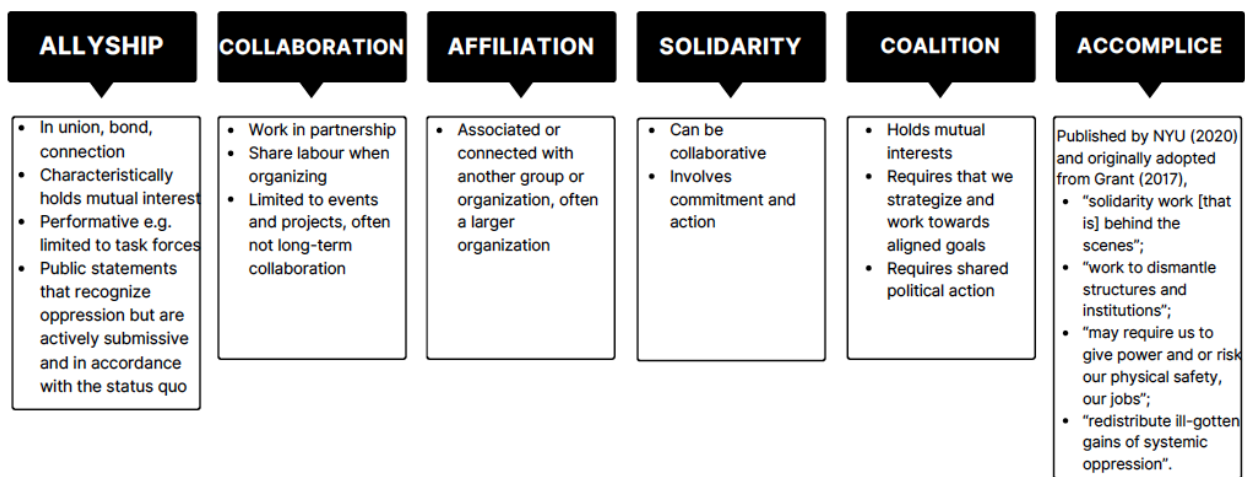

Figure 4.7. Participant comparison of types of organizing emerging from 2nd Focus Group discussion

Despite the popularity of "allyship", this type of organizing practice is "performative", "risks very little", and "generally does not redistribute resources" as recognized by Grant's comparison between allyship and accomplice (2017). Building off this comparison, the above listed partnerships are similar.

Contemporary Coalition in Action

Participants shared varying coalition experience during their individual or joint interviews and group discussions. Common across all discussions was the stressed importance of coalescing that was actively inclusive to and thus as "home" for all Black identities/peoples. Their perspectives identified coalition space as an ideal platform for joint action and knowledge production whereby coalesced members or groups may engage community groups from various ends. As such, the next passages provide excerpts of Black coalition experiences from participants that may inform future coalition building. Co-organizers of South Sudan Youth Canada (SSYC) and its local branch called SSYEG, Dulu and Olga describe the creation of the greater organization, SSYC in 2017 as a direct response to the silos of South Sudanese community groups that were initially rigidly separate local South Sudanese diasporic communities. According to their observations "back home" tribal politics divided the organizing efforts of South Sudanese Diaspora community groups. The silver lining these micro-silos offer include the intimate learning of culture and history based on their specific tribal identities despite their forced migrations as well as an active involvement to the political issues that still cause their departures. Olga explained that to combat the continuation of tribal or "back home" politics amid an upcoming and growing South Sudanese Diasporic community, they have chosen to be "apolitical…[w]e've seen how politics has destroyed our community. So, we decided…politics…if it relates to within our community has no place." (Black Organizer, SSYC, Joint Individual Interview).

Dulu furthered this by sharing that this often-separated South Sudanese young peoples. SSYC was therefore created to prioritize local South Sudanese young peoples affected by anti-Black violence at a local level. SSYC's efforts have resulted in award recognition by Edmonton's National Black Coalition of Canada's local chapter[29] to one of the organization's founders who received the Youth Excellence Award in 2018. As one of the co-founders of NBCC shares, the

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[29] As of date one of two chapters of the National Black Coalition of Canada (NBCC) exist across 'Canada'. Edmonton's NBCC chapter is the only one that exists in its original form while Montreal's NBCC chapter was renamed as the Black Coalition of Quebec.

emergence of NBCC was in also in response to this very issue across early Black and Caribbean communities. Over the past 5 years SSYC's organizing demonstrated and taught the older generation that organizing across cultural and tribal lines is not only necessary but possible through coalition formation. Currently centralized organizing groups of SSYC's coalition extends across 'Canada'. Cognisant of the individualism central to siloistic ideology, Olga framed that "everyone kind of wants to be a voice for social change…[but] once we kind of realize we're all on the same page here and we're all kind of fighting for the same thing" (Black Organizers, SSYEG, Joint Interview) this united approach has accordingly created opportunities and space for the formation of different politics compared to that of the older generation's prior organizing with back home centrally in mind.

In a similar fashion the Black Teacher's Association (BTA) organizer, Dakarai and 5Artists1Love founder Darren described Black community organizing during their upbringing throughout the 70s-80s as composed of separated ethnic silos from the Caribbean Diaspora. For instance, Dakarai described experiences of Black community in the 70s-80s as "…mostly a West Indian vibe" (Black Organizer, BTA, Individual Interview). BTA coalesces educators across the province of Alberta while 5Artists1Love has moved past Caribbean lines organizing Black art with all peoples of African descent. Both Dakarai and Darren recall the impact of NBCC. Serving local Black Diaspora in 'Edmonton' with Black-led community services and events for Black families, their upbringing was influenced by shared experiences of tutoring and culturally driven summer camps as well as short-term, cultural events, such as Christmas or organized support groups centred around sports. Despite NBCC's creation and organizing ethnic fissures across local Black Diaspora structured Black organizing, as voiced by 5Artists1Love Founder, Daren:

> My mom is Jamaican, my dad is Bagian; and so I was aware of the different organizations in the Black community, primarily the Caribbean ones...and historically, they had beef with each other. A lot of the time…they worked independently. They always worked independently. The Trinidadians were doing one thing, the Jamaicans were doing some things, and Bajans doing some things. And even at that age, we could see that there were sometimes feuds where somebody wasn't talking to somebody. You know what I mean?" (Key Informant, 5Artists1Love, Individual Interview)

As we can see, narratives from both BTA organizer, Dakarai and 5Artists1Love founder, Darren point out that siloism existed prior to the recent arrivals of Black Diaspora.

Deconstructing Coalition to Define our Why

Though our initial BPR work realized the cyclical consumption of Black labour in the name of anti-Black resistance that may never see material social changes, in the exact way conceptualizing Black coalition requires the labour of Black peoples, so does Black coalition resistance work. This was reconciled on the premise that the only way these engagements would center the comprehensive and radical interests of Black peoples is through enacting work that is communicated by and for the peoples it involves. This also means that our knowledge production to re/inform Black coalition work was cautious about the notion of inclusion and the illusion of comprehensively because coalition could only practically represent the interests of the Black identities it directly involves and thus needs to be careful of essentializing Black identity.

Critical across the perspectives shared was an understanding of "home" that contrasted with Reagon's depiction of coalitional organizing. While Reagon (1983) provides a contrast between organizing that is "home, safe, and comfortable" proposing that this differs from coalitional politics, participants shed light to the fact that that organizing across Black community *also* feels "like you're threatened to the core" rather than being/organizing at home. This was both made visible and heard loudly when BPR members and I asked that we chart local Black organizing and participants remained silent. Understanding their silence deeply requires an awareness of neo/colonial interferences that limit and prevent any of the above organizing relations that require us to engage and work together including through Black coalition.

Why should we build Coalition?

"...You don't go into coalition because you just *like* it. The only reason you would consider trying to team up with somebody who could possibly kill you, is because that's the only way you can figure out how you can stay alive. (Reagan, 1983, p.357)"

Figure. Slide 8 from the second focus group discussion, "Defining and Strengthening Alliances for Black Coalition Building" with Black Organizers and co-facilitated with BPR Members.

Adding to Reagon's work (1983), I suggest that,

> Reagon is saying … our hiding place, like our home or like our room is over, there is no place where we can go just to be with people like us, like just with Black community. And I don't know if people agree, disagree, or relate to that because what she talks about is very isolating. (Belen, 2nd Focus Group Discussion)

Figure 4.8 Slide example using a quote from Reagon (1983) during our second focus group discussion.

Reflecting on this conversation, I think that there is a level of threat and discomfort that can and is experienced when attempting to coalesce differing Black political interests. To consider possibilities of local Black coalition formation, we collaboratively identified the "benefits, advantages, opportunities, prospects, or visions, concerns, and…disadvantages…basically a SWOT analysis [of coalition formation]," as described during the mixed focus group discussion,

COALITION CONTRIBUTION

BENEFITS/ADVANTAGES
- Access to useful knowledge and information e.g., history
- Limited duplication of Black organizing efforts

DISADVANTAGES
- Potential erasure of distinct histories

OPPORTUNITIES/PROSPECTS
- Shared learning/blueprints of past community organizing
- Development of care culture that is intergenerational and cyclical – not just about young/next generation, about working together across generations
- Cultivation of Critical thought that divests from Western thought and re-invests in African notions
- Destroys and liberates oppressive frameworks
- Black organizing that is sustainable

CONCERNS
- Reproduction of oppressive practices
- Organizing that is palatable to the state
- Intergenerational split
- Replication of individualism and capitalism and nuclear family unit constructs

SOLUTIONS
- Ensuring the intention of community organizers "put community first", identify aligned values
- Re-invest in organizing relationships and build trust
- Organizers must develop skills on navigating lateral violence
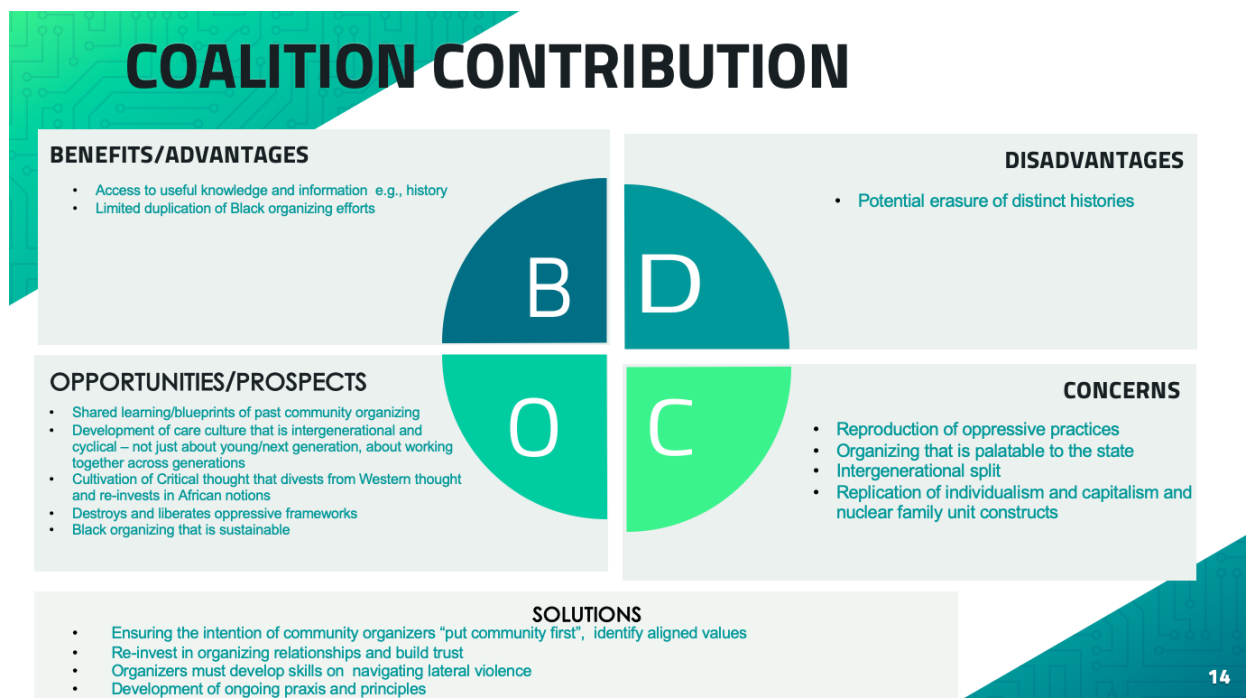- Development of ongoing praxis and principles

Figure 4.9. Slide developed with Black Organizers and BPR members during our discussion that fleshed out possibilities and gains of building local Black coalition.

Individual interviews with Key Informants and Black Organizers and focus group discussions with BPR Members and Black Organizers alike openly acknowledged that local Black community continues to be fragmented. When this concern was brought to the forefront for detailed collective discussion and analysis using the exercise below, silence and discomfort from participants was apparent during this segment. This chart was drafted to collectively identify key local Black

organizing groups and organizers that would strengthen our current relations almost mostly formed through this research study.

Figure 4.10. Slide 17 from Session 2 co-designed with BPR members to map our current organizing relations with Black Organizers during the second focus group discussion.

BPR Members and I asked the following questions to spur discussion: (1) What type(s) of organizing are you involved in? Which organizers and Organizing groups (formal/informal) do you not organize with? Which organizers and organizing groups you would like to organize/align with (does not have to be local; can also include characteristics, practices, political philosophy/placement etc.)? (2) What are the ways that we do organize in alliance or support of Indigenous organizing efforts of sovereignty? (3) What strategies should we think about/incorporate when creating coalition/coalescing?

During our focus group discussion, Black Organizers echoed that both this shared space for organizing groups and practice of coalition politics should be a space where organizers could increase community access and overall resources:

> I think for me coalition building is also about having like what's the word…? A bag of solutions even before you think you need them from: all the assets, skills, tools, the people. Everyone in the group you're bring to the table [has] access to that [without] having to really worry too much about resources and like who your supports are because they're already

145

working with you and are in the room with you. (Karis, BPR member, 2nd Focus Group

Discussion)

As phrased by BPR member, Karis during our first focus group discussion, part of the interest in building Black coalition is to ensure that local Black organizing is not consumed by "reinventing the wheel".

Continuing BPR Conversations

Black Participatory Research (BPR) has been central to learning about anti-Black racist resistances through Black coalition building throughout our research study. While we knew our discussions and the greater study alike would not result in full solutions, our aim was to learn from historical and contemporary or ongoing efforts of organizing and resistance work in response to anti-Black racism. Using BPR and committing to research on organizing however means that even though the research process is complete, our resistance work is not done—and is never done as we learned through our BPR engagements.

Black-Indigenous Anti-Colonial Praxis

Every research participant stressed the parallel yet differing ways Black and Indigenous Peoples shared experiences of oppression. Descendant of Black Pioneers in Western "Canada" and co-founder of the Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots (SCMR), Debbie described that "…we were treated the same and similar in many instances…so we walk a parallel path, sometimes crossing over" (Key Informant, Individual Interview). Looking back at their personal and historical experiences as descendants of Black Pioneers, Debbie and Leander described that local Indigenous communities were removed and isolated from Black rural and urban communities via the establishment of residential schools and reservations. As Debbie recalled learning, one of the elders of the early Black Pioneers were sent to Charles Camsell Indian hospital, "where they put a lot of Indigenous People and Blacks" when they had tuberculosis (TB). Both explained that while these efforts of colonial displacement resulted in limited contact between local Indigenous Peoples and early Black diasporic communities, their personal realities led to their families maintaining or creating close familial Indigenous relations. In Leander's case, he married an Indigenous woman, which was challenged by Black and Indigenous community members alike. For Debbie, while she identified as a person of African descent, her ancestors included Indigenous Peoples from the "United States".

When participants were asked to share their past and current organizing efforts in alignment with and alongside Indigenous organizing, they shared different viewpoints. Providing an example of past organizing with Indigenous groups, Bashir stressed the importance of resource and data collection that would further support and validate Black and Indigenous experiences of oppression,

> I've made a conscious effort to work with the Institute of Sisters to release data together. Because of the actual disparity and lack of understanding that it is not just Black community problem….We are not the only community going through this. Communities that have been here much longer and face extreme generational violence by these same institutions that gaslight us (Key Informant, Individual Interview).

During our individual interview, Debbie voiced that while "reconciliation is our first step" with Indigenous Peoples, she raised the simultaneous necessity for reconciliation efforts to be worked towards for early Black Pioneers.

Jennifer from E4A admits she is not sure how to execute having shared conversations, but given their extensive experience with institutional oppression via settler colonialism she stated,

> I think Indigenous People have so much knowledge to offer in terms of how to navigate all of this… I think it would provide much insight and so much….I think the word that comes to me is I think peace. I'm hoping that in the future that there is some sort of space or something that kind of acts as a common ground for that. (Key Informant, Individual Interview)

Key Informant, Dorothy expressed that Black and Indigenous Peoples have always had competing interests. Also echoing this, Bashir, another Key Informant recognized that "[o]ur experiences are obviously different, but there are a lot of ways that we can actively work together" (Individual Interview). When asked what this work could look like in the future Jennifer offered,

> I think having that communication and having some sort of meeting ground where you can have these conversations about experiences in some respects are almost identical and others completely parallel. (Key Informant, Individual Interview).

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND BPR CONTINUITIES

This work attempted to critically understand the historical context and legacies of Black arrivals, anti-Black racism, and anti-Black racist organizing in Canada by centering Black coalition work at the core of what has been articulated throughout this research as a continuum of Black resistances. Using Black Participatory Research (BPR), we sought to learn from historical and contemporary cases of anti-Black racist organizing to inform and rethink current organizing strategies to radically inform our own praxis in relation to Black organizing. We (BPR team and participants) contend that Afropessimism is a politically productive theory that both makes sense of continued Black oppression and informs praxis. In conjunction with Black Anarchism, Afropessimism and Black Anarchist theories, Afropessimism provides a reflexive tool for actioning Black personal and collective resistance and survivals. This BPR project affirms the organic strategy of building coalition bonds across Black experiences as well as asserts that Black anarchist coalition is an essential ideology, and pedagogical strategy for strengthening Black organizing and resistance work locally, regionally, and ultimately, for global Black survivals.

This chapter offers summative and formative thoughts on the research project by revisiting the research purpose and questions introduced in Chapter 1 in terms of some key lessons and directions for building Black anarchist coalitional bonds; brief reflections on the BPR experience for organizing and coalition building as a process of social change which continues beyond the confines of an academic research project for credentials; and addressing some future prospects for BPR, including where our work is headed moving forward.

As we delved into the complexities of historical and continued Black coalition building, our BPR was guided by the following six interrelated questions:

1. What is the historical legacy and context of Black migration, anti-Black racism and anti-racist Black organizing in Canada?

2. What can be learned from contemporary cases of anti-Black racist organizing to inform Black organizing and coalition building?

3. How might Black theoretical traditions and Black anti-racism education inform organizing and coalition building?

4. What are the perspectives and analyses of contemporary Black organizers and coalition builders regarding anti-Black racist organizing?

5. What are some key platforms that can or should inform and guide organizing and coalition building work?

6. What is the role for anti-racist education in anti-Black racist organizing?

With these research questions in mind, the following section considers how our discussions have contributed to anti-Black racist organizing and coalition building by summarizing the key emergent lessons.

<div align="center">**Towards Building Black Anarchist Coalition Bonds**</div>

Emerging from this research project and our individual, paired, and focus group discussions are many organizing lessons that were produced as a way of informing our continued labour in Black organizing and resistance. Chapter 5's Program of Action expresses critiques on anti-Black racism and the labour of anti-Black resistance, Black organizers and anti-Black organizing praxis, and discusses plans to continue our BPR conversations for anti-Black organizing and coalescing. Reflecting on these discussions, we also look towards the ways we can action these lessons not only for strengthened organizing, but specifically for Black anarchist coalition building. These strategies are summarized as a commitment to: (1) prioritizing the cultivation of comprehensive political education, (2) designing principled coalition structures that engage intersectional Black radical praxis, and (3) building community-wide power that prioritize individual and community survivals.

Reinvest in Cultivating Comprehensive Political Education

Throughout this dissertation we have made mention to the differing ways organizing efforts repeatedly assume exclusivity when, in fact, our organizing and resistance efforts are frequently recycled across generations and locations. As previously argued, the continuum of Black resistance has often involved a history of cyclicality. While cyclicality can act as an indication of organizing and resistance lessons that have been passed down or a sense of sustained Black organizing, it can also explain a hindrance to Black liberation. Black organizing consists of continued robust strategy development across centuries of Black organizing and movement building as analyzed the literature review in Chapter 2. What is often missing in contemporary Black organizing however is the commitment to gaining a comprehensively enriched political education of both historical Black radical organizing and theory for strengthened organizing and movement building, or praxis. Of course, there are a multitude of ways in which learning occurs during, for, and after organizing. Captured as part of anti-Black organizing pedagogy, our Program of Action in Chapter 5 identifies four ways from our BPR discussions as occurring intergenerationally, institutionally, personally, and historically. Addressing cyclicality to create

and attempt new/alternative strategies for Black liberation is communicated by many Black radical theorists and Afropessimists including (Wilderson, 2020) and articulated as central to Black Anarchist theory in Ervin's book, *Black Anarchism and the Black Revolution*. In doing so, a review and analysis of historical and continued attempts, successes, and failures are proposed as integral for social change that centers possibilities for Black liberation. Building on this principled practice of studying historical organizing, this project calls for the strengthened resistance to (neo)colonial and neoliberal organizing strategies because there are better possibilities for Black liberation using anarchist strategies, which have been a part of Black organizing and resistance since early resistances both on the African continent and upon our arrivals, as expressed throughout the literature review in Chapter 2.

Committing to building a comprehensive study of historical or, in some cases, generational Black organizing through what we referred to and practiced as 'political study' is an essential way Black community and organizers alike can learn from past organizing strategy. In response to our first research question, learning from historical Black organizing, experiences of anti-Black racism, and Black migrations certainly inform current and future organizing strategies. Moreover, and in response to our second research inquiry, these historical learnings also alert us to the ways contemporary organizing strategies deter our efforts from Black liberatory futures pushing us towards recreating neoliberal structures, logics, and practices. Political study can, of course, by enacted in countless ways. Though unnamed at the time, our practice of learning from past organizing was enacted through sankofa, an Akan or Ghanaian/Western African borrowed symbol, philosophy, and practice. Generally translated with the phrase to "go back and fetch it," sankofa is symbolized as a bird with its legs rooted to the ground, its feet and body pointing forward, and its beak reaching into the past to grab an egg from its back. This powerful symbol is indicative of our relation to our ancestors as we stand in the present and look to the future" (Morgan, 2023, p.586). Leaning into sankofa is critical to learning from a well-rounded understanding of historic and in some cases, generational organizing, and resistance practices. As Black Diaspora, it has uniquely enabled us to learn from shared and distinct lessons, strategies, and philosophies as the common adoption of sankofa has offered across Black Diasporic communities, spaces, and studies.

Ghanaian-born scholar, George Sefa Dei (2016) approaches sankofa through rethinking assumptions that pose that 'a river never returns to its source' translating this through the

understanding of sankofa as a reclamation of what has been intentionally marginalized to "bring it to the foreground or surface" (p.301). It is also part and parcel to anti-Black racist organizing pedagogy, discussed in Chapter 5 of our Program of Action. The other side of learning from our past to inform our future actions includes the practice of analysis that we also engaged throughout our discourses. Dei (2016) writes about this importance when arguing for the intentional investigation of what has failed us in the years before" (p.301). This can be attributed to Black Anarchism's reflexive practice, which birthed its very politics. Though building political knowledge through political study is not a contemporary or widespread focus across Black organizing, this work has reminded us of the ways in which political study and working towards a more comprehensive political education is inseparable from anti-racism education.

Designing principled coalition structures that engage intersectional Black radical praxis

One of many practices that we attempted to accomplish as early in this project as possible was ensuring that all BPR members and Black organizers were on the same page politically. While we still see this as an important strategy that should be employed prior to entering any collective effort or project as we attempted to do, the pivotal point here was the reminder that we, as Black organizers cannot simply be moving towards a shared conversation or interest for Black liberation. While we gained essential learning from each person's differing politics and current organizing practices, it is equally important to arrive at a shared politics by individually and collectively co/defining what Black liberatory futures look like. It is not enough that we all share Black skin because, as we know, Black experiences are not shared given that they occur intersectionally across class, gender, geographic, and other social lines. In critiquing current efforts of diversity, inclusion, and non-profit organizing developments, this is where contemporary practices and visions of Black representation within and outside of coalition formations, or "a seat at the table" will certainly fail us. The BPR team specifically learned that it is essential to not only understand individual and collectively beneficial rationale for coalescing as we shared during our individual, paired, and focus group engagements, but also each organizer's political orientation, principles and priorities, logics and mindsets, and overall politics that grounds each organizer and their organizing groups for more aligned, effective, and sustainable coalition building and politics across members.

It is also clear from our reflections and overview of history how colonial and neocolonial ideologies, practices, logics, and mindsets can be adopted and used as a continuation of

colonialism/colonial projects by Black persons, groups, and even nations as we have seen across 'post-colonial' Africa that continue to persuade or force Black migrations, for instance. Asking the tough questions following our political studies included discussing what we were unable to answer during our focus group discussions: What Black organizing groups exist? Which groups do/should we organize with? Which groups do we not, and why? In this silence, the siloed ways in which Black organizing occurs was clear. While we were unsure why Black Organizers weren't vocally responsive to mapping out what Black organizing looked like and where linking coalition bonds could start, it was clear that this work would take time and trust building to build these bonds for further coalition formations. At the same time, we learned that it was important to ensure Anarchist organizing governance structures are considered for organizing labour to be strategic; we all see the ways in which organizing labour fell on certain individuals—even the fact that majority of the Black Organizers were women spoke volumes to us. Our conversations with BLMyeg specifically addressed a distinction between hierarchical organizing and co-creating organizing structures that make space for organized action, accountability, and transparency. With the aforementioned in mind, we realize that coalitions cannot be successful or even effectively practiced without applying praxis to coalition governing structures. What we know through our own organizing experience, which was affirmed through our political study is that the comprehensive needs of Black community must not be denied, rejected, or neglected in collective organizing and movement building for social change. Black organizing must be intersectional and international.

Building community-wide power that prioritizes individual and community survivals

Whether local, regional, and or international, building Black coalitions grounded on principles of mutuality and sustainability is critical. As verbalized and documented throughout this study, this calls for the prioritization of organizing to preserve Black energies using Black coalition models that serve the collectively defined rationale, needs, and objectives of organizers, groups, and their greater communities. Conserving Black energies through collaborative power and resource sharing has been a central focus of my own personal organizing interest; in sharing this priority, this assumption was confirmed as a collective lesson that emerged from this project.

 Also stemming from our conversations was the need for Black organizers and community to take or create opportunities to exchange organizing lessons especially by reconnecting early Black Diasporic peoples and communities with more recent Black Diasporic communities, as stressed

by Debbie, a descendant of early Black settlers to Alberta. If intentional and long-term, these efforts would in turn work towards eliminating siloed structures, logics, ideologies, and organizing practices. This also requires us to continue the increasing recognition and acknowledgement of Black individuals and communities who first arrived and resisted anti-Black racism. In doing so, it allows newer Black diasporic communities the benefit of not starting from scratch upon our respective arrivals.

Related to building power and resources is the need to prioritize our personal and collective survivals. Countless instance of surveillance, incarceration, and assassination both across the Diaspora as well as across Turtle Island have taught us that leader-driven movements are not only problematic, but unsafe to the individual, their family, and the organizing group. In recognizing this, it is also important to recognize that personal and communal risks can occur both externally and internally. In a persistently neocolonial world that is structured by the hypersurveillance of particular bodies—in this case the life, movement, and resistance of Black bodies, non-hierarchical structures in organizing offers one element of protection while ensuring power is invested across Black groups and communities. On the topic of surveillance, the protection of information and strategy is important and very much considered in the development and engagements throughout this research project. The concern of cooption due to the revealed identities of organizers was relevant to every individual and group discussion. The academic institution was not an exception. This priority was also discussed as a consideration for future organizing.

Concluding Reflections on the BPR Experience for Organizing and Coalition Building
This research offers an example of how BPR research can be used to co-develop knowledge alongside Black organizers. As discussed in Chapter 4 (BPR methodology), since our research project's knowledge building stage was conducted digitally during the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, this research project demonstrates lessons that can be gained from conducting participatory action research virtually as discussed in Chapter 4. Drawing on the work of Afropessimism, Black Anarchism, and other Black radical theories, this thesis recenters Black radical theories to strengthen anti-Black racist action for strengthened Black coalition building. Our varying Black Diasporic narratives encompass legacies and lessons of resistance that we've brought with us to amiskwacîwâskahikan and greater Turtle Island enriching the robust scholarship of Black migration stories of resistance and survival while layering their resulting

experiences of displacement, unbelonging, and in some cases, exile. In framing both siloism and coalescing as opposing organizing practices, it stresses the ways in which they are used within Black diasporic community organizing as mindsets, logics, and political ideologies that we must continue to unlearn and resist in the case of siloed organizing as we reflexively move towards strategizing towards radical coalition building. Furthermore, we also propose practical possibilities where many critiques have persistently argued for the failure of Afropessimism or excludes the work of Black Anarchism in their Black (radical) scholarship and organizing alike. In turn, this research offers insights on joining Black radical theory for meaningful organizing praxis as well as yields a better sense of what forming Black anarchist coalitions could look like. In retrospect, by building on theoretical scholarship of both PAR and BPR, this work urges the use of Black Participatory Research (BPR) as a methodological framework for research that can be undertaken by Black community members, within Black community. Not only does this work demonstrate the importance of using emancipatory research methods, such as PAR that responds to the rationale by which participants engage in research projects, but it also expresses the particularity of 'researching while Black' and shows how BPR can be applied to the difficult task of coalition building work.

Reflecting on our project, our accomplishments are plenty. On the one hand, we gathered local Black organizers from various organizing corners to spark a much needed and desired conversation about Black coalition building that coalesced our personal, collective, generational, and prior learned experiences of the successes and challenges of Black organized resistance. On the other hand, we had the opportunity to engage lessons from senior Black organizers in conversations about prior Black organizing that informed our group discussions with Black Organizers and BPR members on the topic and shared objective of Black coalition building. Both our engagements and the literature revealed that Black coalition formations are not new or limited to recent history, coalition efforts have rather been ingrained in Black resistance strategies not only prior to our departure from Africa, but the formation of coalition bonds have also proved to be an enduring resistance strategy. This project also shifted our focus to Black abolition and anarchist resistance as the necessary response to colonial experiences of anti-Blackness. Continuing these conversations has encouraged us to continue to consider many questions that can be taken up by future research, particularly and most effectively, BPR: (1) What Black abolitionist to anarchist institutions currently exist? (2) In what ways is reform sustaining anti-

Black racism, oppression, and settler colonialism? And (3) In what ways can our resistance, politic (of refusal, protest etc.), and logic be retooled by non-Blacks, anti-Black systems, and the greater anti-Black world?

Learning from the continuum of historical to continued Black resistance, the process to which we refer to as 'political study' during our discussions, served as a learning and organizing tool during our co-investigation of prospective contemporary local and or regional Black coalition building. Part and parcel of what can be considered as an anti-Black organizing pedagogy, this strategy demonstrated the importance of political study through Sankofa. A key execution that emerged from conducting this project was engaging in reoccurring difficult conversations that centered what it takes to build Black coalition amongst Black organizers. Through our discussions this identified a distinction between the often and reoccurring nature of siloed Black organizing groups or limits of building solidarity, alliances, and collaborative organizing.

While we were able to exchange conflicting understandings of political theory and organizing, limited time prevented possibilities of closure or the creation of coalitions through this study. This not only refers to the limitations of time, but the reality that humans of course learn and grow during, beyond, as well as outside of the data generation and analysis portion of our study. For example, for one BPR member, Afropessimism or Black Anarchism were no longer sufficient as productive political theories given what they see as its limitations. Referring to Black Marxist-Leninist Communists, such as Thomas Sankara and Amílcar Cabral, they better identified with Marxist-Leninist Communism as a solution to the intersecting experiences of Black oppression. If we turn to Ervin's book (2021), *Anarchism and the Black Revolution*, while he doesn't refer to African Marxist-Leninist contexts, he argues that

> "the final distinction between Marxism-Leninism and anarchism […is] that Marxist-Leninists believe in a political revolution to empower revolutionary politicians, while Anarchists believe in social revolution to empower the masses of people. Anarchists build organizations to build a new world, not to perpetuate domination over the masses of people" (p.55).

On the Future of Black Participatory Research (BPR)

There is limited research available on Black radical coalition building as a contemporary organizing strategy for Black resistance across Canada today. Beyond calling for more BPR

research on Black coalition building and organizing locally, regionally, and internationally, this section addresses recommendations that have emerged from our BPR experience. While this BPR research centers prospects of Black radical coalition building locally, a broader focus across Canada and the United States is still necessary—especially as we rethink Black historical organizing and resistance as a continuum that tirelessly persists despite colonial borders. As we consider the ways in which radical Black organizing have become retooled for the protection, continuity, and further benefit of the anti-Black world in this study, further research on coopted Black resistance could be undertaken to investigate this identified barrier to Black liberatory efforts of resistance. A topic of interest across participants including myself has been in relation to Black and Indigenous coalition work: while our work is rooted in Afropessimism, which imparts a repeated lesson that anti-Blackness becomes relegated to the background when Indigenous and POC interests are centered, Afropessimism nor Black Anarchism deny the necessity of Indigenous resistance for self-determination and survival. Relatedly, critiques of reform-driven organizing that sustains anti-Black racism, oppression, and settler colonization is important to the ongoing analysis offered through Black Anarchism. On the other hand, Black Anarchist research on historical and current anarchist organizing formations including studying the ways in which transitional strategies to build anarchist solutions is another important area for future study. A final recommendation for future research is pertains to the coalition strategy and politics of Black Lives Matter (BLM) as a radical modern international Black coalition, i.e., exploring and gathering data pertaining to their coalition strategies employed locally, regionally, and internationally. Despite recognizing the aforementioned areas of research that would be beneficial across scholarly and communal archives, critical to building Black community relations and learning for informed coalesced radical action, this project underscores the need for ethical, careful, and cautious record-keeping given the ongoing misuse of Black strategies and experiences by the academic (and related) research and knowledge production and dissemination systems.

Since the writeup of our project, Black Organizers have started their own political education groups—a praxis working group within BLMyeg and one with a group of local organizers. They've asked for reading lists from the written portion of this project to further inform their respective organizing practices. A second commitment that arose from these discussions was continuing to support Black organizing in high school spaces.

156

While there is no *one way* that Black persons and organizations have engaged in resistance for liberation or survivals, there are however, ways that we Black organizers become complicit in ways that conflict with the prospects for Black liberation as well as Indigenous sovereignty. In recognizing Black anarchist coalitions as a continued strategy for alternative world making, the use of Afropessimist theory and Black Anarchism together, have demonstrated stronger possibilities for Black survivals, and ultimately, Black liberation.

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