

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

of CALIFORNIA

Public History Program

Unrest and Protest Lesson Materials

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8th Grade Pre Activity Handouts

Crosswords:

Black Panther Party Crossword:

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/2020-11-19-738>

Third World Liberation Front Crossword:

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/third-world-liberation-front>

Barbary Coast Crossword:

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/barabary-coast>

LGBTQ and AIDS activism Crossword:

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/lgbtq-and-aids-activism>

Occupation of Alcatraz Crossword:

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/occupation-of-alcatraz>

See attached papers on next page:

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HIST 3901: Public History Dr.

Jordan Lieser

October 22nd 2020

AIDS: Fighting For Equality

The politics surrounding the issue of protest movements in the LGBTQ community were very important in determining how the future would see the community but also how we would operate as a society. The city of San Francisco has been a location that progressed in wide varieties in terms of complexity and in terms of how the west coast has been developed. However, this has not come easy and there have been a number of protesting events that have shaped how the city has become so diverse. San Francisco has been a very important battleground in the fight for equality of all, leading it to become one of the most progressive cities in the United States. The election of Harvey Milk onto the Board of Supervisors and his impact, the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, and the political effects and aftermath of the AIDS epidemic are all key events that took place in San Francisco that tremendously helped shape the overall climate in San Francisco regarding this disease.

Harvey Milk was a very important figure in the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1970s and helped lead the LGBTQ movement to become more widespread. Milk was motivated to change the way society viewed gay people, having experienced harassment first hand as an openly gay shop owner. After losing his race for mayor, he became more well-known for speaking about gay rights, as well as other marginalized groups in the city. After he was elected into the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, he introduced a bill that outlawed discrimination

based on sexual orientation. In a letter sent to President Carter in 1978, Milk asks the president for support in the defeat of Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, which would not have allowed gay and lesbian people to work in the California Public School System. In the letter, he calls on the president to represent the rights of 15-20 million gay and lesbian people.

Harvey Milk not only served to impact the people but also served for a better and more functioning society where people weren't driven by hate or fear. In the following quote, he details the importance of people knowing what was going on in his head, so people could gain a better understanding as to how he experienced his life and what events he went through. "I fully realize that a person who stands for what I stand for, an activist, gay activist, becomes a target or the potential target for somebody who is insecure, terrified, afraid, or very disturbed themselves," Milk said on his final tape. "Knowing that I could be assassinated at any moment or any time, I feel it's important that some people know my thoughts." The impact that Harvey Milk had on the LGBTQ community resonated with the effect that the AIDS epidemic had on gay men living in San Francisco during the 1980s.

The AIDS pandemic that swept over the Bay Area in the early 1970s was a huge turning point and a very large chain of events that helped lead to another series of protests in the area. When it was first discovered in metropolitan areas such as San Francisco and New York, it was commonly known as the "gay disease" because it was said to have come from homosexual men. Early on, it was also known as GRID (Gay-Related Autoimmune Disease) which looked to marginalize the connection between AIDS and homosexuals. Not only was AIDS associated with gay men, but also drug injection users as well as immigrants were highly affected. Unfortunately, this association between the populations and the disease led to a more difficult time to achieve a treatment strategy. The AIDS epidemic brought many of these groups together, due to the injustice they were facing in society. The LGBTQ movement played crucial roles in

the AIDS epidemic because people were treated poorly and were not being treated as an equal member of society. As we can still see today in 2020, people are still fighting for their rights despite the number of laws that have been changed or shut down. Cleve Jones, who was an intern for Harvey Milk, remembers his death as one of the starting points for gay rights. In addition to the backlash that gay people face, and interesting side note to mention is the removal of the word homosexuality in the DSM(Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) in 1973. The diagnosis was considered to be a mental illness up to this point, and Harvey Milk was elected onto the Board of Supervisors only 5 years later. Considering the timing of this event, the role that Harvey Milk played, and the AIDS epidemic that were playing out in San Francisco and New York, this was a minor scientific change that ended up having lasting effects and impact as to how as a society we see someone as homosexual.

During the height of the AIDS epidemic in the 80's and 90's, there was a major call for more efficient needle exchanges, promotion of safe sex practices, and figuring out a more efficient method for the negative stigma surrounding the disease. Due to the lack of government action during this time, community organization was extremely key for the development of the city as well as on the effect of people. A common theme among the people that were diagnosed was that this disease was deadly and had the potential to kill people yet there was no reform taking place, leading to establishments such as ACT-UP. (Aids Coalition to Unleash Power) Another event that was established that helped the AIDS movement as a whole come together as a community was the annual AIDS Walk that was organized by people in the city after the mayor, Diane Feinstein, declared AIDS awareness week. The AIDS epidemic that was occurring during this time also helped lead to the creation of the SFLBGT Center, which opened in 1996, and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, which opened in 1982 prompted by the crisis.

Because of the stigma that was on them due to the first discovery of AIDS being in a gay

man, it was difficult to function living with a disease with the disease. An AIDS diagnosis was not only deadly but forced many people into isolation due to the nature of the disease as well as the damage it had caused in such a small area. The Castro district was a popular area that was hit very hard with the impact of AIDS. CDC researchers concluded that the virus was spread only through the exchange of bodily fluids, and symptoms could start showing up fourteen years after you had contracted the virus. An epidemiology survey conducted in 1985 showed that 37% of gay men had been exposed to the virus, with the number climbing to over 50% in a matter of time. The AIDS pandemic plagued the Castro district in a manner in which these men were left alone, some by their families and some by their lovers. Community organization was very key in the role that it played for some activists to participate in as well as letting city officials know of the harshness that these people faced. Eventually, money in the sums of 4 million, 5 million, and 9 million dollars began to pour in annually. For people living with AIDS, it was a sense of mixed feelings and planning ahead for what you were going to experience. It was mixed because for money, you weren't really aware of when and if the virus was going to take you. A lot of it depended on the choices those people made, and if they wanted to continue to spread this disease knowingly or not.

Beginning in 1987, the AIDS Walk was established where people from the community gathered together and walked from the Castro Center to the Civic Center in hopes for greater government funding on AIDS research and teaching. In another form of failure of government action, President Bush in 1987 declined an invitation to the 6th International Aids Conference, and his administration declined the federal AIDS disaster relief bill. The secretary for the Health and Human Services at the time, Louis Sullivan, who was also appointed by Bush, wasn't even able to be heard at the conference, due to the community organizing to form the group at the time. A common theme among the people that were diagnosed was that this disease was deadly and had the potential to kill people yet there was no reform taking place, leading to

establishments such as ACT-UP. (Aids Coalition to Unleash Power) Another event that was established that helped the AIDS movement as a whole come together as a community was the annual AIDS Walk that was organized by people in the city after the mayor, Diane Feinstein, declared AIDS awareness week. The AIDS epidemic that was occurring during this time also helped lead to the creation of the SFLGBT Center, which opened in 1996, and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, which opened in 1982 prompted by the crisis.

In today's society, fighting for equality as a whole is still a very trending topic and will be a very popular topic for a long time because of our failure as a society to treat everyone equally. There are many circumstances that people are unaware of in which they could make such a small impact on society, and that is where it can truly begin. The AIDS epidemic that occurred in San Francisco during the 1980s helped establish programs such as the SFLGBT Center as well as the San Francisco AIDS walk, that helps the community come together and organize.

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HIST 3901

The Third World Liberation Front Strike at UC Berkeley

Throughout history, minorities have almost always been overlooked in terms of their contributions to their communities and society, but have also been underrepresented when it comes to learning and acknowledging their history in the public and private school education system. Not only has their history been overshadowed by other events in the United States, but one can argue that this has inspired groups of marginalized people to express their grievances through civil disobedience in the form of protest movements and strikes. Through the use of historical methodology, this will form an understanding of the different social and civil rights movements that transpired throughout the Bay Area from various perspectives and groups of people. The Third World Liberation Front was created to remedy the lack of representation of ethnic groups in the curriculum at UC Berkeley, the climate of social unrest, specifically the Chicano and Black Panther movement, can be seen to have a substantial impact on the Front and their path to achieve their intended goals.

To begin, we must acknowledge the prior civil rights groups and movements such as the Chicano movement and the Black Panther Party, as these created a lasting impact towards the students that initiated the Third World Liberation Front. The Black Panther Party originated in Oakland, California, in 1966, where it was formed as a political group against police brutality

and was to focus on self-defense, while still fighting for their rights.¹ Shortly after the creation of the Black Panther Party, the Brown Berets initiated in 1967, following similar styles of protesting like the members of the Black Panther Party, in terms of self-defense, and attire such as the berets that both parties wore, one difference was that this group was mainly comprised of Latino and Chicano youth.² In addition to these protest groups, “...among these were the Civil Rights movement, protests against the Vietnam War, the American Indian Movement, the Black Panthers, the Chicano Protest movement, the Farm Workers movement. War on Poverty and the Red Guards, just to mention a few. Many of these groups inspired and influenced each other”³ Each protest group impacted the people of the Bay Area, giving the message to rise up and demand representation and acknowledgment of their history, culture, and studies. From these movements, The Third World Liberation Front was established to integrate their culture and life into the curriculum at UC Berkeley.

The Third World Liberation Front was initiated in 1968 and was formed by Native American, Chicano and Latino, Filipino-American and Black Student Union students. The Front’s goal was for more ethnic studies and diversity to be integrated within their higher education at UC Berkeley, and made a list of demands pursuing these goals. Members of the Third World Liberation Front “...demanded courses to emphasize the experiences of people of color, and Berkeley started one of the first ethnic studies departments in the country.”⁴ What is

¹ Giovanni Russonello, “Fascination And Fear: Covering The Black Panthers,” The New York Times. 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/us/black-panthers-50-years.html>.

² S. Kapoor, “Brown Beret: Could This Be a Chicano Peace Brigade?,” 1997, pp. 16-17.

³ Ibid.16-17

⁴ Dustin Gardiner, “Newsom Signs Bill To Require Ethnic Studies For CSU Students,” SF Chronicle. 2020.

important to make evident is how these students were able to pursue their interests and goals, and what they went through during their five month-long strike at UC Berkeley. It was not merely a simple process. This required dedication and determination to get the board and administrators of UC Berkeley to listen and understand their demands, and why it is important to integrate ethnic studies into higher education, as well as in the education system in general.

Undoubtedly as the strike took place, the members of the Third World Liberation Front and supporters were met with clouds of tear gas and violence as a response of the police department. Through observation and examination of the previous protests movements and civil disobedience in the late 1960s, we can distinctly see a pattern of violence and chaos that was attributed by the police. It is crucial to state that violence can be instigated from both parties; however, historically, when the authorities are informed of protests, they dress up in riot gear and already assume it will end in flames. Regardless of the initial strike and protest being peaceful, the students faced beatings from the police. Not only were the students facing police brutality, but so were the news reporters as well; "...police made further arrests and embroiled themselves in a brutality case by severely beating a Black news reporter in sight of several secretaries in the basement of Sproul Hall."⁵ A witness reported:

I was standing at least ten yards away from the path where they'd be going. I was leaning on one foot, casually, with my books under my arm, and you know how I

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Newsom-signs-bill-to-require-ethnic-studies-for-15491160.php>

⁵ Timothy W. Armistead, "Police on Campus and the Evolution of Personal Commitments: A Survey of Non-Strikers' Attitudes During a Berkeley Confrontation.," 1969.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42909611>

look. [The informant looked “straight” - very short hair, sport shirt and slacks, dress shoes. This was in contrast to the appearance of many of the strikers.] All of a sudden a huge cop ran over to me - he had to break formation to do it. I didn’t think he was coming for me, so I looked around, but I was alone there. Then he slammed his club into my chest and I dropped my books all over. I was shaking and I was so mad. I said, “What?...., and he yelled “Move on!” I couldn’t believe it. . . . As they got near the entrance to the basement they started to club some guy. Six cops on this guy! [He was doing] nothing! Anyway, if he’d been resisting he couldn’t any more - he was on the ground, bleeding all over his head, and wasn’t moving, but they *still* beat on him... It was horrible. One guy, who must have been his friend, was out of his head, screaming and crying. Other guys had to hold him back.⁶

This was not the only incident in which the strikers and bystanders were attacked for simply being there. This is a direct violation of the first amendment rights, stated in the constitution, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”⁷ The most ‘violent’ day of these strikes was Thursday, February 20th, 1969. “About 3:30 p.m., the police suddenly began to clear strikers and onlookers from Sproul Plaza by hurling tear gas canisters into the crowd. Some students responded by hurling the canisters back, along with stones and chunks of cement. Police repeatedly charged at the students, using tear gas and riot

⁶ Ibid. 172.

⁷ Amend. I. United States Constitution. 1776.

batons to roust them”⁸ Despite such circumstances and beatings from the police, the students and strikers continued to demand change. From such violent interactions between the police and the strikers, Governor Raegan declared a state of extreme emergency, sent over 2,700 national guards to maintain order, as well as placed a 10p.m. curfew.⁹

Due to the Third World Liberation Front being composed of members of different clubs such as Black Student Union, Latin American Student Organization, Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action, as well as the Mexican American Student Confederation and others, different demands were sent to the board of UC Berkeley. The main demands of the whole front itself include:

[1] That a School of Ethnic Studies for the ethnic groups involved in the Third World be set up with the students in each particular ethnic organization having the authority and control of the hiring and retention of any faculty member, director, and administrator, as well as the curriculum in a specific area of study. [2] That 50 faculty positions be appropriated to the School of Ethnic Studies, 20 of which would be for the Black Studies Program. [3] In the Spring semester, the college fulfills its commitment to the non-white students in admitting those that apply. [4] In the Fall of 1969, all applications of non-white students be accepted. [5] That

⁸ Timothy W. Armistead, “Police on Campus and the Evolution of Personal Commitments: A Survey of Non-Strikers' Attitudes During a Berkeley Confrontation,” 173-174.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42909611>

⁹ Jon David Cash, “People’s Park: Birth and Survival,” *California History* 88, no. 1 (2010): 8-55.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25763082>.

George Murray and any other *faculty* person chosen by non-white people as their teacher be retained in their position.¹⁰

On March 20th, 1969, the strike came to an end after negotiations with the administration which ended with UC Berkeley agreeing “...to accept virtually all nonwhite applicants for the fall 1969 semester, and establish a College of Ethnic Studies, the first in the country, with classes geared towards communities of color.”¹¹ This may seem as a victory for the Third World Liberation Front; however, as we examine some of their initial demands, it is certain that not all of them were met. Even though not all of the demands were met per each group, their initial and overall goal was for ethnic studies to be incorporated into their higher education, as opposed to only learning about European ideologies and history.¹²

To conclude, it is essential that our future generations and other students are aware of the many contributions these minority groups have made for the sake of equality in education. To only learn about European history is inadequate, as the Bay Area was created and founded by a multitude of peoples- regardless of their ethnicity or cultural background. All minorities have

¹⁰ San Francisco State Strike Committee, *On Strike Shut It Down : San Francisco State Strike Committee*, 1969.

<http://digitalcollections.library.sfsu.edu/digital/collection/p16737coll1/id/455/rec/63>

¹¹ Asal, Ehsanipour. “Ethnic Studies: Born In The Bay Area From History's Biggest Student Strike,” 2020.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11830384/how-the-longest-student-strike-in-u-s-history-created-ethnic-studies>

¹² Ibid.

created and been a part of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s. Their civil disobedience not only impacted the people of the Bay but continue to leave their imprint in the 21st century, as students and others continue to fight for change. The Third World Liberation Front used their first amendment rights to hold their university accountable, as having their ethnic history be taught in their course literature and studies was essential to preserving and representing their background, identity, and culture.

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Peter Leonhardt

10/18/20

Public History

The Impact and Importance of the Black Panther Party

Throughout the U.S.'s history, the Bay Area has always been an area that is often the focal point of various protests and political movements. Even movements that don't start in the Bay Area often see a massive amount of support from the cities that comprise the Bay. While Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X are seen as the primary civil rights activists of the 1960s, an equally important character (or characters) to mention is the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party was founded in Oakland on October 15, 1966 by Bobby Seale and Huey P Newton. The party was initially founded as the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, and focused on protecting Black communities from police harassment, often in a very militant style. The Party would go through periods of reorganization as the years past, but through all of this the Black Panther Party stands as one of the best examples of an organization that perfectly embodies the message of political protest and unrest.

The Black Panther was formed in the latter half of the 1960s, a decade that was ripe with civil activism, with both Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X preaching about the systemic inequality in America. The founders of the party were inspired by Malcolm X's speeches, which is why the original methods and goals of the party were so militant. Both Huey P Newton and Bobby Seale believed that in order to stop the police harassment of communities of color in the Bay Area they needed to provide armed protection themselves. The Black Panther Party grew quickly within black communities in the Bay Area, attracting activists such as Eldridge Cleaver, a black writer best known for his 1968 book *Soul On Ice*, a collection of essays detailing the struggle of African Americans. Cleaver would serve as one the Party's minister of information. The Party wasn't just founded based on ending police harassment and discrimination, shortly after it's inception they created the Ten Point Program, a document that detailed their demands

towards the U.S. government. Their points include autonomy of black communities, increased employment and housing opportunities, and a reform in the education system regarding the history of black people in the U.S. The Party's first organized campaign took place in April, 1967, after the police shooting of Denzil Dowel, a black man who was accused of robbing a liquor store by the two policemen that shot him. The Panthers quickly launched their own investigation into what happened, and their conclusion differed greatly from the story that the police told. The investigation included protection for the Dowel family against police that were harassing them, and culminated in multiple armed street rallies that served to greatly boost the Party's numbers. Their investigation of the Dowel murder case in Richmond proved that the Black Panther Party could act in a responsive and successful manner.

The teachings of Malcolm X were not the only catalysts for the Black Panther Party's formation. Both Newton and Seale's families had moved to the Bay Area in the 1950s seeking employment and freedom from the Jim Crow laws that were still present in the South. The issue came during the 60s, when Newtons and Seale's generation started looking for employment in Oakland, it simply wasn't there. This led to a cycle where the Oakland youth were often harassed by the police in order to curb "Juvenile delinquency" among a population of young black men and women who were simply trying to find jobs. Like many other black power and civil rights activism, the BPP is also considered a student movement, and before the official founding of the party both Newton and Seale were a part of black activists groups at Merrit Junior college in Oakland, however they believed these groups focused too much on "cultural nationalism", an ideology that both Newton and Seale believed could not yield true results in the fight for black freedom. In the eyes of the party, these unions were too moderate in their approach, not taking enough actions to aid the black communities of America.

The moderate approach of not only many civil activists but black power groups bothered many of the panthers, as they believed that there would be no change without definitive action. Rallies are a tried and true form of protest, and there something that the panthers regularly

organized. Previously mentioned was the case of Denzil Dowel, and on top of the personal investigation there were rallies held around the surrounding Richmond area to bring attention to the incident and to the party itself. Rallies often served one of the primary methods of recruitment, and early rallies served as a type of neighborhood or community protection from the police. While the South was still attempting to completely get rid of segregation, Oakland and the larger Bay Area saw clear cut cases of police brutality among black communities. Residential segregation was still a large issue within many neighborhoods in Oakland, and the aforementioned employment struggles and continuous racist police activities sparked armed protests by the panthers. A decent percentage of their rallies would take place in black neighborhoods, and many party members would watch police there to make sure that they didn't act in abuse of their power. California governor Ronald Reagan actually passed a law in 1967 in order to combat armed "copwatching" by the party. The fact that these party members were armed no doubt raised already high tensions between the protestors and the police. While there is no case of a shootout at any major rally, there were numerous shootouts between the police and the panthers. According to Bobby Seale, any shootouts were instigated by the police, and the panthers made it clear that they would not shoot first. The panthers called this "Policing the police", and was the first consistent activity that the party engaged in.

The Black Panther Party's tactics of armed neighbourhood protection and their adamant nature caught the attention of the government extremely quickly. As soon as August, 1967 the FBI had begun a counterintelligence operation against the black panther. The director of the FBI at the time, J. Edgar Hoover, is quoted in a letter stating "This program will 'expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Blac Nationalists, hate type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, supporters.'" (Newton, pg 1). Given the FBI's negative response to Martin Luther King Jr a few years earlier, and taking into consideration the fact that the Black Panther Party was much more militant than MLK, it's no surprise they quickly jumped on any potential opportunity to suppress the Panthers activities.

Their first operations were attempts to discredit the party as an organization. They would send various newspapers information on how the leaders of the party had been in legal trouble in the past, and try to get the papers to say that the party was in fact run by dangerous criminals. Various encounters with law enforcement (some fatal for members of the BPP), and Huey Newton's incarceration in 67 for the alleged attempted murder of a police officer only served to strengthen the media's and FBI's rhetoric against them. This attempt would later prove to be very ineffective, as the rally to free Huey Newton was one of the largest in the panthers history. Some newspapers took this headline and ran with it, an example coming from the newspaper *The Desert Sun*, where in 1969 they ran an article about how the panthers were one of the nations top security threats. The article quoted the FBI, with them expressing the same level of concern, that the party was a grave threat to the U.S. government. These types of publications certainly did not do much to help the public image of the party. Another tactic used by the FBI was factionalism, an operation that sought to create a divide within the BPP's leadership. The idea was that if the party split off into factions it would eventually crumble. The FBI discusses creating suspicion by spreading false information about the financial resources, spousal affairs, and police involvement regarding the parties leadership. It's very evident that even though the FBI saw the BPP as a threat, they certainly did not think of the leaders and members as intelligent. One of the FBI reports discussing the BPP states " In seeking effective counterintelligence it should perhaps be borne in mind that the two things foremost in the militant Negro's mind are sex and money." (Newton, pg 1). The FBI completely ignored the self proclaimed reasoning behind the BPP and instead stated that they were simply after hedonistic pursuits, instead of the party's true goal, systemic change. Once the BPP started expanding to LA, the FBI even forged a letter and sent it to the Oakland headquarters of the BPP, falsely stating that the LA faction of the party would no longer support Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. These attempts at discrediting and dissolving the party would prove not effective, as the party would continue to grow in the next few years.

The perceived threat of the party created by various newspapers and the FBI would initially do very little to stop the expansion and growth of the BPP. Given the swelling in membership, the party would eventually change their name officially from the Black Panther Party for Self Defense to just the Black Panther Party and would start to shift their policy from protection of black communities to more personal services within those communities. As previously mentioned, educational reform was an initial demand of the party, however they would seek to expand their programs in an attempt to correct the wrongdoings of the War on Poverty. The 1960s saw a variety of social and civil programs that were in theory designed to help the poor and minorities of America, such as the Civil Rights Act and Economic Opportunity Act in 1964. Given that the 1960s was a decade of civil rights protests, perhaps one could even say that these new policies were a direct response to the cries of systemic discrimination, and were a step in the right direction. The BPP disagreed, and had doubts about the applications of these programs. Because of this, they made community service one their top priorities. The party initially sought to expose that these social programs did little to in fact improve the lives of the impoverished black population, pointing to residential segregation, racist police activities, and limited social services in the poorer parts of Oakland as proof that the government was participating in “maximum feasible participation” (Nelson, pg 50), in which the government would not truly see these issues through. Much of the Panthers frustrations came from many of the community programs set up by the War on Poverty. Both Seale and Newton had worked in community CAPs, or anti-poverty centers in 1966 before the formation of the party, and they quickly became harsh critics of the War on Poverty and it’s programs. In working at centers designed for the War on Poverty, many Black Panther leadership were finding ways to run their own programs that would serve their communities better than any program set up by the government. One of these programs was to set up free medical care in black communities, and one of the panther demands developed later would be free healthcare for black and other oppressed peoples. The demand for autonomy of medical facilities in black communities came

from cases of purposeful misinformation given to black women and other women of color, where doctors incorrectly told them that they could still have children after a hysterectomy operation. In the South there was a clear difference in the segregated hospitals was painfully obvious, and the case of Henrietta Lacks at John Hopkins Hospital were also some catalysts for these programs and demand of healthcare autonomy in these communities. Some of these medical programs were groundbreaking for black communities at the time, and included sickle cell anemia research (with help from the Oakland Children's Hospital) which not only was one the first testing programs for these neighborhoods, it was one of the first testing programs throughout the entire country. Other notable programs include free breakfast programs, free clinics, grocery giveaways, programs for senior citizens, school and education, and legal aid to those who needed it. The party was resourceful with their programs, often using them to provide resources to their communities while also educating them on the party and their goal. Washington DC was supposedly alarmed that their anti-poverty programs had seemingly only organized and in their eyes radicalized black communities and groups.

Once the BPP started to shift towards more social and community programs, the tactic used by the FBI changed with the party. Instead of spreading misinformation through the media, the FBI took a much more direct, alarming approach. The FBI started sending anonymous death threats to Huey Newton and other members of the party in order to increase paranoia. Letters were also sent to other branches of the BPP stating that Huey Newton was released because he had become a police informant, again trying to create further factionalism. The FBI discussed attempts to limit recruitment of the not only the party but also other black nationalist groups by trying to reach out to more moderate groups to try to get them to condemn the actions of the black panthers, with the hope that black youths would rather join more moderate groups instead of the more militant or radical black nationalist groups. Once the attempts at dissolving the party through targeted harassment failed, the FBI sought more legislative action, attempting to limit the party's access to weapons and the curb circulation of any literature that

would be considered favorable to the party and its goals. All of these tactics were outlined in various letters and documents from the FBI, and they even had a list ranking their goals of stopping black nationalism in order of importance. Even after the BPP stepped away from armed defense of neighborhoods, the FBI thought that it was of utmost importance that they attempt to stop them and other black nationalist groups.

One aspect that proved the U.S. government statement of them being violent exclusionists was their intersectionality with other activist groups. The BPP initially worked together with the Third World Liberation Front and the Brown Berets, chicano activist groups, and the two groups often attended rallies together, usually on campuses not only around the bay area but all across the U.S. The BPP also had a lot of intersectionality with the gay liberation movement. All three of these movements had a similar goal in combating police brutality against “criminalized groups”, as the police defined them. The gay liberation movement and the BPP created somewhat of a united front against this issue in the Bay Area. The intersectionality of police brutality among the BPP and the gay liberation movement was brought to light at a panther meeting in Bobby Hutton park in Oakland between July 18-20, 1969, when there were reports of the police killing two gay men, one in LA and the other in Berkeley, and one straight man who was presumed to be gay in Oakland. This marked the first articulation of the fact that police brutality was an issue that impacted both the gay liberation movement and the BPP. Their strong relationship with the BPP had a positive influence on the gay liberation movement, and aided the path of the movement. The impact was seen more so with gay activists drawing inspiration from the tactics of the panthers and less so in collaboration, nevertheless it was evident that the BPP supported gay liberation and encouraged direct action. This following of similar paths even showed itself when in 1971, after the BPP started to become slightly less militant and more localized and community oriented, the gay liberation movement did the same.

Formed in a decade rife with civil activism, the Black Panther Party stood out among its peers because of its militant style, clear articulated goals, and its willingness to adapt to meet those goals. The first four years of the organization were spent protecting black neighborhoods around Oakland and throughout the bay and trying to stop police brutality. Afterwards the party shifted to focus more on community change by setting up various programs that served the locals of these neighborhoods better than most of the War on Poverty policies and programs. During all of this they were battling not only the local police but also various media publishing works and articles against them as well as the FBI running its own operation to try to shut them down. Their call for direct action and autonomy within black communities drew a lot of attention, both positive and negative, and it's for this reason that they are one of the most remembered black nationalist and civil rights organizations in the Bay Area.

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HIST 3901

The Occupation of Alcatraz

There are many groups in the United States who face oppression and have been facing severe inequality for many years. Many of these minorities have also been underrepresented without a chance to have their stories told. This is the case with Native Americans, their stories have been told in our history textbooks through the eyes of the people who colonized their land. The stories have been told to make it look as though their battles have ended, this is not the case. In 1969, the Indians of All Tribes group would occupy a federal land that would start the movement to get the voices of these marginalized peoples heard across the nation. Through examining the historical mistreatment of Native Americans by the Federal Government, we can assess the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz. We can examine this mistreatment by focusing our lens on the Lakota Tribe and specifically the broken Treaties of Fort Laramie in 1851 and 1868.

The Lakota Tribe, more commonly known as the Sioux, are widely acclaimed for their relations with the famed American explorers Lewis and Clark. The term Sioux comes from French origins meaning “little snakes” or “enemies”¹³. This tribe had been located in the Great Plains for generations before their encounters with these men. Their locations during the 19th century was in the area of Nebraska, the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming. These lands completely shaped the Lakota culture, they believed they had been born into the world in the

¹³ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 3.

Northern part of the Great Plains. After the outbreaks of smallpox and other various diseases brought over by the European colonizers, the Lakota tribes started expanding to the areas across the Mississippi River. After this expansion they broke into seven individual tribal groups: Oglala, Brule, Miniconjou, Sans Arc, Hunkpapa, Blackfeet, and Two Kettles.

The years after this expansion saw many hardships and extreme oppression against the Lakota Tribe. Their buffalo herds and their land that was so sacred to them and their traditions, started to be pulled out from under them. In 1851, the Lakota Tribe signed their first Treaty of Laramie with the United States Federal Government which included other tribes in the Great Plains as well. This treaty gave the US Government rights to establish roads moving west across the Great Plains ¹⁴. This led to the destruction of wildlife and the food supply for the Lakota, this led to growing tensions that broke out into the Red Cloud's War. This bloody warfare was only halted by the signing of the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868.

The Second Treaty of Fort Laramie is what established the Lakota (Sioux) Reservation which was in the plains of South Dakota, west of the Missouri River and encompassed the Black Hills.¹⁵ This treaty signed by the Sioux tribe and the United States Federal Government has caused some major uproar because there are many set promises made in the more than sixteen articles of the treaty that have all been broken. The second article of the treaty states "the United States now solemnly agrees that no persons, except those herein designated and authorized so to do, and except such officers, agents, and employees of the government as may be authorized to enter upon Indian reservations in discharge of duties enjoined by law, shall ever be permitted to

¹⁴ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 4.

¹⁵ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 4.

pass over, settle upon, or reside in the territory described in this article, or in such territory as may be added to this reservation for the use of said Indians, and henceforth they will and do hereby relinquish all claims or right in and to any portion of the United States or Territories, except such as is embraced within the limits aforesaid, and except as hereinafter provided...”¹⁶.

The United States is giving up full claim to the lands surrendered to the tribe as parts of the reservation as well as their right to go onto the reservation without authorization unless they are officers of the law or government agents. In the 1870s, gold is found in the Black Hills area and this part of the treaty is repeatedly broken by settlers and gold diggers. This is the cause for the series of battles and wars to break out known as the Sioux Wars. In these wars, the US army mounted military action to confine the Lakota to their reservation, but the tribe ended up winning the final battles. Though the Lakota might have come out victorious, this might have been a larger threat to the Federal Government, leading to more acts confining them to their reservations and taking their culture from them.¹⁷

In Article XII of the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie is also a specifically important section of the treaty when it comes to the crossing of the promises outlined within this document. This article states “No treaty for the cession of any portion or part of the reservation herein described which may be held in common, shall be of any validity or force as against the said Indians unless executed and signed by at least three-fourths of all the adult male Indians occupying or interested in the same, and no cession by the tribe shall be understood or construed in such manner as to deprive, without his consent, any individual member of the tribe of his rights to any tract of land

¹⁶ Editor: Akim Reinhardt, THE SECOND TREATY OF FORT LARAMIE (1868). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 61-61.

¹⁷ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 5.

selected by him as provided in Article VI of this treaty.”¹⁸. This outlines that the lands outlined as the reservation in this treaty cannot be put back under control of the government unless there was another document signed by at least three-fourths of the male Lakota population. In 1877, under the 1877 Act, the Federal Government seized control of the Black Hills which is in the terms of the treaty as a part of the land promised to the Lakota tribe or the reservation. The government presented an “agreement” to the Sioux via a special commission but only ten percent of the adult male population signed off on this agreement to give their rights to the Black Hills back to the government in exchange for subsequent rations for as long as needed.¹⁹ The government accepted this as a full relinquishment of their claim to the land even though this was an official breach of the Treaty of Laramie. After over one hundred years of fighting to seek legal control once again over the Black Hills, the Lakota tribe got this battle to the United States Supreme Court. In July of 1980 the Supreme Court ruled that the Black Hills had been illegally taken from the Lakota tribe. The court offered the tribe the value of the Hills plus the interest over a hundred years, this amounted to around nine hundred million dollars, but the tribe is refusing to take any offered money from the Federal government; they simply want their land back.

After the Sioux Wars, the Lakota had to start working hard to adapt and change to fit what the government wanted from them while also trying to stay true to their closely held values. The US government wanted to exterminate the Native Americans or assimilate them into white

¹⁸ Editor: Akim Reinhardt, THE SECOND TREATY OF FORT LARAMIE (1868). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 64.

¹⁹ Editor: Akim Reinhardt, UNITED STATES VS. THE SIOUX NATION OF INDIANS (1980). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 188.

culture.²⁰ In 1879, boarding schools started to open up in the eastern United States to remove Native American children from their reservations and from the influences from their cultures. These boarding schools were meant to whitewash these children into “traditional” American society. In 1883, the government prohibited the Lakota tribe from engaging in their religious rituals which and President Grant assigned churches to start converting natives to Christianity. Not only did the government start to take away the land they were promised, but they also started to remove them from that land and strip them of their cultural.

At Standing Rock, Reservation policeman murdered activist Sitting Bull on December 15, 1890. This shifted a dynamic and led to a downward spiral of unnecessary brutal conflicts between the government and the tribe. On December 29, 1890, a group of Lakota headed to the Pine Ridge Agency were intercepted at the banks of the Wounded Knee Creek. They were surrounded and forced to stay overnight. In the morning when the US calvary went to disarm the Lakota, many were doing a Ghost Dance ritual when a gun was fired starting the massacre. It is unknown who shot first, but by the time the dust had settled 250 men, women, and children were killed with 51 wounded. The remaining surrendered to the federal army.²¹

Through this few hundred years’ worth of mistreatments of the Lakota tribe, we can now focus our lens to discuss the Occupations of Alcatraz and specifically the nineteen-month occupation in 1969. Generations later, the Native American population is still living on the land given to them by the United States. Even though these are the population native to this land, Congress still was trying to take away the land we had selected and parceled to give out to them

²⁰ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 6.

²¹ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 6-7.

as reservations, they did this in 1953 by the stopping federal recognition of certain tribes and opening reservation lands for federal development. While doing this, the government was also heavily promoting a reservation Native American urban relocation program. More than one hundred thousand people were relocated during this program. This program promised vocational training, adequate housing, financial assistance, and the relocation from reservations to urban areas.²² This program was not quite as ideal as it sounded: training was three months, skid-row housing, one job referral (at best), and the financial assistance would run out even before the vocational training started. The Bay Area was one of the largest relocation areas in the country. Here, the tribes would band together and form their own organizations to provide communal support to each other to make up for they lost from the government.

America during the 1960s was a time full of unrest and protest especially from the youth. These younger generations were witnessing the birth of civil rights movements such as the Black Power movement, the feminist movement, the new left, the Hispanic movement, and many more.²³ They were opening their eyes to injustices at home in the states and overseas in Vietnam. Protests and strikes were starting to become popular throughout college campuses and were uniting people more than ever on the topic of inequity. One group becoming increasingly united was this younger generation of urban Native Americans who had grown up through these white washing boarding school systems and had all shared similarly stories of being casted off by their own country.

²² Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 65.

²³ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 65.

The first occupation of Alcatraz was in 1964. This was a very short occupation, only lasting about four hours and made-up of five people. This occupation also had a completely different basis than the other two occupations following this event. The basis of this occupation was the planner of the event, Belva Cottier, misremembering an article from the second Treaty of Fort Laramie. Alcatraz Federal Prison had shut down operations in the following year and the island was in a transitional period of being moved from federal ownership to being owned by San Francisco. Cottier had remembered that in the treaty, federal land that had become unused would have ownership reverted back to the Lakota. Cottier and the leader of the occupation, Richard McKenzie were both of the Lakota tribe and went through with the occupation in order to get their rightful land back. McKenzie ended up bringing this issue to the federal courts, trying to get the title to Alcatraz and they ruled against him citing that this was not explicitly stated in the treaty. Though their historical reasons for the occupation were technically wrong, the occupation still laid almost the entirety of the foundation for the occupations to follow. The demands made by the protesters during the occupation would soon be the ones seen in the nineteen-month occupation, these wants were to establish both a cultural center and an Indian University on Alcatraz with full federal funding. The occupation ended peacefully and with no hostile interaction from the federal government.²⁴

The occupation lit the flame for the growing public unrest for and within the Native American community. The Bay Area native community was become active and vocal in these university protests popping up around the Bay. In September of 1969, student activists at San Francisco State started to plan an occupation of Alcatraz. These activists were led by Richard

²⁴ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 64.

Oakes who was a member of the Mohawk Indian tribe from the East Coast. This occupation for then was a sign of Indian self-determination and call for unity.²⁵

The breaking point for the need for the occupation was the San Francisco Indian Center burning down in October of 1969. The San Francisco Indian Center was the home and major meeting place to the Native American organizations that rose due to the urbanization movement as well as the United Bay Indian Council headed by Adam Fortunate Eagle. Adam Fortunate Eagle and other members of the council first tried to get Alcatraz as their approved new center, but this movement was rejected. The council joined forces with the student organizations including Oakes and planned an occupation in the name of the Indians of All Tribes.²⁶

This is the second occupation of Alcatraz. This took place on November 9th and was originally supposed to just be circling the island to symbolically claim it. During the circle around the island, Richard Oakes and four other student activists jumped off the boats and swam up to the island where they climbed on the land and claimed it in the name of the Indians of All Tribes. That night, Richard and fourteen others came back with supplies and stayed until morning. After realizing that occupation seemed much more in reach than previously thought, a much longer occupation began to be planned.²⁷

Richard Oakes began traveling to other universities to rally up supporters for the occupation, one of these universities being UCLA. From UCLA alone, Oakes rounded about eighty students to be make up most of the occupation force for the initial occupation of Alcatraz. With rallied support of one hundred and a multi-tribal group behind him, on November 20th,

²⁵ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 67.

²⁶ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 67.

²⁷ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 68.

Richard Oakes initiated the third and most notable occupation. The occupation was huge and attracted media support from far and wide, even reaching voices of stars in Hollywood. Once on the Island, Oakes was a leader, but there was an elected council put into place and everyone was assigned roles also banning alcohol and drugs use.²⁸ They also started a radio broadcast called the “Radio Free Alcatraz” where they would broadcast thirty minute programs around forty times a day through local radio stations. This was one of their keyways of getting attention and information for their cause.

Around December of 1969, the dynamic of the island started to collapse before them. Oakes’ position of leadership did not sit right with some of the protesters because they viewed that they should all live in an equal society ruled by the elected council on the island. The media stuck to their being a leader on Alcatraz because it was easier than viewing them as a group. Student activists started to go back to school bringing in a new population of Native Americans both from urban areas and from reservation life. This started a conflict of different views for claiming the island. Oakes and the students claimed the island by rights of discovery, the newbies went back to the Treaty of Fort Laramie rhetoric seen in the first occupation.²⁹ Many non-Native Americans ushered into the island around this time too bringing the party culture with them that was initially banned from the island. The final blow for Oakes was in January of 1970 when his twelve-year-old stepdaughter fell down a stairwell to her death, this is unknown if this was an accident or if this was a child of an opposition group on the island. Nevertheless,

²⁸ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 69.

²⁹ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 70.

Oakes and his family left the occupation behind them, leaving the remaining groups on the island to go back and forth.

Throughout all of this the Federal Government under the Nixon Administration had been taking a position of non-interference with the protestors on the island. They did not want to interfere given the current world climate and what that could cause politically. At first, the government was open to negotiation with the Indians of All Tribes. The IOAT demanded the deed for the island, the establishing of an Indian University, a cultural center, and museum on the island and that these were to all be federally funding. The government rejected this idea and had the Coast Guard have a weak barricade around the island. The government decided to wait it out and play a waiting game until the protestors decided to leave on their own accord.³⁰ Also during this time, Nixon was working on his own policies on Native Americans at this time and waiting to make a move. During the occupation, in July of 1970, Nixon returned Blue Lakes to a native tribe as a nationwide symbol to the Administration's approach to Native American affairs.

As support started to dwindle for the island occupants, the government tried to propose a grant to the IOAT as part of a negotiation deal, but this was rejected because they would not move on their stipulations. The government shut-off all power on the island and a fire broke out on the island which resulted in the loss of building including the lighthouse for the Bay. After the fire, the government stopped all negotiations with the IOAT. In January of 1971, two oil tankers collided in the Bay, this incident was never explicitly said to be cause by the absence of the lighthouse, but the government took this as the last straw. Nixon greenlit a removal plan for

³⁰ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 70.

Alcatraz. On June 10, 1971 federal marshals, the FBI and special forces swarmed the island, (fully armed) and removed the occupants.

Though the Indians of all tribes did not get the negotiations they were looking for when they occupied Alcatraz, they still did more than they could have imagined for the Native American community. They opened up the floodgates for many movements after them such as the American Indian Movement or AIM and occupations around the country of federal sites. After this movement, Nixon during his Administration alone introduced 26 pieces of legislature to improve the lives of Native Americans.³¹ Though the fight for equality is far from over, the Occupation of Alcatraz helped gain national attention and unity for the Native American community.

Looking at the years of mistreatment of the Native American community in the United States through the Lakota tribe, we can analyze the long history that has led us to the where the movement came to a tipping point in 1969. There are many marginalized groups in the world and the information on them are not as widely shared or the information is miss-leading. Studying years of oppression to put one large movement in perspective is the least bit of education we could do to help these group and to get their causes noticed.

³¹ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 71.

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Abigail Gordon

Dr. Jordan Lieser

Hist 3901

Committee of Vigilance

The discovery of gold in California, brought many people seemingly overnight. What had been a small city, quickly boomed to several thousand, with no way to handle the mass movement. There were little in the ways of police, judges or any form of a criminal justice system. Adding to that the formation of several violent gangs, San Francisco quickly became a very lawless place. Although crimes were committed all over California, San Francisco seemingly had an “alliance” between the criminals and the politicians, ensuring that the people with the right connections would never be guilty of anything³². This ultimately allowed San Francisco to turn into a lawless land with no one to enforce any form of order. The formation of the Committee of Vigilance brought some semblance of order to what was easily a period of unrest. Though they were not elected nor asked to, several hundred men came together to form this group that for several months in 1851 and 1856 became the judicial system in San Francisco and sent a message to any criminals residing there that they would be brought to justice.

The Gold Rush brought many people to San Francisco in hopes of becoming rich. People all over the US believed that it was their chance to make a fortune. The population began to increase rapidly, with no one in charge to impose any laws. The Criminal Justice system was severely lacking in many regards. With no jails, there was nowhere for criminals to be held awaiting trial, so they were expected to show up when

³² Cleland, Robert Glass. "The San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1856: An Estimate of A Private Citizen." *The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1949): 291-98. Accessed October 21, 2020. doi:10.2307/41168216.

told to. Few of the people who did show up were ever convicted because they made friends with the lawyers, politicians and police³³. The formation of gangs around the city did little to help the issue either. The most well known gang was the Sydney Ducks. Many of these men were criminals who were exiled to Australia from Britain, known for their arson crimes. However, not all of the immigrants from Sydney were criminals and many actually found respectable jobs. The most notorious of the group, though, were criminals and gamblers³⁴. It was through the actions of this gang, that the first Committee of Vigilance was founded in 1851.

The turning point was when the Sydney Ducks lit San Francisco on fire. Several of the Sydney Ducks had boasted that they would start even worse fires than the other ones that occurred in the years before³⁵. According to *The Barbary Coast* by Herbert Ashbury, there was a man known to live in Sydney Town who was seen running from a paint shop minutes before the shop caught on fire. Other buildings nearby caught on fire as well. The Sydney Ducks used the fire and the ensuing chaos to steal from the stores. After this the crime rate continued to spike in the area. This ultimately led to the formation of the first Committee of Vigilance in 1851. The members wrote in their constitution, "The name and styling of the association shall be the 'Committee of Vigilance' for the protection of the lives and property of the citizens and residents of the city of San Francisco³⁶." These members were actually prominent men in their society,

³³ Dillon, Mark C. "Formation of the Vigilance Committee." In *The Montana Vigilantes 1863–1870: Gold, Guns and Gallows*, 119-34. Logan: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Accessed October 18, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1d8h9zp.12>.

³⁴ Ricards, Sherman L., and George M. Blackburn. "The Sydney Ducks: A Demographic Analysis." *Pacific Historical Review* 42, no. 1 (1973): 20-31. Accessed October 18, 2020. doi:10.2307/3637740.

³⁵ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

³⁶ Williams, M. F. (1919). *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851; minutes and miscellaneous papers, financial accounts and vouchers*. Berkeley, CA, CA: University of California.

allowing for the committee to gain a foothold and popularity. They were seen as the “...leading merchants of San Francisco³⁷.” However, the majority of them are not remembered as part of the committee besides the most prominent three: Samuel Brannan, Isaac Bluxome Jr and William Coleman. These men believed that they would be the only way for justice to be done, as none of the actual members of law enforcement were doing anything about it.

The Vigilance Committee made their first debut as a group on June 10, 1851. John Jenkins was a member of the Sydney Ducks, was caught stealing. He was apprehended by the Committee of Vigilance and was questioned and found guilty. In their constitution, they stated that when decisions needed to be made it would be put to a vote and the majority would win. Jenkins was hanged in the early morning, around 2 AM. H. North, a police officer testified about it later saying that, “... that he would shoot me if I interfered with the man³⁸.” Nothing ever happened to any of the members of the committee. They instead published a list of their members and continued to go after other criminals.

This would be the case for several other members of the Sydney Ducks. James Stuart was apprehended by the sailors on the ship he was robbing and was delivered to the Vigilance Committee. He was tried by the Vigilance Committee and found guilty of his crimes. He was hanged later on that day. There were two other Sydney Duck members who were arrested, tried and executed. They were Samuel Whittaker and Robert Mckenzie. These two would be the last official acts of the 1851 Committee of

³⁷ Williams, M. F. (1921). *History of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851: A study of social control on the California frontier in the days of the gold rush*. Berkeley, CA, CA: Univ. of Calif. Pr.

³⁸ Williams, M. F. (1919). *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851; minutes and miscellaneous papers, financial accounts and vouchers*. Berkeley, CA, CA: University of California.

Vigilance, though they never officially disbanded³⁹. After Whittaker and McKenzie were executed, many of the Sydney Ducks inhabiting San Francisco left, believing that they would be executed next.

The Committee of Vigilance did not resurface again until 1856. After the Vigilance Committee in 1851 made most of the Sydney Duck members leave town for fear of their lives, they slowly began to filter back into San Francisco. Sydney Town began to grow again and the crime rate began to climb, reaching highs seen at the beginning of the Gold Rush⁴⁰. The actual event leading to the recreation of the Vigilance Committee was a man named James King, being shot in reference to some things he said in his newspaper about James Casey, another journalist. King was arguing that Charles Cora should receive the death penalty for shooting General Richardson. King and Casey had been rivals for a while, eventually leading to Casey shooting King when he left work to go home⁴¹. This directly led to the Vigilance Committee being reinstated under the guidance of William T Coleman.

This time around, the Committee of Vigilance would gain much more prominence and support from the citizens of San Francisco. The members of the committee were seen as “the people” and were described in their efforts as, “...not a mob, but the people, in the highest sense of the term⁴².” The committee asked Governor Johnson to release James Casey into their custody, which he did. The Vigilance Committee went to

³⁹ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

⁴⁰ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

⁴¹ WALDREP, CHRISTOPHER. "The Popular Sources of Political Authority in 1856 San Francisco: Lynching, Vigilance, and the Difference between Politics and Constitutionalism." In *Lynching Beyond Dixie: American Mob Violence Outside the South*, edited by PFEIFER MICHAEL J., 54-80. Urbana; Chicago; Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2013. Accessed October 21, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt2jcc5k.6>.

⁴² Rushdy, Ashraf H. A. "The Rise of Lynching." In *American Lynching*, 22-50. NEW HAVEN; LONDON: Yale University Press, 2012. Accessed October 21, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt32bxc8.6>.

the county jail and walked out with both Cora and Casey in an hour⁴³. They were both executed by the Committee of Vigilance on the day of King's funeral.

This action by the governor led to the Committee of Vigilance being seen as one of the leading authorities in judicial proceedings. Although the committee was protested against by some people, mainly the Law and Order organization, many believed that they were the only force in San Francisco that was willing to conduct fair trials and ensure that justice was served. It was well known before the creation of the committee that many of the people in criminal justice positions were being paid off and that the juries were often stacked to favor the alleged. Many saw the Vigilance Committee as a way to ensure that there would be order in a largely lawless land and this led to the level of prominence that the committee garnered.

There were two more men who would be executed by the Committee of Vigilance of 1856 and they would also be the last. In the period between this event and the murder of James King, there was not a single killing and therefore no reason for action by the committee⁴⁴. Though the governor had originally supported the Vigilance Committee, he soon retracted that sentiment. Governor Johnson demanded that the committee disband and even sent William T. Sherman to deal with them. This didn't work as planned and the Committee of Vigilance only further solidified their power of the city. During the next seven weeks, no murders were committed and less than a dozen robberies. Joseph Heatherington then shot Dr. Andrew Randall for not paying back the money that he owed Heatherington, even though the courts had said that he didn't need

⁴³ O'Meara, J. (1887). *The Vigilance Committee of 1856*. San Francisco, CA: J.H. Barry.

⁴⁴ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

to. The Vigilance Committee then demanded that Heatherington be released into their custody for trial and the subsequent execution⁴⁵. The other man that was executed with Heatherington that day was Brace who had killed a man two years prior and escaped. They were hung together on July 29, 1856.

This was the last official action of the Committee of Vigilance. After this, they decided to disband and give the power back to the elected officials. They had killed four men during this time and banished 26, although several hundred had fled in fear of the committee⁴⁶. Having proven that they could bring justice and order to the people of San Francisco, they felt it was okay to relinquish the power and let order restore itself.

As seen, the Committee of Vigilance brought many people to justice who would not have been otherwise. They were able to bring order to a place where little order had been established. It is entirely possible that without them, the gangs could have eventually run the city with no law enforcement to stop them. Their methods were definitely unconventional and highly illegal and fed into lynch culture, but they were able to become the police in a place where it was needed the most. The city began to grow after the second Committee of Vigilance disbanded and eventually transformed into one of the most important ports in the US.

⁴⁵ O'Meara, J. (1887). *The Vigilance Committee of 1856*. San Francisco, CA: J.H. Barry.

⁴⁶ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

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Activity Handouts:

Podcast Transcripts for on Ship Activity

Samuel Brannan

Samuel Brannan was born on March 2, 1819 in Saco, Maine. Brannan was a very early member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. After the death of Mormon leader Joseph Smith, the members of the church decided to move west towards California. Brannan landed in the Mexican port town of Yerba Buena on July 31, 1846. He and the other church members began colonizing the area that is now present day San Francisco.

In 1848, Brannan started industrializing California through many ventures like the mail delivery service industry which then led him to start buying land throughout the Bay Area. This left him in a strategic position to buy, sell, and trade goods during the Gold Rush. Through this and many other financial endeavors, Brannan became California's very first millionaire. Samuel Brannan's success story and the many others like it seemed to spread nationwide leading thousands of people to migrate towards the California coast to be part of the Gold Rush.

This quick growth of population was way too much for the city of San Francisco to ever anticipate for it's then relatively small population. The city rapidly fell into a vicious cycle of bad habits that led it to becoming crime-ridden. On top of the rise in crime and violence, the city seemingly had an alliance going on between criminals and politicians that kept those perpetuating the trouble out of harm's way. It was this increase in corruption and crime that led to the creation of the Committee of Vigilance in 1851.

Brannan was a well known member of his community and became a member of the first town council of San Francisco. The turning point for Brannan taking the initiative to create the Committee was the gang, the Sydney Ducks, starting a series of fires around the city with little to no legal repercussions following them. This gang was one of California's first organized criminal gangs ever recorded and they were known for the chaos and lawlessness that followed them.

Their behaviors were uncontrollable with the law and citizens unwilling to intervene. Samuel Brannan and a few other prominent San Franciscan men decided they must take matters into their own hands and protect the streets of their beloved city.

The Committee of Vigilance had a mission plan to help clean up San Francisco, but this group turned into a dangerous force, terrifying many of the city's population. Due to the fact that the men running the committee were men of high class ranking, this group gained heavy popularity and evolved into a militia equalling to about 700. These men all believed that they were the only force that could hail justice unto the criminals reining supreme throughout the city. They were their own police force that would roam the streets and uphold the criminal justice system as they saw it which was through lynching, public execution, humiliation, and deportation.

The group made headlines on June 10, 1851 when they apprehended John Jenkins, a prominent member of the Sydney Ducks. Jenkins was caught stealing, taken in, and questioned by the Committee. He was found guilty by a large majority of the group and sentenced to hanging. The police officers of San Francisco did nothing about these actions and the committee never faced any legal repercussions for this. The Committee continued to go after other criminals, specifically hunting down members of the Sydney Ducks. James Stuart was later caught robbing a ship by the Committee. Stuart was found to be a member of the Ducks, questioned, and found guilty. He was also sentenced to hanging. Samuel Whittaker and Robert McKenzie were two other Sydney Duck members found guilty by Brannan and the Committee and sentenced to hanging. The rest of the Sydney Duck population vacated the city fearing for their lives, though they never officially disbanded their gang. The 1851 Committee of Vigilance spent its final two acts on the Whitakker and McKenzie, seeming to disappear until 1856.

Samuel Brannan was elected California state Senator in 1853, leaving the Committee behind him. Samuel went on to do bigger and greater things that transformed California history, but so did the Committee of Vigilance. The Committee made a resurgence in 1856 when the Sydney Duck members started to seep back into the San Francisco underground. Once again the crime rate started to skyrocket and the justice for these crimes was also nonexistent. The incidence that led to the group being reinstated was the shooting of James King. James King was a journalist who had argued that a certain criminal should receive the death penalty for a murder, but a rival journalist took issue with this. The rival journalist shot King on the streets of San Francisco. This event led to the Committee coming back under the guidance of William T. Coleman.

During this insurgency of the Committee, it was more popular than under Brannan. The members were numbered in the thousands and represented the common men instead of a mob mentality. The Committee pled to the Governor asking for the journalist who murdered King to be released to them to be executed. The Governor agreed and he was executed. This led to the Committee of Vigilance being seen as the main sources of justice and the leaders in law and order. They were seen as more effective than true police forces. They were the only force in San Francisco that would punish criminals and keep the streets safe for the citizens.

After multiple other public executions brought upon by the Committee of Vigilance in 1856, the governor withdrew his support of the organization and called for them to end their tirade. This only led to the strengthening of forces behind the Committee and helped them maintain their power of the city. This seemed to actually show an impact of crime rates throughout San Francisco as they went down and so did the rate of executions.

The last actions of the Committee of Vigilance were on July 29, 1856 when two men were executed by hanging. Both of these men were put on trial by the Committee and convicted of murder. This was their final act before they decided to end their reign over San Francisco and give the power back to the elected officials whose jobs were to do so. They felt they had brought justice back to the city and that order could once again restore itself.

Sam Brannan is an influential figure throughout the entire state of California, but his creating of the Committee of Vigilance in 1851 changed the course of the movements and the justice in San Francisco for years to come. This group brought justice and order back to the Bay when the citizens thought there was no hope left for the city. If not for the Committee of Vigilance, the course of the city of San Francisco could have been changed forever and never would have become the city we know today. Though their methods were violent and sometimes unnecessary, these acts were able to bring elected officials back into control and bring justice back to the streets of the blooming young city.

The Sydney Ducks

During the mid 1800s, the San Francisco Bay Area birthed a new era filled with new hopes and dreams for many. This era, known as the Gold Rush, brought thousands of people from around the globe to San Francisco in hopes of getting rich and famous. This quick growth of population was way too much for the young city to ever anticipate. The city rapidly fell into a vicious cycle of bad habits that led it to becoming crime-ridden. On top of the rise in crime and violence, the city seemingly had an alliance going on between criminals and politicians that kept those perpetuating the trouble out of harm's way. It was this increase in corruption and crime that led to the creation of the Committee of Vigilance in 1851.

A group of these people who had immigrated in hopes of finding gold were ex-convicts who had made their way from Australia. Once they made the long journey from across the world, they realized how hard the mining industry was with such little pay off. This led to the creation of the Sydney Ducks. This gang was one of California's first organized criminal gangs ever recorded and they were known for the chaos and lawlessness that followed them. The Ducks ran the city so heavy handedly that parts of San Francisco were referred to as Sydney Town.

The Ducks ran illegal gambling halls just as the lightest part of their illegal dealings. They were known mostly for lighting fires then robbing buildings and neighborhoods while officials were fighting the fires. They also collected money from politicians, businessmen, and families to guarantee that they would not set fire to their buildings in these pursuits. Police and other officials that could enforce justice upon the group were not doing anything to stop the group for fear of repercussions.

In 1851, town council member Samuel Brannan and a few other prominent San Franciscan men decided they must take matters into their own hands and protect the streets of their beloved city.

The Committee of Vigilance had a mission plan to help clean up San Francisco, but this group turned into a dangerous force, terrifying many of the city's population. Due to the fact that the men running the committee were men of high class ranking, this group gained heavy popularity and evolved into a militia equalling to about 700. These men all believed that they were the only force that could hail justice unto the criminals reining supreme throughout the city. They were their own police force that would roam the streets and uphold the criminal justice system as they saw it which was through lynching, public execution, humiliation, and deportation.

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The Committee of Vigilance brought justice and order back to the Bay when the citizens thought there was no hope left for the city. If not for the Committee of Vigilance, the course of the city of San Francisco could have been changed forever and never would have become the city we know today. Though their methods were violent and sometimes unnecessary, these acts were able to bring elected officials back into control and bring justice back to the streets of the blooming young city.

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Post Activity Handouts

11/19/2020 Word Search Puzzle



Unrest and Protest Crossword

F X H E B H T T X N D S T U W D Z A V P U H G V T E D N B F
 V B R U C W V Z J Y N L V I D N Y Y T P C Q O H S K L W C T
 M K U D M N N Q G J G I P C Z N X C O A S T I U J I G N O E
 P U J G X O A N R D M T Z O P U G V N A O R B U Q R V I X N
 L R P Z B W P L L N K K Z G M V A R Z H D T Z X X T X H L D
 Y F O Z V D E U I O L S I A D K N I V W X S S F A S E W J F
 A K P T Z M W W P G Q G O J N W A X O J H I Q E T R T V W J
 X D X M E T W Z R F I S B D P S O R Q D I T S M R S H F Y W
 R T J P R S C J R N R V O T U H L H B F M O F L Z N T R C F
 U P E L X H T Y R A B R A B Q D N M P T N Q G Y Y R U K V I
 K U D I F J U K Y O H V C Z L S W E C J H K L K W M Y D P V
 H X U Z D Y K D U Y Z D U I B K Q K J F H M E Z R L X B A V
 Z P I N H P V Y O L P X B D R L A Z U C F C P O Q V O Q T R
 O A O M V K F N D R X E M Z H V Y X U P X C V V O L K S I G
 X M N I R H V S D I R S N C U J R F W D Z V U K E L K C Q X
 B P C O X O X K X A I O G R N L Q O B Q X I B U G J B P L B
 N C O A Y Z R U T V N C C J P Q M L V Z R M P F H G J U B C
 W D A A J Y A I I F M J N P S X Q L E U E I A F Z Y G U H J
 U D J I Z G O T Z Q C K O D U S P T K E H V N Z D V J I F B
 J C I W N N C E S C W X H N A R T N J Q N T T S U V C B S H
 V S A X F A O U D Q O T P K I B Z E C P J N H F I A N J W C
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ACTIVISM
 AIDS
 ALCATRAZ
 BARBARY
 BLACK
 CHICANO
 COAST
 LGBTQ
 MOVEMENT
 OCCUPATION
 PANTHER
 PROTEST
 STRIKE
 THIRDWORLDLIBERATIONFRONT
 UNREST
 VIGILANCE



11th Grade Handouts

Pre Activity Handouts

Guiding Questions for Students to think about:

- What were some of the underlying causes of these movements?
- Do these movements have anything in common?
- Would you consider these groups extreme or radical?
- What did these groups do that worked or didn't work?

See attached papers.

Simon Stewart

Dominican University of California

HIST 3901: Public History Dr.

Jordan Lieser

October 22nd 2020

AIDS: Fighting For Equality

The politics surrounding the issue of protest movements in the LGBTQ community were very important in determining how the future would see the community but also how we would operate as a society. The city of San Francisco has been a location that progressed in wide varieties in terms of complexity and in terms of how the west coast has been developed. However, this has not come easy and there have been a number of protesting events that have shaped how the city has become so diverse. San Francisco has been a very important battleground in the fight for equality of all, leading it to become one of the most progressive cities in the United States. The election of Harvey Milk onto the Board of Supervisors and his impact, the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s, and the political effects and aftermath of the AIDS epidemic are all key events that took place in San Francisco that tremendously helped shape the overall climate in San Francisco regarding this disease.

Harvey Milk was a very important figure in the San Francisco Bay Area during the 1970s and helped lead the LGBTQ movement to become more widespread. Milk was motivated to change the way society viewed gay people, having experienced harassment first hand as an openly gay shop owner. After losing his race for mayor, he became more well-known for speaking about gay rights, as well as other marginalized groups in the city. After he was elected

into the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, he introduced a bill that outlawed discrimination based on sexual orientation. In a letter sent to President Carter in 1978, Milk asks the president for support in the defeat of Proposition 6, also known as the Briggs Initiative, which would not have allowed gay and lesbian people to work in the California Public School System. In the letter, he calls on the president to represent the rights of 15-20 million gay and lesbian people.

Harvey Milk not only served to impact the people but also served for a better and more functioning society where people weren't driven by hate or fear. In the following quote, he details the importance of people knowing what was going on in his head, so people could gain a better understanding as to how he experienced his life and what events he went through. "I fully realize that a person who stands for what I stand for, an activist, gay activist, becomes a target or the potential target for somebody who is insecure, terrified, afraid, or very disturbed themselves," Milk said on his final tape. "Knowing that I could be assassinated at any moment or any time, I feel it's important that some people know my thoughts." The impact that Harvey Milk had on the LGBTQ community resonated with the effect that the AIDS epidemic had on gay men living in San Francisco during the 1980s.

The AIDS pandemic that swept over the Bay Area in the early 1970s was a huge turning point and a very large chain of events that helped lead to another series of protests in the area. When it was first discovered in metropolitan areas such as San Francisco and New York, it was commonly known as the "gay disease" because it was said to have come from homosexual men. Early on, it was also known as GRID (Gay-Related Autoimmune Disease) which looked to marginalize the connection between AIDS and homosexuals. Not only was AIDS associated with gay men, but also drug injection users as well as immigrants were highly affected. Unfortunately, this association between the populations and the disease led to a more difficult time to achieve a treatment strategy. The AIDS epidemic brought many of these groups together,

due to the injustice they were facing in society. The LGBTQ movement played crucial roles in the AIDS epidemic because people were treated poorly and were not being treated as an equal member of society. As we can still see today in 2020, people are still fighting for their rights despite the number of laws that have been changed or shut down. Cleve Jones, who was an intern for Harvey Milk, remembers his death as one of the starting points for gay rights. In addition to the backlash that gay people face, and interesting side note to mention is the removal of the word homosexuality in the DSM(Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) in 1973. The diagnosis was considered to be a mental illness up to this point, and Harvey Milk was elected onto the Board of Supervisors only 5 years later. Considering the timing of this event, the role that Harvey Milk played, and the AIDS epidemic that were playing out in San Francisco and New York, this was a minor scientific change that ended up having lasting effects and impact as to how as a society we see someone as homosexual.

During the height of the AIDS epidemic in the 80's and 90's, there was a major call for more efficient needle exchanges, promotion of safe sex practices, and figuring out a more efficient method for the negative stigma surrounding the disease. Due to the lack of government action during this time, community organization was extremely key for the development of the city as well as on the effect of people. A common theme among the people that were diagnosed was that this disease was deadly and had the potential to kill people yet there was no reform taking place, leading to establishments such as ACT-UP. (Aids Coalition to Unleash Power) Another event that was established that helped the AIDS movement as a whole come together as a community was the annual AIDS Walk that was organized by people in the city after the mayor, Diane Feinstein, declared AIDS awareness week. The AIDS epidemic that was occurring during this time also helped lead to the creation of the SFLBGT Center, which opened in 1996, and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, which opened in 1982 prompted by the crisis.

Because of the stigma that was on them due to the first discovery of AIDS being in a gay man, it was difficult to function living with a disease with the disease. An AIDS diagnosis was not only deadly but forced many people into isolation due to the nature of the disease as well as the damage it had caused in such a small area. The Castro district was a popular area that was hit very hard with the impact of AIDS. CDC researchers concluded that the virus was spread only through the exchange of bodily fluids, and symptoms could start showing up fourteen years after you had contracted the virus. An epidemiology survey conducted in 1985 showed that 37% of gay men had been exposed to the virus, with the number climbing to over 50% in a matter of time. The AIDS pandemic plagued the Castro district in a manner in which these men were left alone, some by their families and some by their lovers. Community organization was very key in the role that it played for some activists to participate in as well as letting city officials know of the harshness that these people faced. Eventually, money in the sums of 4 million, 5 million, and 9 million dollars began to pour in annually. For people living with AIDS, it was a sense of mixed feelings and planning ahead for what you were going to experience. It was mixed because for money, you weren't really aware of when and if the virus was going to take you. A lot of it depended on the choices those people made, and if they wanted to continue to spread this disease knowingly or not.

Beginning in 1987, the AIDS Walk was established where people from the community gathered together and walked from the Castro Center to the Civic Center in hopes for greater government funding on AIDS research and teaching. In another form of failure of government action, President Bush in 1987 declined an invitation to the 6th International Aids Conference, and his administration declined the federal AIDS disaster relief bill. The secretary for the Health and Human Services at the time, Louis Sullivan, who was also appointed by Bush, wasn't even able to be heard at the conference, due to the community organizing to form the group at the time. A common theme among the people that were diagnosed was that this disease

was deadly and had the potential to kill people yet there was no reform taking place, leading to establishments such as ACT-UP. (Aids Coalition to Unleash Power) Another event that was established that helped the AIDS movement as a whole come together as a community was the annual AIDS Walk that was organized by people in the city after the mayor, Diane Feinstein, declared AIDS awareness week. The AIDS epidemic that was occurring during this time also helped lead to the creation of the SFLGBT Center, which opened in 1996, and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, which opened in 1982 prompted by the crisis.

In today's society, fighting for equality as a whole is still a very trending topic and will be a very popular topic for a long time because of our failure as a society to treat everyone equally. There are many circumstances that people are unaware of in which they could make such a small impact on society, and that is where it can truly begin. The AIDS epidemic that occurred in San Francisco during the 1980s helped establish programs such as the SFLGBT Center as well as the San Francisco AIDS walk, that helps the community come together and organize.

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23 October 2020

HIST 3901

The Third World Liberation Front Strike at UC Berkeley

Throughout history, minorities have almost always been overlooked in terms of their contributions to their communities and society, but have also been underrepresented when it comes to learning and acknowledging their history in the public and private school education system. Not only has their history been overshadowed by other events in the United States, but one can argue that this has inspired groups of marginalized people to express their grievances through civil disobedience in the form of protest movements and strikes. Through the use of historical methodology, this will form an understanding of the different social and civil rights movements that transpired throughout the Bay Area from various perspectives and groups of people. The Third World Liberation Front was created to remedy the lack of representation of ethnic groups in the curriculum at UC Berkeley, the climate of social unrest, specifically the Chicano and Black Panther movement, can be seen to have a substantial impact on the Front and their path to achieve their intended goals.

To begin, we must acknowledge the prior civil rights groups and movements such as the Chicano movement and the Black Panther Party, as these created a lasting impact towards the students that initiated the Third World Liberation Front. The Black Panther Party originated in Oakland, California, in 1966, where it was formed as a political group against police brutality

and was to focus on self-defense, while still fighting for their rights.⁴⁷ Shortly after the creation of the Black Panther Party, the Brown Berets initiated in 1967, following similar styles of protesting like the members of the Black Panther Party, in terms of self-defense, and attire such as the berets that both parties wore, one difference was that this group was mainly comprised of Latino and Chicano youth.⁴⁸ In addition to these protest groups, "...among these were the Civil Rights movement, protests against the Vietnam War, the American Indian Movement, the Black Panthers, the Chicano Protest movement, the Farm Workers movement. War on Poverty and the Red Guards, just to mention a few. Many of these groups inspired and influenced each other"⁴⁹ Each protest group impacted the people of the Bay Area, giving the message to rise up and demand representation and acknowledgment of their history, culture, and studies. From these movements, The Third World Liberation Front was established to integrate their culture and life into the curriculum at UC Berkeley.

The Third World Liberation Front was initiated in 1968 and was formed by Native American, Chicano and Latino, Filipino-American and Black Student Union students. The Front's goal was for more ethnic studies and diversity to be integrated within their higher education at UC Berkeley, and made a list of demands pursuing these goals. Members of the Third World Liberation Front "...demanded courses to emphasize the experiences of people of color, and Berkeley started one of the first ethnic studies departments in the country."⁵⁰ What is

⁴⁷ Giovanni Russonello, "Fascination And Fear: Covering The Black Panthers," The New York Times. 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/us/black-panthers-50-years.html>.

⁴⁸ S. Kapoor, "Brown Beret: Could This Be a Chicano Peace Brigade?," 1997, pp. 16-17.

⁴⁹ Ibid.16-17

⁵⁰ Dustin Gardiner, "Newsom Signs Bill To Require Ethnic Studies For CSU Students," SF Chronicle. 2020.

important to make evident is how these students were able to pursue their interests and goals, and what they went through during their five month-long strike at UC Berkeley. It was not merely a simple process. This required dedication and determination to get the board and administrators of UC Berkeley to listen and understand their demands, and why it is important to integrate ethnic studies into higher education, as well as in the education system in general.

Undoubtedly as the strike took place, the members of the Third World Liberation Front and supporters were met with clouds of tear gas and violence as a response of the police department. Through observation and examination of the previous protests movements and civil disobedience in the late 1960s, we can distinctly see a pattern of violence and chaos that was attributed by the police. It is crucial to state that violence can be instigated from both parties; however, historically, when the authorities are informed of protests, they dress up in riot gear and already assume it will end in flames. Regardless of the initial strike and protest being peaceful, the students faced beatings from the police. Not only were the students facing police brutality, but so were the news reporters as well; "...police made further arrests and embroiled themselves in a brutality case by severely beating a Black news reporter in sight of several secretaries in the basement of Sproul Hall."⁵¹ A witness reported:

I was standing at least ten yards away from the path where they'd be going. I was leaning on one foot, casually, with my books under my arm, and you know how I

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Newsom-signs-bill-to-require-ethnic-studies-for-15491160.php>

⁵¹ Timothy W. Armistead, "Police on Campus and the Evolution of Personal Commitments: A Survey of Non-Strikers' Attitudes During a Berkeley Confrontation.," 1969.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42909611>

look. [The informant looked “straight” - very short hair, sport shirt and slacks, dress shoes. This was in contrast to the appearance of many of the strikers.] All of a sudden a huge cop ran over to me - he had to break formation to do it. I didn’t think he was coming for me, so I looked around, but I was alone there. Then he slammed his club into my chest and I dropped my books all over. I was shaking and I was so mad. I said, “What?...., and he yelled “Move on!” I couldn’t believe it. . . . As they got near the entrance to the basement they started to club some guy. Six cops on this guy! [He was doing] nothing! Anyway, if he’d been resisting he couldn’t any more - he was on the ground, bleeding all over his head, and wasn’t moving, but they *still* beat on him... It was horrible. One guy, who must have been his friend, was out of his head, screaming and crying. Other guys had to hold him back.⁵²

This was not the only incident in which the strikers and bystanders were attacked for simply being there. This is a direct violation of the first amendment rights, stated in the constitution, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”⁵³ The most ‘violent’ day of these strikes was Thursday, February 20th, 1969. “About 3:30 p.m., the police suddenly began to clear strikers and onlookers from Sproul Plaza by hurling tear gas canisters into the crowd. Some students responded by hurling the canisters back, along with stones and chunks of cement. Police repeatedly charged at the students, using tear gas and riot

⁵² Ibid. 172.

⁵³ Amend. I. United States Constitution. 1776.

batons to roust them”⁵⁴ Despite such circumstances and beatings from the police, the students and strikers continued to demand change. From such violent interactions between the police and the strikers, Governor Raegan declared a state of extreme emergency, sent over 2,700 national guards to maintain order, as well as placed a 10p.m. curfew.⁵⁵

Due to the Third World Liberation Front being composed of members of different clubs such as Black Student Union, Latin American Student Organization, Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action, as well as the Mexican American Student Confederation and others, different demands were sent to the board of UC Berkeley. The main demands of the whole front itself include:

[1] That a School of Ethnic Studies for the ethnic groups involved in the Third World be set up with the students in each particular ethnic organization having the authority and control of the hiring and retention of any faculty member, director, and administrator, as well as the curriculum in a specific area of study. [2] That 50 faculty positions be appropriated to the School of Ethnic Studies, 20 of which would be for the Black Studies Program. [3] In the Spring semester, the college fulfills its commitment to the non-white students in admitting those that apply. [4] In the Fall of 1969, all applications of non-white students be accepted. [5] That

⁵⁴ Timothy W. Armistead, “Police on Campus and the Evolution of Personal Commitments: A Survey of Non-Strikers' Attitudes During a Berkeley Confrontation,” 173-174.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/42909611>

⁵⁵ Jon David Cash, “People’s Park: Birth and Survival,” *California History* 88, no. 1 (2010):

8-55. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25763082>.

George Murray and any other *faculty* person chosen by non-white people as their teacher be retained in their position.⁵⁶

On March 20th, 1969, the strike came to an end after negotiations with the administration which ended with UC Berkeley agreeing “...to accept virtually all nonwhite applicants for the fall 1969 semester, and establish a College of Ethnic Studies, the first in the country, with classes geared towards communities of color.”⁵⁷ This may seem as a victory for the Third World Liberation Front; however, as we examine some of their initial demands, it is certain that not all of them were met. Even though not all of the demands were met per each group, their initial and overall goal was for ethnic studies to be incorporated into their higher education, as opposed to only learning about European ideologies and history.⁵⁸

To conclude, it is essential that our future generations and other students are aware of the many contributions these minority groups have made for the sake of equality in education. To only learn about European history is inadequate, as the Bay Area was created and founded by a multitude of peoples- regardless of their ethnicity or cultural background. All minorities have

⁵⁶ San Francisco State Strike Committee, *On Strike Shut It Down : San Francisco State Strike Committee*, 1969.

<http://digitalcollections.library.sfsu.edu/digital/collection/p16737coll1/id/455/rec/63>

⁵⁷ Asal, Ehsanipour. “Ethnic Studies: Born In The Bay Area From History's Biggest Student Strike,” 2020.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11830384/how-the-longest-student-strike-in-u-s-history-created-ethnic-studies>

⁵⁸ Ibid.

created and been a part of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s. Their civil disobedience not only impacted the people of the Bay but continue to leave their imprint in the 21st century, as students and others continue to fight for change. The Third World Liberation Front used their first amendment rights to hold their university accountable, as having their ethnic history be taught in their course literature and studies was essential to preserving and representing their background, identity, and culture.

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Peter Leonhardt

10/18/20

Public History

The Impact and Importance of the Black Panther Party

Throughout the U.S.'s history, the Bay Area has always been an area that is often the focal point of various protests and political movements. Even movements that don't start in the Bay Area often see a massive amount of support from the cities that comprise the Bay. While Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X are seen as the primary civil rights activists of the 1960s, an equally important character (or characters) to mention is the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther Party was founded in Oakland on October 15, 1966 by Bobby Seale and Huey P Newton. The party was initially founded as the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, and focused on protecting Black communities from police harassment, often in a very militant style. The Party would go through periods of reorganization as the years past, but through all of this the Black Panther Party stands as one of the best examples of an organization that perfectly embodies the message of political protest and unrest.

The Black Panther was formed in the latter half of the 1960s, a decade that was ripe with civil activism, with both Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X preaching about the systemic inequality in America. The founders of the party were inspired by Malcolm X's speeches, which is why the original methods and goals of the party were so militant. Both Huey P Newton and Bobby Seale believed that in order to stop the police harassment of communities of color in the Bay Area they needed to provide armed protection themselves. The Black Panther Party grew quickly within black communities in the Bay Area, attracting activists such as Eldridge Cleaver, a black writer best known for his 1968 book *Soul On Ice*, a collection of essays detailing the struggle of African Americans. Cleaver would serve as one the Party's minister of information. The Party wasn't just founded based on ending police harassment and discrimination, shortly after it's inception they created the Ten Point Program, a document that detailed their demands

towards the U.S. government. Their points include autonomy of black communities, increased employment and housing opportunities, and a reform in the education system regarding the history of black people in the U.S. The Party's first organized campaign took place in April, 1967, after the police shooting of Denzil Dowel, a black man who was accused of robbing a liquor store by the two policemen that shot him. The Panthers quickly launched their own investigation into what happened, and their conclusion differed greatly from the story that the police told. The investigation included protection for the Dowel family against police that were harassing them, and culminated in multiple armed street rallies that served to greatly boost the Party's numbers. Their investigation of the Dowel murder case in Richmond proved that the Black Panther Party could act in a responsive and successful manner.

The teachings of Malcolm X were not the only catalysts for the Black Panther Party's formation. Both Newton and Seale's families had moved to the Bay Area in the 1950s seeking employment and freedom from the Jim Crow laws that were still present in the South. The issue came during the 60s, when Newtons and Seale's generation started looking for employment in Oakland, it simply wasn't there. This led to a cycle where the Oakland youth were often harassed by the police in order to curb "Juvenile delinquency" among a population of young black men and women who were simply trying to find jobs. Like many other black power and civil rights activism, the BPP is also considered a student movement, and before the official founding of the party both Newton and Seale were a part of black activists groups at Merrit Junior college in Oakland, however they believed these groups focused too much on "cultural nationalism", an ideology that both Newton and Seale believed could not yield true results in the fight for black freedom. In the eyes of the party, these unions were too moderate in their approach, not taking enough actions to aid the black communities of America.

The moderate approach of not only many civil activists but black power groups bothered many of the panthers, as they believed that there would be no change without definitive action. Rallies are a tried and true form of protest, and there something that the panthers regularly

organized. Previously mentioned was the case of Denzil Dowel, and on top of the personal investigation there were rallies held around the surrounding Richmond area to bring attention to the incident and to the party itself. Rallies often served one of the primary methods of recruitment, and early rallies served as a type of neighborhood or community protection from the police. While the South was still attempting to completely get rid of segregation, Oakland and the larger Bay Area saw clear cut cases of police brutality among black communities. Residential segregation was still a large issue within many neighborhoods in Oakland, and the aforementioned employment struggles and continuous racist police activities sparked armed protests by the panthers. A decent percentage of their rallies would take place in black neighborhoods, and many party members would watch police there to make sure that they didn't act in abuse of their power. California governor Ronald Reagan actually passed a law in 1967 in order to combat armed "copwatching" by the party. The fact that these party members were armed no doubt raised already high tensions between the protestors and the police. While there is no case of a shootout at any major rally, there were numerous shootouts between the police and the panthers. According to Bobby Seale, any shootouts were instigated by the police, and the panthers made it clear that they would not shoot first. The panthers called this "Policing the police", and was the first consistent activity that the party engaged in.

The Black Panther Party's tactics of armed neighbourhood protection and their adamant nature caught the attention of the government extremely quickly. As soon as August, 1967 the FBI had begun a counterintelligence operation against the black panther. The director of the FBI at the time, J. Edgar Hoover, is quoted in a letter stating "This program will 'expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Blac Nationalists, hate type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, supporters.'" (Newton, pg 1). Given the FBI's negative response to Martin Luther King Jr a few years earlier, and taking into consideration the fact that the Black Panther Party was much more militant than MLK, it's no surprise they quickly jumped on any potential opportunity to suppress the Panthers activities.

Their first operations were attempts to discredit the party as an organization. They would send various newspapers information on how the leaders of the party had been in legal trouble in the past, and try to get the papers to say that the party was in fact run by dangerous criminals. Various encounters with law enforcement (some fatal for members of the BPP), and Huey Newton's incarceration in 67 for the alleged attempted murder of a police officer only served to strengthen the media's and FBI's rhetoric against them. This attempt would later prove to be very ineffective, as the rally to free Huey Newton was one of the largest in the panthers history. Some newspapers took this headline and ran with it, an example coming from the newspaper *The Desert Sun*, where in 1969 they ran an article about how the panthers were one of the nations top security threats. The article quoted the FBI, with them expressing the same level of concern, that the party was a grave threat to the U.S. government. These types of publications certainly did not do much to help the public image of the party. Another tactic used by the FBI was factionalism, an operation that sought to create a divide within the BPP's leadership. The idea was that if the party split off into factions it would eventually crumble. The FBI discusses creating suspicion by spreading false information about the financial resources, spousal affairs, and police involvement regarding the parties leadership. It's very evident that even though the FBI saw the BPP as a threat, they certainly did not think of the leaders and members as intelligent. One of the FBI reports discussing the BPP states " In seeking effective counterintelligence it should perhaps be borne in mind that the two things foremost in the militant Negro's mind are sex and money." (Newton, pg 1). The FBI completely ignored the self proclaimed reasoning behind the BPP and instead stated that they were simply after hedonistic pursuits, instead of the party's true goal, systemic change. Once the BPP started expanding to LA, the FBI even forged a letter and sent it to the Oakland headquarters of the BPP, falsely stating that the LA faction of the party would no longer support Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. These attempts at discrediting and dissolving the party would prove not effective, as the party would continue to grow in the next few years.

The perceived threat of the party created by various newspapers and the FBI would initially do very little to stop the expansion and growth of the BPP. Given the swelling in membership, the party would eventually change their name officially from the Black Panther Party for Self Defense to just the Black Panther Party and would start to shift their policy from protection of black communities to more personal services within those communities. As previously mentioned, educational reform was an initial demand of the party, however they would seek to expand their programs in an attempt to correct the wrongdoings of the War on Poverty. The 1960s saw a variety of social and civil programs that were in theory designed to help the poor and minorities of America, such as the Civil Rights Act and Economic Opportunity Act in 1964. Given that the 1960s was a decade of civil rights protests, perhaps one could even say that these new policies were a direct response to the cries of systemic discrimination, and were a step in the right direction. The BPP disagreed, and had doubts about the applications of these programs. Because of this, they made community service one their top priorities. The party initially sought to expose that these social programs did little to in fact improve the lives of the impoverished black population, pointing to residential segregation, racist police activities, and limited social services in the poorer parts of Oakland as proof that the government was participating in “maximum feasible participation” (Nelson, pg 50), in which the government would not truly see these issues through. Much of the Panthers frustrations came from many of the community programs set up by the War on Poverty. Both Seale and Newton had worked in community CAPs, or anti-poverty centers in 1966 before the formation of the party, and they quickly became harsh critics of the War on Poverty and it’s programs. In working at centers designed for the War on Poverty, many Black Panther leadership were finding ways to run their own programs that would serve their communities better than any program set up by the government. One of these programs was to set up free medical care in black communities, and one of the panther demands developed later would be free healthcare for black and other oppressed peoples. The demand for autonomy of medical facilities in black communities came

from cases of purposeful misinformation given to black women and other women of color, where doctors incorrectly told them that they could still have children after a hysterectomy operation. In the South there was a clear difference in the segregated hospitals was painfully obvious, and the case of Henrietta Lacks at John Hopkins Hospital were also some catalysts for these programs and demand of healthcare autonomy in these communities. Some of these medical programs were groundbreaking for black communities at the time, and included sickle cell anemia research (with help from the Oakland Children's Hospital) which not only was one the first testing programs for these neighborhoods, it was one of the first testing programs throughout the entire country. Other notable programs include free breakfast programs, free clinics, grocery giveaways, programs for senior citizens, school and education, and legal aid to those who needed it. The party was resourceful with their programs, often using them to provide resources to their communities while also educating them on the party and their goal. Washington DC was supposedly alarmed that their anti-poverty programs had seemingly only organized and in their eyes radicalized black communities and groups.

Once the BPP started to shift towards more social and community programs, the tactic used by the FBI changed with the party. Instead of spreading misinformation through the media, the FBI took a much more direct, alarming approach. The FBI started sending anonymous death threats to Huey Newton and other members of the party in order to increase paranoia. Letters were also sent to other branches of the BPP stating that Huey Newton was released because he had become a police informant, again trying to create further factionalism. The FBI discussed attempts to limit recruitment of the not only the party but also other black nationalist groups by trying to reach out to more moderate groups to try to get them to condemn the actions of the black panthers, with the hope that black youths would rather join more moderate groups instead of the more militant or radical black nationalist groups. Once the attempts at dissolving the party through targeted harassment failed, the FBI sought more legislative action, attempting to limit the party's access to weapons and the curb circulation of any literature that

would be considered favorable to the party and its goals. All of these tactics were outlined in various letters and documents from the FBI, and they even had a list ranking their goals of stopping black nationalism in order of importance. Even after the BPP stepped away from armed defense of neighborhoods, the FBI thought that it was of utmost importance that they attempt to stop them and other black nationalist groups.

One aspect that proved the U.S. government statement of them being violent exclusionists was their intersectionality with other activist groups. The BPP initially worked together with the Third World Liberation Front and the Brown Berets, chicano activist groups, and the two groups often attended rallies together, usually on campuses not only around the bay area but all across the U.S. The BPP also had a lot of intersectionality with the gay liberation movement. All three of these movements had a similar goal in combating police brutality against “criminalized groups”, as the police defined them. The gay liberation movement and the BPP created somewhat of a united front against this issue in the Bay Area. The intersectionality of police brutality among the BPP and the gay liberation movement was brought to light at a panther meeting in Bobby Hutton park in Oakland between July 18-20, 1969, when there were reports of the police killing two gay men, one in LA and the other in Berkeley, and one straight man who was presumed to be gay in Oakland. This marked the first articulation of the fact that police brutality was an issue that impacted both the gay liberation movement and the BPP. Their strong relationship with the BPP had a positive influence on the gay liberation movement, and aided the path of the movement. The impact was seen more so with gay activists drawing inspiration from the tactics of the panthers and less so in collaboration, nevertheless it was evident that the BPP supported gay liberation and encouraged direct action. This following of similar paths even showed itself when in 1971, after the BPP started to become slightly less militant and more localized and community oriented, the gay liberation movement did the same.

Formed in a decade rife with civil activism, the Black Panther Party stood out among its peers because of its militant style, clear articulated goals, and its willingness to adapt to meet those goals. The first four years of the organization were spent protecting black neighborhoods around Oakland and throughout the bay and trying to stop police brutality. Afterwards the party shifted to focus more on community change by setting up various programs that served the locals of these neighborhoods better than most of the War on Poverty policies and programs. During all of this they were battling not only the local police but also various media publishing works and articles against them as well as the FBI running its own operation to try to shut them down. Their call for direct action and autonomy within black communities drew a lot of attention, both positive and negative, and it's for this reason that they are one of the most remembered black nationalist and civil rights organizations in the Bay Area.

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HIST 3901

The Occupation of Alcatraz

There are many groups in the United States who face oppression and have been facing severe inequality for many years. Many of these minorities have also been underrepresented without a chance to have their stories told. This is the case with Native Americans, their stories have been told in our history textbooks through the eyes of the people who colonized their land. The stories have been told to make it look as though their battles have ended, this is not the case. In 1969, the Indians of All Tribes group would occupy a federal land that would start the movement to get the voices of these marginalized peoples heard across the nation. Through examining the historical mistreatment of Native Americans by the Federal Government, we can assess the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz. We can examine this mistreatment by focusing our lens on the Lakota Tribe and specifically the broken Treaties of Fort Laramie in 1851 and 1868.

The Lakota Tribe, more commonly known as the Sioux, are widely acclaimed for their relations with the famed American explorers Lewis and Clark. The term Sioux comes from French origins meaning “little snakes” or “enemies”⁵⁹. This tribe had been located in the Great Plains for generations before their encounters with these men. Their locations during the 19th century was in the area of Nebraska, the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming. These lands completely shaped the Lakota culture, they believed they had been born into the world in the

⁵⁹ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 3.

Northern part of the Great Plains. After the outbreaks of smallpox and other various diseases brought over by the European colonizers, the Lakota tribes started expanding to the areas across the Mississippi River. After this expansion they broke into seven individual tribal groups: Oglala, Brule, Miniconjou, Sans Arc, Hunkpapa, Blackfeet, and Two Kettles.

The years after this expansion saw many hardships and extreme oppression against the Lakota Tribe. Their buffalo herds and their land that was so sacred to them and their traditions, started to be pulled out from under them. In 1851, the Lakota Tribe signed their first Treaty of Laramie with the United States Federal Government which included other tribes in the Great Plains as well. This treaty gave the US Government rights to establish roads moving west across the Great Plains ⁶⁰. This led to the destruction of wildlife and the food supply for the Lakota, this led to growing tensions that broke out into the Red Cloud's War. This bloody warfare was only halted by the signing of the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868.

The Second Treaty of Fort Laramie is what established the Lakota (Sioux) Reservation which was in the plains of South Dakota, west of the Missouri River and encompassed the Black Hills.⁶¹ This treaty signed by the Sioux tribe and the United States Federal Government has caused some major uproar because there are many set promises made in the more than sixteen articles of the treaty that have all been broken. The second article of the treaty states "the United States now solemnly agrees that no persons, except those herein designated and authorized so to do, and except such officers, agents, and employees of the government as may be authorized to enter upon Indian reservations in discharge of duties enjoined by law, shall ever be permitted to

⁶⁰ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 4.

⁶¹ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 4.

pass over, settle upon, or reside in the territory described in this article, or in such territory as may be added to this reservation for the use of said Indians, and henceforth they will and do hereby relinquish all claims or right in and to any portion of the United States or Territories, except such as is embraced within the limits aforesaid, and except as hereinafter provided...”⁶².

The United States is giving up full claim to the lands surrendered to the tribe as parts of the reservation as well as their right to go onto the reservation without authorization unless they are officers of the law or government agents. In the 1870s, gold is found in the Black Hills area and this part of the treaty is repeatedly broken by settlers and gold diggers. This is the cause for the series of battles and wars to break out known as the Sioux Wars. In these wars, the US army mounted military action to confine the Lakota to their reservation, but the tribe ended up winning the final battles. Though the Lakota might have come out victorious, this might have been a larger threat to the Federal Government, leading to more acts confining them to their reservations and taking their culture from them.⁶³

In Article XII of the Second Treaty of Fort Laramie is also a specifically important section of the treaty when it comes to the crossing of the promises outlined within this document. This article states “No treaty for the cession of any portion or part of the reservation herein described which may be held in common, shall be of any validity or force as against the said Indians unless executed and signed by at least three-fourths of all the adult male Indians occupying or interested in the same, and no cession by the tribe shall be understood or construed in such manner as to deprive, without his consent, any individual member of the tribe of his rights to any tract of land

⁶² Editor: Akim Reinhardt, THE SECOND TREATY OF FORT LARAMIE (1868). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 61-61.

⁶³ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 5.

selected by him as provided in Article VI of this treaty.”⁶⁴ This outlines that the lands outlined as the reservation in this treaty cannot be put back under control of the government unless there was another document signed by at least three-fourths of the male Lakota population. In 1877, under the 1877 Act, the Federal Government seized control of the Black Hills which is in the terms of the treaty as a part of the land promised to the Lakota tribe or the reservation. The government presented an “agreement” to the Sioux via a special commission but only ten percent of the adult male population signed off on this agreement to give their rights to the Black Hills back to the government in exchange for subsequent rations for as long as needed.⁶⁵ The government accepted this as a full relinquishment of their claim to the land even though this was an official breach of the Treaty of Laramie. After over one hundred years of fighting to seek legal control once again over the Black Hills, the Lakota tribe got this battle to the United States Supreme Court. In July of 1980 the Supreme Court ruled that the Black Hills had been illegally taken from the Lakota tribe. The court offered the tribe the value of the Hills plus the interest over a hundred years, this amounted to around nine hundred million dollars, but the tribe is refusing to take any offered money from the Federal government; they simply want their land back.

After the Sioux Wars, the Lakota had to start working hard to adapt and change to fit what the government wanted from them while also trying to stay true to their closely held values. The US government wanted to exterminate the Native Americans or assimilate them into white

⁶⁴ Editor: Akim Reinhardt, THE SECOND TREATY OF FORT LARAMIE (1868). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 64.

⁶⁵ Editor: Akim Reinhardt, UNITED STATES VS. THE SIOUX NATION OF INDIANS (1980). In *Welcome to the Oglala Nation: A Documentary Reader in Oglala Lakota Political History* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), 188.

culture.⁶⁶ In 1879, boarding schools started to open up in the eastern United States to remove Native American children from their reservations and from the influences from their cultures. These boarding schools were meant to whitewash these children into “traditional” American society. In 1883, the government prohibited the Lakota tribe from engaging in their religious rituals which and President Grant assigned churches to start converting natives to Christianity. Not only did the government start to take away the land they were promised, but they also started to remove them from that land and strip them of their cultural.

At Standing Rock, Reservation policeman murdered activist Sitting Bull on December 15, 1890. This shifted a dynamic and led to a downward spiral of unnecessary brutal conflicts between the government and the tribe. On December 29, 1890, a group of Lakota headed to the Pine Ridge Agency were intercepted at the banks of the Wounded Knee Creek. They were surrounded and forced to stay overnight. In the morning when the US calvary went to disarm the Lakota, many were doing a Ghost Dance ritual when a gun was fired starting the massacre. It is unknown who shot first, but by the time the dust had settled 250 men, women, and children were killed with 51 wounded. The remaining surrendered to the federal army.⁶⁷

Through this few hundred years’ worth of mistreatments of the Lakota tribe, we can now focus our lens to discuss the Occupations of Alcatraz and specifically the nineteen-month occupation in 1969. Generations later, the Native American population is still living on the land given to them by the United States. Even though these are the population native to this land, Congress still was trying to take away the land we had selected and parceled to give out to them

⁶⁶ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 6.

⁶⁷ Mark Hollabaugh, THE LAKOTA PEOPLE. In *The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2017), 6-7.

as reservations, they did this in 1953 by the stopping federal recognition of certain tribes and opening reservation lands for federal development. While doing this, the government was also heavily promoting a reservation Native American urban relocation program. More than one hundred thousand people were relocated during this program. This program promised vocational training, adequate housing, financial assistance, and the relocation from reservations to urban areas.⁶⁸ This program was not quite as ideal as it sounded: training was three months, skid-row housing, one job referral (at best), and the financial assistance would run out even before the vocational training started. The Bay Area was one of the largest relocation areas in the country. Here, the tribes would band together and form their own organizations to provide communal support to each other to make up for they lost from the government.

America during the 1960s was a time full of unrest and protest especially from the youth. These younger generations were witnessing the birth of civil rights movements such as the Black Power movement, the feminist movement, the new left, the Hispanic movement, and many more.⁶⁹ They were opening their eyes to injustices at home in the states and overseas in Vietnam. Protests and strikes were starting to become popular throughout college campuses and were uniting people more than ever on the topic of inequity. One group becoming increasingly united was this younger generation of urban Native Americans who had grown up through these white washing boarding school systems and had all shared similarly stories of being casted off by their own country.

⁶⁸ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 65.

⁶⁹ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 65.

The first occupation of Alcatraz was in 1964. This was a very short occupation, only lasting about four hours and made-up of five people. This occupation also had a completely different basis than the other two occupations following this event. The basis of this occupation was the planner of the event, Belva Cottier, misremembering an article from the second Treaty of Fort Laramie. Alcatraz Federal Prison had shut down operations in the following year and the island was in a transitional period of being moved from federal ownership to being owned by San Francisco. Cottier had remembered that in the treaty, federal land that had become unused would have ownership reverted back to the Lakota. Cottier and the leader of the occupation, Richard McKenzie were both of the Lakota tribe and went through with the occupation in order to get their rightful land back. McKenzie ended up bringing this issue to the federal courts, trying to get the title to Alcatraz and they ruled against him citing that this was not explicitly stated in the treaty. Though their historical reasons for the occupation were technically wrong, the occupation still laid almost the entirety of the foundation for the occupations to follow. The demands made by the protesters during the occupation would soon be the ones seen in the nineteen-month occupation, these wants were to establish both a cultural center and an Indian University on Alcatraz with full federal funding. The occupation ended peacefully and with no hostile interaction from the federal government.⁷⁰

The occupation lit the flame for the growing public unrest for and within the Native American community. The Bay Area native community was become active and vocal in these university protests popping up around the Bay. In September of 1969, student activists at San Francisco State started to plan an occupation of Alcatraz. These activists were led by Richard

⁷⁰ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 64.

Oakes who was a member of the Mohawk Indian tribe from the East Coast. This occupation for then was a sign of Indian self-determination and call for unity.⁷¹

The breaking point for the need for the occupation was the San Francisco Indian Center burning down in October of 1969. The San Francisco Indian Center was the home and major meeting place to the Native American organizations that rose due to the urbanization movement as well as the United Bay Indian Council headed by Adam Fortunate Eagle. Adam Fortunate Eagle and other members of the council first tried to get Alcatraz as their approved new center, but this movement was rejected. The council joined forces with the student organizations including Oakes and planned an occupation in the name of the Indians of All Tribes.⁷²

This is the second occupation of Alcatraz. This took place on November 9th and was originally supposed to just be circling the island to symbolically claim it. During the circle around the island, Richard Oakes and four other student activists jumped off the boats and swam up to the island where they climbed on the land and claimed it in the name of the Indians of All Tribes. That night, Richard and fourteen others came back with supplies and stayed until morning. After realizing that occupation seemed much more in reach than previously thought, a much longer occupation began to be planned.⁷³

Richard Oakes began traveling to other universities to rally up supporters for the occupation, one of these universities being UCLA. From UCLA alone, Oakes rounded about eighty students to be make up most of the occupation force for the initial occupation of Alcatraz. With rallied support of one hundred and a multi-tribal group behind him, on November 20th,

⁷¹ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 67.

⁷² Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 67.

⁷³ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 68.

Richard Oakes initiated the third and most notable occupation. The occupation was huge and attracted media support from far and wide, even reaching voices of stars in Hollywood. Once on the Island, Oakes was a leader, but there was an elected council put into place and everyone was assigned roles also banning alcohol and drugs use.⁷⁴ They also started a radio broadcast called the “Radio Free Alcatraz” where they would broadcast thirty minute programs around forty times a day through local radio stations. This was one of their keyways of getting attention and information for their cause.

Around December of 1969, the dynamic of the island started to collapse before them. Oakes’ position of leadership did not sit right with some of the protesters because they viewed that they should all live in an equal society ruled by the elected council on the island. The media stuck to their being a leader on Alcatraz because it was easier than viewing them as a group. Student activists started to go back to school bringing in a new population of Native Americans both from urban areas and from reservation life. This started a conflict of different views for claiming the island. Oakes and the students claimed the island by rights of discovery, the newbies went back to the Treaty of Fort Laramie rhetoric seen in the first occupation.⁷⁵ Many non-Native Americans ushered into the island around this time too bringing the party culture with them that was initially banned from the island. The final blow for Oakes was in January of 1970 when his twelve-year-old stepdaughter fell down a stairwell to her death, this is unknown if this was an accident or if this was a child of an opposition group on the island. Nevertheless,

⁷⁴ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 69.

⁷⁵ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 70.

Oakes and his family left the occupation behind them, leaving the remaining groups on the island to go back and forth.

Throughout all of this the Federal Government under the Nixon Administration had been taking a position of non-interference with the protestors on the island. They did not want to interfere given the current world climate and what that could cause politically. At first, the government was open to negotiation with the Indians of All Tribes. The IOAT demanded the deed for the island, the establishing of an Indian University, a cultural center, and museum on the island and that these were to all be federally funding. The government rejected this idea and had the Coast Guard have a weak barricade around the island. The government decided to wait it out and play a waiting game until the protestors decided to leave on their own accord.⁷⁶ Also during this time, Nixon was working on his own policies on Native Americans at this time and waiting to make a move. During the occupation, in July of 1970, Nixon returned Blue Lakes to a native tribe as a nationwide symbol to the Administration's approach to Native American affairs.

As support started to dwindle for the island occupants, the government tried to propose a grant to the IOAT as part of a negotiation deal, but this was rejected because they would not move on their stipulations. The government shut-off all power on the island and a fire broke out on the island which resulted in the loss of building including the lighthouse for the Bay. After the fire, the government stopped all negotiations with the IOAT. In January of 1971, two oil tankers collided in the Bay, this incident was never explicitly said to be cause by the absence of the lighthouse, but the government took this as the last straw. Nixon greenlit a removal plan for

⁷⁶ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 70.

Alcatraz. On June 10, 1971 federal marshals, the FBI and special forces swarmed the island, (fully armed) and removed the occupants.

Though the Indians of all tribes did not get the negotiations they were looking for when they occupied Alcatraz, they still did more than they could have imagined for the Native American community. They opened up the floodgates for many movements after them such as the American Indian Movement or AIM and occupations around the country of federal sites. After this movement, Nixon during his Administration alone introduced 26 pieces of legislature to improve the lives of Native Americans.⁷⁷ Though the fight for equality is far from over, the Occupation of Alcatraz helped gain national attention and unity for the Native American community.

Looking at the years of mistreatment of the Native American community in the United States through the Lakota tribe, we can analyze the long history that has led us to the where the movement came to a tipping point in 1969. There are many marginalized groups in the world and the information on them are not as widely shared or the information is miss-leading. Studying years of oppression to put one large movement in perspective is the least bit of education we could do to help these group and to get their causes noticed.

⁷⁷ Troy Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Roots of American Indian Activism* (Wicazo Sa Review, 1994), 71.

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Hist 3901

Committee of Vigilance

The discovery of gold in California, brought many people seemingly overnight. What had been a small city, quickly boomed to several thousand, with no way to handle the mass movement. There were little in the ways of police, judges or any form of a criminal justice system. Adding to that the formation of several violent gangs, San Francisco quickly became a very lawless place. Although crimes were committed all over California, San Francisco seemingly had an “alliance” between the criminals and the politicians, ensuring that the people with the right connections would never be guilty of anything⁷⁸. This ultimately allowed San Francisco to turn into a lawless land with no one to enforce any form of order. The formation of the Committee of Vigilance brought some semblance of order to what was easily a period of unrest. Though they were not elected nor asked to, several hundred men came together to form this group that for several months in 1851 and 1856 became the judicial system in San Francisco and sent a message to any criminals residing there that they would be brought to justice.

The Gold Rush brought many people to San Francisco in hopes of becoming rich. People all over the US believed that it was their chance to make a fortune. The population began to increase rapidly, with no one in charge to impose any laws. The Criminal Justice system was severely lacking in many regards. With no jails, there was nowhere for criminals to be held awaiting trial, so they were expected to show up when

⁷⁸ Cleland, Robert Glass. "The San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1856: An Estimate of A Private Citizen." *The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1949): 291-98. Accessed October 21, 2020. doi:10.2307/41168216.

told to. Few of the people who did show up were ever convicted because they made friends with the lawyers, politicians and police⁷⁹. The formation of gangs around the city did little to help the issue either. The most well known gang was the Sydney Ducks. Many of these men were criminals who were exiled to Australia from Britain, known for their arson crimes. However, not all of the immigrants from Sydney were criminals and many actually found respectable jobs. The most notorious of the group, though, were criminals and gamblers⁸⁰. It was through the actions of this gang, that the first Committee of Vigilance was founded in 1851.

The turning point was when the Sydney Ducks lit San Francisco on fire. Several of the Sydney Ducks had boasted that they would start even worse fires than the other ones that occurred in the years before⁸¹. According to *The Barbary Coast* by Herbert Ashbury, there was a man known to live in Sydney Town who was seen running from a paint shop minutes before the shop caught on fire. Other buildings nearby caught on fire as well. The Sydney Ducks used the fire and the ensuing chaos to steal from the stores. After this the crime rate continued to spike in the area. This ultimately led to the formation of the first Committee of Vigilance in 1851. The members wrote in their constitution, "The name and styling of the association shall be the 'Committee of Vigilance' for the protection of the lives and property of the citizens and residents of the city of San Francisco⁸²." These members were actually prominent men in their society,

⁷⁹ Dillon, Mark C. "Formation of the Vigilance Committee." In *The Montana Vigilantes 1863–1870: Gold, Guns and Gallows*, 119-34. Logan: University Press of Colorado, 2013. Accessed October 18, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1d8h9zp.12>.

⁸⁰ Ricards, Sherman L., and George M. Blackburn. "The Sydney Ducks: A Demographic Analysis." *Pacific Historical Review* 42, no. 1 (1973): 20-31. Accessed October 18, 2020. doi:10.2307/3637740.

⁸¹ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

⁸² Williams, M. F. (1919). *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851; minutes and miscellaneous papers, financial accounts and vouchers*. Berkeley, CA, CA: University of California.

allowing for the committee to gain a foothold and popularity. They were seen as the “...leading merchants of San Francisco⁸³.” However, the majority of them are not remembered as part of the committee besides the most prominent three: Samuel Brannan, Isaac Bluxome Jr and William Coleman. These men believed that they would be the only way for justice to be done, as none of the actual members of law enforcement were doing anything about it.

The Vigilance Committee made their first debut as a group on June 10, 1851. John Jenkins was a member of the Sydney Ducks, was caught stealing. He was apprehended by the Committee of Vigilance and was questioned and found guilty. In their constitution, they stated that when decisions needed to be made it would be put to a vote and the majority would win. Jenkins was hanged in the early morning, around 2 AM. H. North, a police officer testified about it later saying that, “... that he would shoot me if I interfered with the man⁸⁴.” Nothing ever happened to any of the members of the committee. They instead published a list of their members and continued to go after other criminals.

This would be the case for several other members of the Sydney Ducks. James Stuart was apprehended by the sailors on the ship he was robbing and was delivered to the Vigilance Committee. He was tried by the Vigilance Committee and found guilty of his crimes. He was hanged later on that day. There were two other Sydney Duck members who were arrested, tried and executed. They were Samuel Whittaker and Robert Mckenzie. These two would be the last official acts of the 1851 Committee of

⁸³ Williams, M. F. (1921). *History of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851: A study of social control on the California frontier in the days of the gold rush*. Berkeley, CA, CA: Univ. of Calif. Pr.

⁸⁴ Williams, M. F. (1919). *Papers of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance of 1851; minutes and miscellaneous papers, financial accounts and vouchers*. Berkeley, CA, CA: University of California.

Vigilance, though they never officially disbanded⁸⁵. After Whittaker and McKenzie were executed, many of the Sydney Ducks inhabiting San Francisco left, believing that they would be executed next.

The Committee of Vigilance did not resurface again until 1856. After the Vigilance Committee in 1851 made most of the Sydney Duck members leave town for fear of their lives, they slowly began to filter back into San Francisco. Sydney Town began to grow again and the crime rate began to climb, reaching highs seen at the beginning of the Gold Rush⁸⁶. The actual event leading to the recreation of the Vigilance Committee was a man named James King, being shot in reference to some things he said in his newspaper about James Casey, another journalist. King was arguing that Charles Cora should receive the death penalty for shooting General Richardson. King and Casey had been rivals for a while, eventually leading to Casey shooting King when he left work to go home⁸⁷. This directly led to the Vigilance Committee being reinstated under the guidance of William T Coleman.

This time around, the Committee of Vigilance would gain much more prominence and support from the citizens of San Francisco. The members of the committee were seen as “the people” and were described in their efforts as, “...not a mob, but the people, in the highest sense of the term⁸⁸.” The committee asked Governor Johnson to release James Casey into their custody, which he did. The Vigilance Committee went to

⁸⁵ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

⁸⁶ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

⁸⁷ WALDREP, CHRISTOPHER. "The Popular Sources of Political Authority in 1856 San Francisco: Lynching, Vigilance, and the Difference between Politics and Constitutionalism." In *Lynching Beyond Dixie: American Mob Violence Outside the South*, edited by PFEIFER MICHAEL J., 54-80. Urbana; Chicago; Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2013. Accessed October 21, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt2jcc5k.6>.

⁸⁸ Rushdy, Ashraf H. A. "The Rise of Lynching." In *American Lynching*, 22-50. NEW HAVEN; LONDON: Yale University Press, 2012. Accessed October 21, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt32bxc8.6>.

the county jail and walked out with both Cora and Casey in an hour⁸⁹. They were both executed by the Committee of Vigilance on the day of King's funeral.

This action by the governor led to the Committee of Vigilance being seen as one of the leading authorities in judicial proceedings. Although the committee was protested against by some people, mainly the Law and Order organization, many believed that they were the only force in San Francisco that was willing to conduct fair trials and ensure that justice was served. It was well known before the creation of the committee that many of the people in criminal justice positions were being paid off and that the juries were often stacked to favor the alleged. Many saw the Vigilance Committee as a way to ensure that there would be order in a largely lawless land and this led to the level of prominence that the committee garnered.

There were two more men who would be executed by the Committee of Vigilance of 1856 and they would also be the last. In the period between this event and the murder of James King, there was not a single killing and therefore no reason for action by the committee⁹⁰. Though the governor had originally supported the Vigilance Committee, he soon retracted that sentiment. Governor Johnson demanded that the committee disband and even sent William T. Sherman to deal with them. This didn't work as planned and the Committee of Vigilance only further solidified their power of the city. During the next seven weeks, no murders were committed and less than a dozen robberies. Joseph Heatherington then shot Dr. Andrew Randall for not paying back the money that he owed Heatherington, even though the courts had said that he didn't need

⁸⁹ O'Meara, J. (1887). *The Vigilance Committee of 1856*. San Francisco, CA: J.H. Barry.

⁹⁰ Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

to. The Vigilance Committee then demanded that Heatherington be released into their custody for trial and the subsequent execution⁹¹. The other man that was executed with Heatherington that day was Brace who had killed a man two years prior and escaped. They were hung together on July 29, 1856.

This was the last official action of the Committee of Vigilance. After this, they decided to disband and give the power back to the elected officials. They had killed four men during this time and banished 26, although several hundred had fled in fear of the committee⁹². Having proven that they could bring justice and order to the people of San Francisco, they felt it was okay to relinquish the power and let order restore itself.

As seen, the Committee of Vigilance brought many people to justice who would not have been otherwise. They were able to bring order to a place where little order had been established. It is entirely possible that without them, the gangs could have eventually run the city with no law enforcement to stop them. Their methods were definitely unconventional and highly illegal and fed into lynch culture, but they were able to become the police in a place where it was needed the most. The city began to grow after the second Committee of Vigilance disbanded and eventually transformed into one of the most important ports in the US.

⁹¹ O'Meara, J. (1887). *The Vigilance Committee of 1856*. San Francisco, CA: J.H. Barry.

⁹² Asbury, H. (2008). *The Barbary Coast: An informal history of the San Francisco underworld*. New York, New York: Basic Books.

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Activity Handouts:

Podcast Transcripts for On Ship Activity

Richard Oakes

Richard Oakes was born in 1942 on St. Regis Mohawk Reservation in New York. He moved to the Bay in 1968 when he was just 26 years old. When arriving in the San Francisco Oakes had no idea of the tight-knit Native American community he was entering into. This area specifically had this largely built community because of the United States government's implementation of the Indian Urbanization movement.

The Indian Urbanization movement was a relocation plan set in place by the government in efforts to push the native population from their reservations and into large urban areas. Through this program, they were promised job training, housing, financial assistance, and all the help they would need to relocate to these bigger cities. This program fell short and left most in low level housing with little to no money, lack of training, and no job referrals. Because of this, these larger communities were built in large urban areas like the Bay Area.

When Oakes moved to San Francisco, he decided to go to San Francisco State University to better his educational endeavors. With all the other activist movements swirling around the Bay and jumping from college campus to college campus, the Indigenous population were finally able to rise up and get their voices heard. Oakes decided he wanted to take a stand and lead one of these movements after hearing about all of the predominantly white professors continuing to teach Native American histories in universities across California. He wanted to fight for Native American self determination and unity.

After the San Francisco Indian Center burnt down in October 1969, the population in the area needed a new place for their tribes to meet. They had called to get the funding to get their building rebuilt, but it had been shot down which is when the council joined forces with Oakes and these young activist groups. At the time, Alcatraz was being taken from federal control and

moved to the control of the city of San Francisco. There had been a previous occupation of Alcatraz at this point trying to get the land into the control of the Native American population with federal funding to back up many institutions on the island such as a museum, a university, and a cultural center. Richard Oakes remembered this and it lit a spark in him to fight for the island as the new symbol for Native American self determination. The reason this original occupation failed was because the organizers had previously misunderstood a treaty from 1868 and thought they had claimed the island stated in that treaty, which was found not true in a court of law. Therefore, this was not the reason for Oakes wanting to occupy the island.

By November 9th of 1969, Richard had an initial plan to occupy the island where they wanted to symbolically circle the island and declare it the territory of the Indians of All Tribes. But during the circle of the island Oakes had an idea to jump from the boat with four others and swim to the island to claim it physically as well. After seeing how easy it was to get on the island, Oakes and fourteen others decided to come back later that night to spend the night on Alcatraz, but after speaking with a janitor on the island they decided to leave and plan a longer occupation.

After this small coup, Oakes started travelling to other places such as UCLA to band students together and started to get hundreds of students to join the movement and occupy the island. With rallied support of hundreds, on November 20th, 1969, they occupied the island for what would be the longest occupation . Once on the island, though Oakes was a major leader and organizer, an elected tribal council was put in place and all occupants were assigned roles on the island. They started building a well rounded community with rules put into place such as the banning of drug and alcohol use on the island.

During this time, the United States government under the Nixon Administration had decided to not interfere with those occupying the island. They took this stance due to all the other things currently happening in the world during the time and they were nervous of the backlash and repercussions that could happen by causing a conflict with the population on the island. At first, the government said they were completely open to negotiating with the Indians of All Tribes but they were continually rejecting the group's demands which were: the deed for the island, the establishing of an Indigenous University, a cultural center, and a museum on the island and that these were to all be federally funded. The Coast Guard set up a weak barricade around the island and decided that they must play a waiting game until the protestors left on their own accord.

In late 1969 and early 1970, the movement began to change rapidly on the island. Students were going back to university and the dynamic on the island was shifting, more people who were from reservations and who were not of Native American descent were coming to the island and bringing the partying culture with them. Not only were they bringing the party culture with them, they were also bringing the ideas from the original occupation that had failed. Some of these new protesters were also taking serious issue with the media's portrayal of Oakes as the group's leader. This created a massive divide on the island that started growing violent and malicious. The last straw for Richard Oakes came in January of 1970 when his 12 year old step daughter fell down one of the stairwells to her death. It is unclear if this was an accident or a horrible act of aggression from the opposition group on the island. Nevertheless, after her funeral, Oakes and his family left the island behind them and left the remaining groups to battle.

Though the occupation took unexpected turns and was not quite what Oakes was planning on it being, it still made a major impact on the Native American community. It created

many activist groups such as the American Indian Movement and many more. It also sparked protests and occupations of federal sites all over the country. After the movement, Nixon alone during his administration introduced 26 pieces of legislation that were in support of Native American self determination. Though the fight for equality is far from over, the Occupation of Alcatraz helped gain national attention and sparked a movement for Native American self-determination nationwide.

Adam Fortunate Eagle

Adam Fortunate Eagle Nordwall, born Adam Nordwall, was born in 1929 on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Northwestern Minnesota. Nordwall moved to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1951 with his wife Bobbie where they then started their life together in San Leandro. After being influenced by the tight-knit Native American culture established in the area, he and his wife wanted to expand their knowledge on their Native American heritage and become more active in the community around them. This area specifically had this largely built community because of the United States government's implementation of the Indian Urbanization movement.

The Indian Urbanization movement was a relocation plan set in place by the government in efforts to push the native population from their reservations and into large urban areas. Through this program, they were promised job training, housing, financial assistance, and all the help they would need to relocate to these bigger cities. This program fell short and left most in low level housing with little to no money, lack of training, and no job referrals. Because of this, these larger communities were built in large urban areas like the Bay Area.

Nordwall became Chairman of the United Bay Area Council of American Indian Affairs and became a radical activist in the community. Adam Fortunate Eagle is known for going to great lengths with his activism around the Bay Area and making the Native American voices heard in the community through his acts.

In October of 1969, the San Francisco Indian Center burned to the ground leaving the local tribes with nowhere to meet and them scrambling for a place to meet. They were searching to rebuild their building and they knew that the land on Alcatraz Island that once was federal owned, was in the middle of being transferred to the city of San Francisco. They rallied to get the

claims to this land, but they were shot down. This is when Nordwall met a young activist, Richard Oakes, at a Halloween party. Richard Oakes was a college activist who was rallying for Native American self-determination. Nordwall decided to join forces with Oakes.

There had been a previous occupation of Alcatraz at this point trying to get the land into the control of the Native American population with federal funding to back up many institutions on the island such as a museum, a university, and a cultural center. Richard Oakes remembered this and it lit a spark in him to fight for the island as the new symbol for Native American self determination. The reason this original occupation failed was because the organizers had previously misunderstood a treaty from 1868 and thought they had claimed the island stated in that treaty, which was found not true in a court of law. Therefore, this was not the reason for Oakes wanting to occupy the island.

By November 9th of 1969, Richard and Nordwall had an initial plan to occupy the island where they wanted to symbolically circle the island and declare it the territory of the Indians of All Tribes. But during the circle of the island Oakes had an idea to jump from the boat with four others and swim to the island to claim it physically as well. After seeing how easy it was to get on the island, Oakes and fourteen others decided to come back later that night to spend the night on Alcatraz, but after speaking with a janitor on the island they decided to leave and plan a longer occupation. Nordwall was disappointed in the young activists and wanted to get the rights to the island the right way, but the young activist perceived this as him not pushing hard enough and planned the occupation for when Nordwall would be out of town two weeks later.

With rallied support of hundreds, on November 20th, 1969, they occupied the island for what would be the longest occupation. Once on the island, though Oakes was a major leader and organizer, an elected tribal council was put in place and all occupants were assigned roles on the

island. During this time, the United States government under the Nixon Administration had decided to not interfere with those occupying the island. They took this stance due to all the other things currently happening in the world during the time and they were nervous of the backlash and repercussions that could happen by causing a conflict with the population on the island. At first, the government said they were completely open to negotiating with the Indians of All Tribes but they were continually rejecting the group's demands which were: the deed for the island, the establishing of an Indigenous University, a cultural center, and a museum on the island and that these were to all be federally funded. The Coast Guard set up a weak barricade around the island and decided that they must play a waiting game until the protestors left on their own accord.

In late 1969 and early 1970, the movement began to change rapidly on the island. Students were going back to university and the dynamic on the island was shifting, more people who were from reservations and who were not of Native American descent were coming to the island and bringing the partying culture with them. Not only were they bringing the party culture with them, they were also bringing the ideas from the original occupation that had failed. Some of these new protesters were also taking serious issue with the media's portrayal of Oakes as the group's leader. This created a massive divide on the island that started growing violent and malicious. The last straw for Richard Oakes came in January of 1970 when his 12 year old step daughter fell down one of the stairwells to her death. It is unclear if this was an accident or a horrible act of aggression from the opposition group on the island. Nevertheless, after her funeral, Oakes and his family left the island behind them and leaving the remaining groups to battle. After this event took place, support for the protestors started to dwindle at a national level as things started to get rowdy on the island. In late 1970, the government shut-off all power on

the island which led to a massive fire breaking out on the island and resulted in the loss of many structures such as the lighthouse for the Bay. In early January of 1971, two tankers collided in the Bay that was never explicitly said to be caused by the loss of the lighthouse, but Nixon saw this as the final straw for the protestors and greenlit a removal plan. On June 10, 1971 armed federal marshals, FBI agents, and special forces swarmed the island and removed the rest of the occupants.

Though Nordwall never lived on the island during the occupation, he was one of the largest influences on the Native American community and the occupation as a whole. Adam Fortunate Eagle wrote the five point proposal that eventually became the well known proclamation that the community occupation on the island lived by during the many months they lived on the island. Nordwall also raised funds on the mainland for food and other resources to be sent to the island while also helping control the media.

Though the occupation took unexpected turns and was not what it had planned on being, it still made a major impact on the Native American community. It created many activist groups such as the American Indian Movement and many more. It also sparked protests and occupations of federal sites all over the country. After the movement, Nixon alone during his administration introduced 26 pieces of legislation that were in support of Native American self determination. Though the fight for equality is far from over, the Occupation of Alcatraz helped gain national attention and sparked a movement for Native American self-determination nationwide. Nordwall today still continues to advocate wholeheartedly for the Indigenous community.

The United States Government

In the 1960s, the political climate in the United States was turbulent to say the least. This was a time filled with unrest and protest especially inhibiting youth culture. With an unjust war raging in Vietnam to equally unjust battles being fought on the homefront, when Richard Nixon took office at the beginning of 1969, he was walking directly into no man's land. America's younger generations were witnessing the birth of civil rights movements such as the Black Panther Movement, the Third World Liberation Army, second wave feminism, the new radical left and many more.

This led to protests and strikes becoming increasingly popular throughout college campuses and were uniting people more than ever on the topic of inequality. One group becoming increasingly more united was this younger generation of urban Native Americans who had been moved through urbanization processes and different processes institutionalized by the US government. One of these programs that the US government put in place was the Indian Urbanization Movement. The government wanted to put a movement in place to help the population move off of the reservations and into the thriving workplace present in urban city areas. This program promised vocational training, housing, financial assistance, and the relocation from reservations to cities. The Bay Area was one of the largest relocation centers in the country. From the government's point of view, this plan had worked accordingly and they had fulfilled their promises to the Indigenous communities.

The government started to notice extreme unrest in the Bay Area Native American community in 1964 when there was an initial occupation of Alcatraz Island. Alcatraz Federal Prison had shutdown operations in the previous year and the island was in a transitional period from being a federally owned piece of land to one being owned by the city of San Francisco.

This occupation in 1964 was a very small and contained occupation that lasted about four hours and was only made up of around five people. This event also had a completely different basis than the other two occupations following. The basis of this occupation was the planner of the event, Belva Cottier, misremembering an article from the second Treaty of Fort Laramie in which they believed that federal land that had become unused would ownership reverted back to the Native Americans. One of the organizers, Richard McKenzie eventually brought this issue up to the federal court level trying to obtain the title to Alcatraz, but they ruled against him citing that this was not explicitly stated in the treaty. The occupation ended peacefully with no hostile interaction from the federal government.

In October of 1969, the San Francisco Indian Center burned to the ground leaving the local tribes with nowhere to meet and them scrambling for a place to meet. The council tried to get Alcatraz approved as the land for their new center, but this movement was rejected. This served as a breaking point for youth activist Richard Oakes who was already starting to plan his own occupation of the island.. The council joined forces with the student organizations including Oakes' and planned an occupation in the name of the Indians of All Tribes.

By November 9th of 1969, Richard had an initial plan to occupy the island where they wanted to symbolically circle the island and declare it the territory of the Indians of All Tribes. But during the circle of the island Oakes had an idea to jump from the boat with four others and swim to the island to claim it physically as well. After seeing how easy it was to get on the island, Oakes and fourteen others decided to come back later that night to spend the night on Alcatraz, but after speaking with a janitor on the island they decided to leave and plan a longer occupation.

After this smaller coup, Richard Oakes began traveling to other universities to rally up supporters for the occupation, one of these being UCLA. With rallied support of hundreds, on November 20th, 1969, they occupied the island for what would be the longest occupation. The occupation was large and attracted media attention from far and wide, even reaching voices of stars in Hollywood. Once on the Island, Oakes was a leader, but there was an elected council put into place and everyone was assigned roles. They also started a radio broadcast called the “Radio Free Alcatraz” where they would broadcast daily to local radio stations.

In late 1969 and early 1970, the movement began to change rapidly on the island. Students were going back to university and the dynamic on the island was shifting, more people who were from reservations and who were not of Native American descent were coming to the island and bringing the partying culture with them. Not only were they bringing the party culture with them, they were also bringing the ideas from the original occupation that had failed. Some of these new protesters were also taking serious issue with Oakes as the group’s leader. This created a massive divide on the island that started growing violent and malicious. The last straw for Richard Oakes came in January of 1970 when his 12 year old step daughter fell down one of the stairwells to her death. It is unclear if this was an accident or a horrible act of aggression from the opposition group on the island. Nevertheless, after her funeral, Oakes and his family left the island behind them and left the remaining groups to battle. After this event took place, support for the protestors started to dwindle at a national level as things started to get rowdy on the island.

Throughout all of this the Federal government under the leadership of Richard Nixon had been taking a position of non-interference with the protestors on the island. They took this stance due to all the other things currently happening in the world during the time and they were

nervous of the backlash and repercussions that could happen by causing a conflict with the population on the island. At first, the government said they were completely open to negotiating with the Indians of All Tribes but they were continually rejecting the group's demands which were: the deed for the island, the establishing of an Indigenous University, a cultural center, and a museum on the island and that these were to all be federally funded. The Coast Guard set up a weak barricade around the island and decided that they must play a waiting game until the protestors left on their own accord. During this time, Nixon himself was working on his own policies in Native Americans and was waiting to make his move. During the occupation, in July of 1970, Nixon returned Blue Lakes to a native tribe as a nationwide symbol of the administration's approach to Native American affairs.

As support started to dwindle for the island occupants, the government tried to propose a grant to the IOAT as part of a negotiation deal, but this was rejected because they would not move on their stipulations. The government shut-off all power on the island and a fire broke out on the island which resulted in the loss of buildings including the major lighthouse for the Bay. After the fire, the government took this as the last straw and Nixon greenlit a removal plan for the occupants of Alcatraz. On June 10, 1971 federal marshals, the FBI and special forces swarmed the island to remove those remaining on the island.

Though the Indians of All Tribes did not get the negotiations they were looking for when they started the occupations, they made many great strides for the Indigenous community. They opened up the floodgates for many movements after them such as the American Indian movement. After this movement, Nixon during his time in office introduced 26 pieces of legislature to strive towards Native American self determination. The occupation of Alcatraz helped gain national recognition and unity for the Indigenous community in America.

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