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Project Central Voice: Assessing the Congruency Between African American Perspectives and the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant Practices

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PROJECT CENTRAL VOICE: ASSESSING THE CONGRUENCY BETWEEN AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES AND THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PRACTICES

by

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ABSTRACT

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Theories of Critical Race provide a foundation on which to analyze racism. Critical Race Theory uses elements such as the ordinariness of racism, convergence of interest, revisionist history, and the voice of the oppressed to identify how systems of oppression function to maintain institutional racism.

This dissertation is a community-based participatory research project that studies a government-funded social welfare system serving the African American community in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The research analyzes how the structure, policies, and practices of this decentralized system, composed of government institutions and community-based organizations, affects the infrastructure of Milwaukee's African American community. Specifically, the research analyzes the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant's Neighborhood Planning/Community Organizing/Crime Awareness program. This research identifies how African Americans view government-funded delivery systems, whether blacks view these systems from an African American worldview, and the level of congruency between the views of African American residents, organizational leaders, and City officials as well as program and other public data.

To my brother, Jesse A. “Tony” Clements. You worked for gender equality so many years ago when you took a stand to let me play on the “all boy” football, basketball, baseball, and tennis teams in our neighborhood. You understood how much I wanted to be an athlete at a time when women were supposed to just stand on the sidelines and cheer**.** We love and miss you!

To my son, Geraud, daughter-in-law Element and grandchildren, Karma, Kairo, and Nazir – thank you for enriching my life with love, laughter and pure joy. I am blessed to be on life’s journey with you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAA	Community Action Agency
CAPER	Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDGA	Community Development Grant Administration
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CRT	Critical Race Theory
ESHAC	East Side Housing Action Committee
FAP	Funding Allocation Plan
HUD	Housing & Urban Development
IRB	Institutional Review Board
MCJ	Milwaukee Community Journal
MPS	Milwaukee Public Schools
MUL	Milwaukee Urban League
MUSIC	Milwaukee United School Integration Committee
NAACP	National Association of the Advancement of Colored People
NRSA	Neighborhood Residential Strategy Area
NSP	Neighborhood Strategic Planning
PCV	Project Central Voice
WBHS	Wisconsin Black Historical Society

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I will always remember the meeting with my dissertation committee when I defended my proposal. The encouragement, wisdom, and validation that I received from the committee made me a believer that my unique perspective had theoretical value and that my research would enhance the scholarship on race and oppression. While they gave me input regarding theory and research, the greatest gift they gave me was the ability see their contributions to making a difference through research and

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known most of them for more than twenty years. They have made a lasting impact on my life; they are excellent examples of the strength, wisdom, courage and kindness that African American women possess.

Section I: Introduction

American society operates systems of oppression that maintain racial and social order while appearing to provide benevolent social services to the oppressed. To understand how these systems have been maintained and perpetuated, it is important to acknowledge that they are a historical part of the fabric of America. As Trattner writes, "Social welfare systems do not arise in a vacuum; they stem from the customs, statutes, and practices of the past. Therefore, one cannot understand current efforts to help the needy without first comprehending the foundations on which they were built" (Trattner, 1974, p.1).

In the 1600s, the American form of social welfare was founded based on the English Poor Laws. The concept of worthy/unworthy, adopted from the English Poor Laws, has been an integral part of the American welfare system's process of labeling and delivering services to the poor based on their being categorized as deserving or undeserving. This process has significantly impacted the provision of services in general, and their application to African Americans, specifically. In fact, African Americans were excluded from the social welfare system for most of the first 300 years of the existence of the United States of America. When they were briefly provided services after the Civil War, they received services in segregated environments. Their exclusion was based on their being stereotyped as the unworthy poor, who lived in poverty because of their moral deficiencies and personal failures.

Even when African Americans were included in the social welfare system, they received marginalized assistance. Scholarship has detailed how the framework of the Social Security Act of 1935 helped establish a hierarchy of social citizenship. Primarily

white men were eligible for the programs that contained employee contributions such as old-age insurance and unemployment insurance. Non-contributory programs including elderly assistance, aid to the blind, and aid to dependent children, were designated public welfare and operated by state and local officials who could determine eligibility, resulting in variation and discretion. Thus, this bifurcated system changed the way in which programs were perceived by the public. Social insurance programs came to be seen as earned entitlements, while public assistance, labeled "welfare," was considered charity (Chapell, 2009).

The Social Security Act amendments of 1939 reinforced racial and class divisions by not incorporating agricultural and domestic laborers into social insurance programs. The exclusion of these employment categories, in which most Blacks worked, garnered the support of the Social Security Act from Southern states focused on preserving cheap labor and a racial caste system (Katz 2008). Thus, the Social Security Act amendments of 1939 primarily covered white men. As a result, white women and children were the beneficiaries who received benefits when the male died (Chapell, 2009). This bifurcated system distinguished benefits allocated to the undeserving poor and Blacks from benefits allocated to the deserving, primarily white Americans, as a right of citizenship (Katz, 1991; Nadasen, 2005).

In the 1960s, Daniel Patrick Moynihan characterized African Americans in a dehumanizing manner when framing black men as "cocking roosters." While Moynihan argued for structural changes in American society to address issues of poverty in Black America, he also stressed what he perceived as Black family disorganization and dysfunction (Moynihan, 1965).

Given this background regarding how Blacks living in poverty were perceived and how these perceptions impacted service delivery, it is understandable that the nation developed in a bifurcated fashion, as two separate nations based on race: a society where those deemed unworthy were controlled through public policy, allocation of resources, denial of equal treatment and services, and violence.

In 1968 the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders – known as the Kerner Commission, released its report, citing racism as the major factor in a surge of violence in the United States. Between 1965 and 1968 more than 150 riots or major disorders occurred in cities throughout the nation (Kerner Commission Report, 1967). This was true in Milwaukee where a riot transpired in July 1967 (Blanks, 2015). The Kerner Report identified "white racism" as the fuel that ignited violence contrary to the counter framing by some that the violence was generated by African American political groups. The report acknowledged that our nation was on the path to becoming "two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal" (Kerner Commission Report, 1967, p.1). The report warned that failure to take immediate and drastic action would result in the continued "polarization of the American community and, ultimately, the destruction of basic democratic values" (Kerner Commission Report, 1967). The report called for a significant investment in the African American community to remedy long standing racism and oppression. It recommended job creation, diverse law enforcement, desegregated housing programs, and government provision of needed services.

Almost fifty years after the Kerner Report, the nation has not crafted or executed a strategy that results in racial equality. This is quite evident in Milwaukee. In his 2015

report, “The Shame of Milwaukee: Race, Segregation and Inequality,” Marc Levine asserted that Milwaukee was the most segregated city in America with the third lowest Black household income and the highest Black poverty rate in the nation (Levine, 2015). Levine demonstrated that the economic status for Blacks had regressed since 1970 due to significant erosion of Black employment, financial stability, and education, coupled with an increase in joblessness, concentrated poverty and hyper-segregated schools.

I contend that some government actions implemented since 1970 through a decentralized service system have exacerbated issues plaguing the Black community in Milwaukee. Further, I argue that the investments made by the government to white-led organizations who provide services in the Black community have often failed to yield quality outcomes and have damaged the infrastructure of the African American community.

I have analyzed Milwaukee history (1835 -1970) to identify how the past national and local history of racism and oppression influences contemporary social service provision. The City of Milwaukee’s Community Development Block Grant program utilizes a decentralized system of community-based organizations to provide community organizing services to Milwaukee’s predominantly African American community. This study assesses the City’s policies and practices of funding community-based organizations to provide services in Milwaukee’s African American community, the program’s effectiveness in achieving outcomes, and how outcome achievement affects community development in the black community. I compare the data derived from this analysis to the perspectives held by African American residents residing in the service area, leaders of community-based organizations that provide services in the service

area, and government officials. I analyze the similarities and differences in the perspectives of the residents, service providers and elected officials regarding the city's community development efforts in the Black community.

The City of Milwaukee is an ideal focal point for this research because of its failure, like most urban centers, to significantly reduce poverty, unemployment and racism. Milwaukee has linked African American poverty with African American crime, family disorganization, and social disorder as a justification for its failure to effectively address racial inequality. In the 1960s, Mayor Frank Zeidler assessed the problems plaguing the African-American community and blamed the concentration of low-income, problem, fragmented black families obstructing police as the cause of the problems in the Inner Core (The Committee, 1960, p. 2)

Like Zeidler, current City leaders describe neighborhood blight, poverty, crime, and problem families as pervasive in and produced primarily by the African American community. A 2008 Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report reinforced this connection between Zeidler's perspectives and those of the city's contemporary elite. Excerpts of the report, included in the City of Milwaukee Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) document, "DRAFT 2015-2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy" stated that:

> Unless Milwaukee is able to reduce its violent crime rate, all other economic development strategies will prove fruitless. Reducing serious and violent crime is critical to the City of Milwaukee's comprehensive and integrated strategy to revitalize high-poverty areas. Crime in the City of Milwaukee is linked to areas of

> concentrated disadvantage, which is accompanied by social disorder such as blight, delinquency, unlawful activities, and concentrated poverty (Census tracts where 40% of the population lives at or below poverty). (Milwaukee 2025 – 2019 Consolidated Plan).

The report also indicates that in those neighborhoods there is physical and behavior disorder that are idicators of weak social control (as cited in Milwaukee Consolidated Plan). However there is little, if any, discussion about the role that government plays in the creation of poverty or the failure to eradicate it.

Thus, the two city reports written almost fifty years apart continue a narrative that blames poverty, crime, and the perceived character deficits of African Americans for the government's failure to design and implement an effective community development strategy in the Black community. This linkage rationalizes the inadequate conditions of the segregated Black community and justifies ineffective community development. Milwaukee has implemented numerous anti-poverty initiatives, yet the city ranks high in Black poverty, Black unemployment, and segregation. Its continued link of poverty to perceived cultural and character deficits of African Americans diverts attention away from identification and critical assessment of economic and social structures that perpetuate racial disparities and oppress rather than empower Black residents. This also allows white America to avoid taking responsibility for the current racial inequity and to tout its actions as benevolent, wise, and proof of its superiority.

In this dissertation, I argue that racialized ideologies promulgated promoted by elites frame the operation of social welfare and community development initiatives, influence policy decisions and institutionalize practices aimed at controlling rather than

empowering African American residents. Further, I argue that these negative views and actions toward Blacks perpetuate systems of oppression historically ingrained in American society. Trattner (1974) found that the customs, practices, policies and ideologies of the past were firmly embedded in the fabric of American society and culture. Thus it is critical to review the history to identify how racism evolved in Milwaukee and impacted its African American community.

Critical Theories of Race provide the basis of my theory formation. Critical Theories of Race contend that the United States, from its inception, categorized African Americans and used this categorization to differentiate them as inferior and unworthy. This categorization has perpetuated oppressive systems of institutional racism, operationalized through racial hierarchies and racialized social control (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Omi & Winant, 1994; Feagin, 2006; Dhamoon, 2011).

I utilized Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) as my main methodology to ensure the research bears input from African American residents as interview subjects and as community researchers. The goal is to provide an analytical framework regarding how systems of oppression function in social service programs; to document the effect of these systems on the Black community, and to identify effective ways to dismantle or systems that oppress the African American community.

The research questions that form the basis of this dissertation are:

1. Does the current system of oppression perpetuate a history of racialized social control?
2. How do government institutions maintain systems of oppression in decentralized provision of social welfare to the African American community?

3. How do systems of oppression influence the inclusion of Black agency (knowledge and organizational infrastructure) in state led community development?

Section II. Theories of Critical Race, Framing and Counter-Framing

Race plays a vital role in American society and its treatment of African Americans. Critical Theories of Race form the theoretical foundation for research into the functionality of systems of oppression in American society and institutions generally, and the social welfare system in its delivery of services to the African American community, specifically. "Critical Race Theory" is a framework that emerged from legal scholarship, whereas the term "Critical Theories of Race" is a broad field of study and encompasses Critical Race Theory (CRT), developed by Derrick Bell (1995), Kimberle Williams Crenshaw (1993), and Richard Delgado (2012); Racial Formation, formulated by Michael Omi and Howard Winant (2013); and Systemic Racism, defined by Joe Feagin and Sean Elias (2013). These three frameworks are based on a fundamental premise that a system of white supremacy creates a racial hierarchy through which power, privilege, and material resources are unequally distributed. This dissertation analyzes the ways in which a system of oppression embedded in the social welfare system of the United States exerts racialized social control over African Americans, and will foster an understanding of the dynamics that support the persistence of racial oppression in America.

Racial Formation Theory as developed by Michael Omi and Howard Winant explains that race is a socially constructed identity and that economic, social, and political forces determine the significance of racial categories (Omi & Winant, 1994). Racial Formation is a concept that explains the deep structure of racial oppression and inequality. Omi and Winant (1994) argue, "Societies organize themselves around their notions of race, and in the process, categories of race were 'created, inhabited,

transformed and destroyed.' Race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies" (Omi & Winant, 1994, p.55). In America, African Americans have been categorized as the inferior "Other" and subjected to a system of racial oppression based on this categorization.

Feagin defined Systemic Racism as (1) a complex array of oppressive racial practices implemented by whites to oppress African Americans, (2) unjustly gained white power and privilege which is normalized in American institutions and society, and (3) the use of a white racial frame as an epistemology, a way of knowing that maintains white superiority and norms (Miller, Feagin, & Picca, 2015). The categorization of race as a means to classify and control is facilitated by the entrenchment of the social reproduction of racial hierarchy (Feagin, 2006; Omi & Winant, 2013). The perpetuation of this hierarchical system is facilitated by oppressive institutions that promote inequality through their discriminatory processes, practices, and discourse. Thus, a system of white supremacy creates a racial hierarchy through which power, privilege, and material resources are unequally distributed, and the interest of the elites in power are protected and maintained (Omi & Winant, 1994).

A central theme throughout Theories of Critical Race is that race is a social construct used to categorize and differentiate among individuals based on race to determine the allocation of resources and power. Individuals are categorized based on phsyical attribues which do not correspond with genetic or biological classifications or cultural attributes. Meaning is given to these categorizations which allows for unequal differentation based on how an individual is categorized. Such unequal differentiation allowed for the exploitation of African Americans to be rationalized by the use of

stereotypes and labeling which many Americans viewed as factual and accepted as reality (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). This differentiation labeled African Americans as Outsiders, "Other," and justified implementation of social control mechanisms, including paternalistic and benevolent measures to maintain a system of oppression. It also prompted the racialization of crime and poverty as inherently Black activities.

The social construction of African Americans as "Other" enables the privileging of whites and the marginalization of Blacks. The social construction of race is the foundation on which systems, structures, and processes control social, political, and economic relationships between the elites and the oppressed (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Soss, Fording & Schram, 2011). This social construction provides a framework for racial domination by defining rights and privileges, determining the distribution of resources, and entrenching ideologies and practices of oppression. (Feagin & Elias, 2013; Omi & Winant, 2013). Racial domination is operationalized through racial hierarchies that exert racialized social control through the systems, processes, policies and practices of American institutions. Thus racial hierarchy is the mechanism used in an American stratified society by the dominant group to maintain power and privilege. (Omi & Winant, 1994; Omi & Winant, 2013; Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Soss, et al. 2011).

Critical Race Theory is a theoretical framework that uses Critical Theory to examine the ways in which society and culture influence the categorizations of race, law, and power. CRT asserts that racial power and white supremacy are sustained over time and the law has a critical role in the perpetuation of racial oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT contains several premises similar to Racial Formation and Systemic Racism, such as the social construction of race, differentiation, and the

maintenance of racial hierarchies. However, CRT also has several tenets that are unique to CRT and accepted by most CRT theorists as fundamental aspects of the CRT. These tenets include the ordinariness of racism, interest convergence, revisionist history, narratives, myth of neutrality, and intersectionality.

1. Ordinariness of Racism. A major tenet of Critical Race Theory is that racism is "endemic, pervasive, widespread, and ingrained in society" (Milner, 2007, p. 390). Critical Race Theorists argue that society accepts racism as a commonplace, permanent fixture of life. CRT contends that racism is a daily occurrence for African Americans and as a normal and natural part of the American social fabric, in addition to being deeply embedded into institutional policies. This ordinariness makes it difficult to detect and address racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998). The goal is to unmask racism so it's various forms are exposed and action can be taken to eradicate it (Ladson-Billings, 1998).
2. Interest convergence. Derrick Bell (1995) introduced the concept of the convergence of interest which asserts that oppressors act to advance their own interests rather than to follow an altruistic agenda. These interests may at times converge with those of the oppressed, resulting in progress being made against racism, but ultimately benefitting the oppressor. Because of this, progressive change for racial equality will not occur if a potential remedy threatens white privilege or the dominant power structure (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Critical Race Theorists state that gains in civil liberties can only be achieved when whites do not view the progress as a major interruption to their normal way of life. At the

same time, Critical Race Theorists assert that civil right gains that correspond with the self-interest of whites will not result in significant positive changes in the lives of African Americans (Kolivoski, K. M. et al., 2014; Brown & Jackson, 2013).

3. Revisionist history. American history has excluded the perspectives and experiences of racially oppressed groups. The attempt to silence the oppressed as an effort to downplay the interconnection between power and oppression is demonstrated by the abundance of information about history from the lens of mainstream America. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), "Revisionist history reexamines America's historical record, replacing comforting majoritarian interpretations of events with ones that square more accurately with minorities' experiences" (p. 20). Revisionist history promotes the evaluation and reinterpretation of American history rather than a passive acceptance of the history we are presented. Revisionist history provides an opportunity for individuals to understand history told from the perspective of the oppressed (Harper et al., 2009).
4. Narrative, Storytelling, and Chronicles. Storytelling is a part of African American culture. Lopez (2003) identified narratives and coutner-narratives told by African Americans as very important in addressing racism and acknowledging the value of oppressed groups. Groups can challenge the way they are portrayed by engaging in providing counter-narratives, storytelling, and chronicling. To counter false claims, naratives, and storytelling,they can provide a voice for those whom the dominat group works to silence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). From the perspective of Critical Race Theory, knowledge can and should be generated

through the narratives and counter-narratives that are told by African Americans. Critical Race Theorists identify the importance of researchers including narratives and counter narratives in their research work, thus ensuring that the experiential knowledge of the oppressed is collected and African Americans have the opportunity to share their stories. In Critical Race Theory, race and racism are positioned as central themes in the narrative and counter-narrative (Milner, 2007; Brown & Jackson, 2013).

5. The Myth of Neutrality. Critical Race Theory asserts that claims of neutrality and colorblindness are used to mask power and privilege. The dominant ideology equates success with one's competitive individualism, talent, and effort, and not with the lingering effects of historical racism or the current practices of institutionalized racism. This perpetuates the colorblind view that the playing field of life is level for all and one's success correlates with their work ethic; one's success is merited. The myth of neutrality provides the dominant group's ability to ignore race as if it has no effect on people's lives, and to dismiss racism as primarily something from the past (Sleeter, 2017).
6. Intersectionality. Kimberele Williams Crenshaw who introduced the term intersectionality, asserts that intersectionality:

> helps us understand how different sets of identities impact on access to rights and opportunities. It starts from the premise that people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history and the operation of structures of power. People are members of more than one community at the same time, and

> can simultaneously experience oppression and privilege
>
> (Crenshaw, 2004. p. 1).

Intersectionality acknowledges that there are several oppressions which are overlooked when race is the primary focus and overshadows other forms of exclusion. CRT advocates for a multi-dimensional framework to prevent the essentializing of oppression (Brown & Jackson, 2013).

Critical Theories of Race provide a framework for understanding the ways in which systems of oppression are maintained. Specifically, these theories consider the historical impact, evolution, and normalization of systems of oppression, and the role of state and nation in the perpetuation of systems of oppression. Critical Theories of Race argue that racial oppression is operationalized through racial hierarchies that exert power through American institutions. While the form and nature of racial domination and oppression have evolved, systems of oppression have been institutionalized and normalized to maintain the superiority of one group and the subordination of the "Other."

A singular focus on racial dominance as an institutionalized, structured system obscures the significant roles that elite whites have in shaping our institutional policies, systems, and practices, and ignores how their policy decisions are ingrained into the infrastructure of American institutions to maintain a system of oppression (Feagin, 2006). Kruks emphasizes the need to focus on the agents who use discursive strategies that support systemic dominance. These agents also receive the benefits of this systemic dominance through the allocation of the scarce resource of privilege. As Sonia Kruks explains, "Privilege is the benefits received by one group from the oppression of another" (Kruks, 2005, p.179). A system of oppression establishes a

structural relationship in which the benefits or privilege that one group receives are denied to another group (Kruks, 2005). Thus being recipients of privilege, it is in the self-interest of whites to justify oppression, to maintain dominant structures and to accept social injustice and inequality as the price the nation pays to maintain their white privilege.

This reinforces the fact that systems are maintained by the specific roles of the state (institutions) and the nation (people) which both work to suppress the agency of the oppressed. The roles of institutions and individuals are interconnected in maintaining structures that sustain white power and privilege and that white elites play a critical role in controlling these systems. Acknowledging the differences in roles is useful in understanding how these structures are maintained, and the degree to which racism is entrenched in these systems and institutions. This knowledge can inform the ways in which systems of oppression and the perpetuation of racism can be transformed and destroyed (Feagin & Elias, 2013). Failure to identify the actors that reproduce racial inequality increases the difficulty of dismantling racial inequality; ultimately people, more than structures, exert power, control, and privilege (Feagin, 2006). Thus, the argument is not whether institutions or people maintain inequalities and racialized social control, the argument is that both the state's institutions and the people's actions and decisions play critical roles in maintaining racism (Feagin & Elias, 2006; Omi & Winant, 2013).

Critical Race Theorists and Omi and Winant (2013) emphasize the ways in which maintenance of systems of oppression through institutional policies and institutional actions have impacted African Americans through American history and continue to do

so today. These scholars attribute this oppression, in part, to the long-term impact of European colonization, which continues to influence current practices. The manner in which race was used in the creation of colonialism, slavery, and capitalism demonstrates the use of racial identity and categorization to differentiate groups and justify oppression of those categorized as "Other" (Omi & Winant, 1986, p. 55). The American government's systems of oppression evolved through the years based on the actions society would sanction or accept to restrict and control the lives and choices of African Americans.

Critical Race Theorists argue that structures of domination evolve and change over time based on existing economic, political, legal, and social structures. Oppression was resisted in a variety of ways: through slave revolts, work slowdowns, the creation of separate social welfare systems, and the building of African American community infrastructure. Oppression was also challenged through massive protests such as those inspired by the Civil Rights Movement and other direct actions of resistance by citizens across the nation. This resistance forced the replacement of older, more repulsive methods of oppression with more acceptable ones and forced whites to find alternative ways to maintain white supremacy. This fueled the evolution from blatant, violent, overt racism that is easily recognizable to an invisible, covert racism woven into organizational policies, processes, and practices that appear race-neutral. This change has resulted in racial oppression being a normal part of institutional systems. The highly visible racism practiced during slavery and Jim Crow has been replaced by more subtle racism, which is harder to detect, less subject to legal challenges, and more acceptable to many Americans. This is achieved through institutional hierarches that exert power

through polices, processes, and practices that may appear "colorblind" but negatively impact African Americans. While the form and nature of racial domination has evolved from overt racism to covert racism, racial hierarchies sustain institutional through acts of marginalization, exclusion, and oppression.

Scholars differ regarding the degree of change and progress that has taken place in racism in American society. Omi and Winant argue that much progress has been achieved since the 1960s and the victories of the Civil Rights movement, but that the effects of racism are still present. In *Racial Formation*, Omi and Winant assert that the racist "legacy of the past–of conquest, racial dictatorship and exclusion may no longer weigh like a nightmare on the rain of the living, but it still lingers like a hangover or a sleepless night that has left us badly out of sorts" (Omi & Winant, 1994, p.157). Feagin and Elias disagree, contending that little has changed. Systemic racism aligns with CRT's "racial realism" that refutes the claim of significant progress in race-based human rights and racial equality.

Bell (1995) and Delgado (2001) argue that whites benefitted as much or more than Blacks from the Civil Rights movement, which ushered in a "colorblind" era that enabled whites to proclaim the eradication of racism and the achievement of racial equality. Omi and Winant's (1994) view more of a democratic society and the entrenchment of colorblindness promotes a more moderate approach to issues of race and racism. Colorblindness is a racial ideology accepted by many whites after the Civil Rights Movement based on the assumption that real, substantial, and sustainable progress had been made regarding racial equality in American society. (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). This belief supports the claim that the playing field is equal for all Americans and

that all citizens have access to equal opportunities. These beliefs justify the reduction of initiatives, actions, and policies that focus specifically on addressing the injustice inflicted specifically on African Americans. The failure of African Americans to achieve success and prosperity is viewed as the by-product of Black character flaws and not as a signal of the need to address racial inequality. Proponents of colorblindness contend that the best way to end any residual discrimination would be by treating individuals equally. Thus, these beliefs eliminated the idea that African Americans would continue to face racism because of the color of their skin or a societal belief in the inferiority of African Americans. At the same time, colorblindness supported the idea that the failure of African Americans to achieve equality and success was based on their lack of knowledge, work ethic or motivation. In a capitalistic society, proponents of colorblindness view African Americans who struggle to achieve success as simply individual losers in a competitive society, not as victims of systems of oppression. Colorblindness diminishes the willingness of some whites to consider that institutional racism exists or that the American society continues to perpetuate inequality.

Similar to Feagin and Elias, Bell (1995) and Delgado (2001) also consider racism as a permanent part of American life. CRT explains the ways in which racial domination has been normalized into American society. The elements of oppression identified in CRT are operational in American social welfare systems. Understanding how systems of oppression are formed and perpetuated can enhance our ability to identify oppressive elements of the social welfare system. This is relevant to a study of welfare and Black agency because it unmasks the ways in which a system enforces oppression through

institutions, structures, policies and rhetoric and identifies opportunities for institutional reform and the deconstruction of oppression.

Dhamoon's Framework of Mainstreaming Intersectionality

Dhamoon provides a framework for mainstreaming intersectionality which operationalizes the concepts contained in Critical Theories of Race and which is applicable to my research. Dhamoon's analysis supports the language and concepts of Critical Theories of Race, specifically categorization, differentiation, and racialization. In her analysis of issues regarding the mainstreaming of intersectionality, Rita Dhamoon developed critical concepts useful in deconstructing oppression. However, Dhamoon argues against the traditional focus on individuals and identities as the subject of analysis. Rather, Dhamoon advocates for the study of processes and systems "that constitute, govern and counter differences" (Dhamoon, 2011 p. 235). Differentiation can be produced through discourse and practices regarding economic, political, cultural, intellectual, personal, and experiential factors. The production of social differences is used to justify the maintenance of systems of oppression. Structures of domination that include racism, capitalism, paternalism, and patriarchy, operate within these systems and interact with power to assign privilege and penalty based on social differences such as race, class, and gender. Dhamoon advocates for the use of this theory as a means to analyze societal issues with the intent of disrupting oppressive vehicles of power and to inform the politics of resistance. (Dhamoon, 2011).

The White Racial Frame as Foundation for Oppression

The white racial frame was developed in the seventeenth century as a racialized worldview that whites used to implement, interpret and rationalize oppressive actions

against people of African origin. Feagin identifies several critical dimensions of the white racial frame: racial stereotypes, racial narratives, racialized images and language accents, racialized emotions, and inclinations to discriminatory action. The frame justifies white superiority based on Black inferiority and legitimizes a racial hierarchy of white people who dominate over African Americans (Feagin, 2013; Graham, 2004).

The pervasiveness of the use of the white racial frame precludes whites from acknowledging guilt or complicity in the maintenance of a racist society; furthering the idea of white superiority/Black inferiority is necessary to justify systems of oppression that ensure an unequal distribution of resources, material deprivation, and prejudiced world views. For example, the white racial frame stereotypes Blacks as lazy, oversexed, dumb, selfish, and unpatriotic. It racializes criminality as Black. It suggests that Black female parents would rather stay at home than work and Black men would rather hang out on the street corner and hustle than work. It paints poor Blacks as welfare queens and poverty pimps, uncaring parents, and drug users. It conveys negative caricatures of Blacks as Aunt Jemima, Sambo, Mandingo, and Sapphire (Feagin, 2013). This framing of African American is a way to justify racism.

Counter to CRT's emphasis on revisionist history, the white racial frame includes collective memory, which portrays American history as a record of white courage, nobility, and compassion. It also includes collective forgetting, which erases the cruel actions taken by whites against African Americans and excludes from history positive contributions and achievements of African Americans. Thus, American history is often a recounting of white achievements, strength, and character, void of acknowledgment of Black achievements, strength, and character, or of white oppressive and racist actions.

Collective memory and forgetting aid in the maintenance of whiteness as the racial norm, which perpetuates America's racial problems (Feagin, 2013).

President Reagan provides an example of racial framing. In 1981, President Reagan wanted to provide public assistance only to those who were "truly needy" and to increase funding to the military. Reagan claimed that the "truly needy" would not be hurt by his proposed cuts in domestic spending. The term "truly" modified the definition of needy, implying that there were needy people who were not "truly' needy (Blanks, 2015). Reagan made the case that the good people of the community, the "us," were negatively impacted by the resources wasted taking care of those who did not merit aid. Reagan suggested that the future of hardworking people and their children (the nation) was being compromised. He claimed to be concerned that resources were being wasted at the expense of the good people of the community while "Others" were benefiting from fraudulent acts. By dividing the "truly" needy from those who were not "truly" needy, Reagan suggested that this division would enable his administration to take care of those who were actually in need by allocating resources efficiently and preventing fraud. To portray those he felt were not "truly" needy as frauds, and to substantiate his claim, Reagan referred to the Black female on welfare as a "welfare queen" driving in a Cadillac. By painting a visual picture of some welfare recipients, Reagan was able to redefine them as non-needy, and cheaters of the welfare system. Reagan effectively painted a mental picture of the welfare queen that fed into society's stereotype of poor Black women without uttering a word about race. He described segments of the poor as "welfare queens and poverty pimps." With his rhetoric and policies, President Reagan reinforced the concept in the English Poor Laws regarding

the deserving and the underserving poor in a racialized manner. He helped validate government's retrenchment policy from social welfare provision and thus justified the federal government's decrease in domestic spending, including federal funds allocated to states and cities. This oratory was designed to appeal to his constituency, the white, middle class, mainstream Americans who felt they had been forced to take on too great a burden because of lazy, immoral, poor people. Reagan's views continue to influence the public's perceptions of African Americans and social welfare (Blanks, 2015).

The idea of white solipsism complements Feagin's concept of white racial frame and adds to an understanding of the effects of using a white racial frame to see and describe the world. Adrienne Rich defines white solipsism as the tendency of white Americans "to speak, imagine and think as if whiteness described the world" (as cited in Applebaum, 2008, p. 294). Elizabeth Spelman explains white solipsism as "not the consciously held belief that one race is inherently superior to all. It is a tunnel-vision that simply does not see non-white experiences or existence as precious or significant, unless in spasmodic, impotent guilt-reflexes, which have little or no long-term, continuing momentum or political usefulness." (as cited in Applebaum, 2008, p. 295). At times, whites are unaware of the blinders that allow them to discount the valid experiences of others and to contribute to and benefit from racial oppression without having to acknowledge the impact of their actions.

This use of an ostensibly universal white perspective prevents key elites and others from having a comprehensive understanding of the impact of systems of oppression and how whites are "benefitting from" and "contributing to" these systems. At the same time, Alice McIntyre identifies the "privileged affect" expressed in whites'

exclusive focus on their own need to feel good (as cited in Applebaum, 2008, p. 294). whites can feel good about their benevolent acts without assuming any responsibility for the deprivation their racism has created.

Benevolent white acts also demonstrate the ways in which white privilege and complicity protect systems of oppression from being challenged. Elizabeth Spelman asks, “At what point or under what conditions does compassion become parasitical upon its suffering host?” (as cited in Applebaum, 2008, p. 294). This hidden self-centeredness means that people who “enjoy being in the saddle of compassion may have disincentives to cancel the suffering that provides the ride” (Applebaum, 2008, p. 294). Benevolent acts provide opportunities for whites to increase their reputation and status in the community. As a result, benevolence perpetuates the continuance of white privilege and the maintenance of a racist system that is applauded rather than challenged.

Privilege exercised by individuals perpetuates institutional oppression; their limited world views reinforce racial oppression. Cris Mayo argues that, “Privilege…gives whites a way to not know that does not even fully recognize the extent to which they do not know that race matters or that their agency is closely connected with their status” (as cited in Applebaum, 2008, p. 296). Charles Mills argues that the dynamics of white ignorance are a systemically supported and socially induced pattern of (mis) understanding of how the world sustains systemic oppression and privilege “white ignorance involves not just ‘not knowing,’ but also ‘not knowing what one does not know while believing that one knows.’ This latter phenomenon, fueled by a refusal to consider one’s possible moral complicity, promotes a resistance to knowing” (Applebaum, 2008

p. 296). Conversely, the oppressed, who are well aware of how of white ignorance, privilege, and benevolence negatively impact their lives, feel powerless to influence or change these dynamics.

White innocence also contributes to the maintenance of the white frame because many whites believe they have not benefitted from racism, are not responsible for racism, and have not contributed to racism. This innocence is rooted in a belief that they have achieved success because of their hard work and individualism, and that Blacks have unfairly received extra support and resources. This white innocence persists, in part, because of the whitewashing of American history that fails to accurately and truthfully include the genocide of Native Americans, the enslavement and exploitation of African Americans for capitalistic gains, or the continued racism ingrained in American institutions (Pierce, 2012).

The white racial frame, white solipsism, and white innocence are reflected in the ideology of colorblind racism, which denies the impact of institutional racism, perpetuates the existing racial order, and provides liberal and conservative whites the opportunity to acknowledge past injustices without acknowledging the continuation of racism or white privilege (Bonilla-Silva & Forman, 2000).

As theorists of Critical Race have identified, history's impact on the status of Blacks in America is important to understanding current systemic racism. The white racial frame, cultural dominance, and white solipsism explain how white superiority is maintained by ignoring African American history and experiences. This prevents an understanding by Americans of how racism has existed for centuries, how oppression is ingrained into society's institutions, and how elites maintain its continuance. Thus, the

white racial frame, white innocence, and white solipsism prevent whites from identifying the value of a strong, viable, African American infrastructure.

I contend that the white racial frame, white solipsism, and white innocence maintain a system of oppression by perpetuating a sense of white superiority, and preventing whites from recognizing their actions as racist or seeing the value and worth of the "Other." Whites use the white frame as a valid, normalized way of viewing the world, and their place in it. Within this frame, white solipsism is often implicated in white desire to be benevolent, to do and be good. White moral agency functions to reinforce systems of privilege by validating white people as the central agents of kindness, charity and alturistic acts, and by inferring that white innocence can be preserved through benevolent acts (Applebaum, 2008).

Feagin also explains another white racial frame: the liberty-justice frame, which has been articulated by many whites throughout American history. The Declaration of Independence positioned the concept of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," as central to American values. However, many of the country's founding fathers, including George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, did not always model these values. They were prosperous slave owners while they were revolting against the tyranny of England. They saw the impact of the oppressive system of slavery on slave families and the active resistance of slaves, abolitionists and Black leaders against oppression (Feagin, 2013).

Over the history of America many respected national leaders have not made the connection between whites' patriotism and allegiance to the liberty and justice frame and their culpability in the institutionalized oppression of African Americans. This

dichotomy represents a level of hypocrisy among whites who believe in liberty and justice but also contribute to and benefit from institutionalized oppression (Feagin, 2013). As Rich and Spellman (as cited in Applebaum, 2008) describe, there is a tendency for white America to see through a lens that focuses solely on whiteness; their view of the non-white experience is blocked from their vision which makes it extremely difficult for whites to acknowledge or change their role as contributors to or beneficiaries of oppression.

Counter Framing and Black Agency

Critical Theorists of Race view Black agency as relevant and critical in the counter-framing that opposes white racial framing (Omi & Winant, 2013). Through Black agency, African Americans challenge racial oppression and the idea of white superiority (Feagin, 2010; Thompson-Miller, 2014). Resisting oppression is an extremely difficult undertaking which has demonstrated the conviction, resiliency, and courage of many African Americans. At the same time, African Americans have experienced lost opportunities, diminished social and political standing in the mainstream community, and significant physical and emotional trauma. Feagin states that, “Human agency is usually possible in spite of oppressive social structures, but such agency must be regularly supported and regenerated” (Thompson-Miller, 2014, p.49). Feagin notes that African Americans practiced individual and collective agency to resist racism and oppression, and explains that resisting oppression came with a price for African Americans. He describes “the blood spilled, and the bodies literally beaten, broken and murdered through the exercise of Black agency” (Thompson-Miller, 2014, p. 47). However, white privilege and ignorance prevent the resiliency, bravery, and hard work

displayed by African Americans to be acknowledged by the American public. This discounting of an oppressed group further increases the sense of powerlessness, anger, and despair felt by many African Americans.

Over several centuries, African Americans developed important counter-knowledge, a different way of knowing and understanding the causes of oppression; this counter knowledge nurtured the will to survive and the courage to resist racial oppression. Feagin offers two frames that help explain African American agency: the anti-oppression counter-frames, and the home culture frames. The counter-frame is one of resistance based on African Americans experience in an oppressive society, their sense of liberty and justice, and the values of their African culture. The home culture frame reflected a sense of racial solidarity during slavery; a respect for the family, spiritual, and moral elements of their African culture; acknowledgement of their African roots in their creation of art, music and religion; and the incorporation of their culture in the development of strategies to fight oppression and support social justice (Feagin, 2010). African Americans strengthened their abilities and strategies to engage in resistance on a daily basis and have utilized these frames for centuries. These counter-frames provide individuals and groups with resources to effectively operate in an environment of white hostility and discrimination (Feagin, 2013). Despite racial oppression and inequality, Blacks actively resisted oppression and promoted a protest agenda. Black agency was demonstrated by slaves who quietly sabotaged their masters' production goals, ran away, or revolted against slavery. Agency was demonstrated by those who spoke out against slavery and who acted as conductors on the Underground Railroad. Black agency was present in the North where Black

institutions developed emerging leaders; led social, political and labor movements to gain racial equality; to actively resist oppression; and to promote black unity and pride (Walker, 2005).

However, since the seventeenth century, whites have utilized various tactics to restrict and repress the use of the many positive elements of African home culture to force Blacks into compliance with the norms of European culture. Because African home culture existed before American slavery and white oppression, enslaved Africans and contemporary African Americans utilized their strong ancestral history and positive cultural elements to create positive counter frames and anti-oppression strategies (Feagin, 2013).

When faced with the opportunity to exercise positive aspects of their own liberty-and-justice frame after the emancipation of the slaves, powerful white elites chose to implement the Jim Crow system of segregation enforced through laws, customs, and anti-Black violence. To counter this oppression, African Americans protested Jim Crow Laws in the south and defacto segregation in the North by citing the hypocrisy of whites' call for liberty and justice for America while perpetuating the continued oppression of Blacks. This injustice motivated Blacks to protest and to refine a strong resistance frame (Feagin, 2013).

During slavery, African Americans expressed counter-framing in a multitude of ways, such as organizing, protesting, speaking, and aiding slaves through the Underground Railroad and revolting against slavery. African Americans frequently protested, individually and collectively, against slavery and later against legal segregation. Before the Civil War, there were hundreds of protest meetings and

demonstrations organized by Black and white abolitionists targeting the institution of slavery. In 1829, David Walker, a young abolitionist, published anti-oppression counter-frame in his pamphlet, "Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World." Walker's analysis showed that Black Americans had already developed a strong counter-frame to the dominant white frames: "1. A strong critique of white racial oppression. 2. An aggressive countering of the negatively stereotyped framing of African Americans; 3. A positive assertion of the full humanity of African Americans; 4. A clear assertion of the American-ness of African Americans; and, 5. A strong accent on liberty, justice, and equality for all Americans" (as quoted in Feagin, 2013, p. 150).

In a speech in 1843 at a National Negro Convention, Henry Garvey argued that those enslaved must assertively rebel against the racial oppression they face. Nat Turner and John Brown took aggressive action against slavery by leading slave revolts to resist the oppression of slavery. Martin Delaney attacked racist stereotypes and images by listing important achievements of numerous free and enslaved African Americans across many areas of U.S. society. Delaney infused Black counter-framing with the idea of whites being privileged and unjustly enriched because of racism (Feagin, 2013). As a former slave and abolitionist, Frederick Douglass developed a counter-narrative that identified the hypocrisy of white liberty–and-justice rhetoric while emphasizing the grave injustices suffered by African Americans. Douglass also spoke out to counter-frame the oppression of Jim Crow segregation saying, "It meets them at the workshop and factory when they apply for work, it meets them at the church, at the hotel, at the ballot box, and worst of all, it meets them in the jury-box. Most African Americans had moved from being the "slave of an individual" to now being "the slave of

society" (Feagin, 2013, p.166). Douglass reflected the perspectives held by many African Americans then and now.

In the 1900s, Black scholars and activists contributed scholarly thought, analysis and activism to the discussion and expression of counterframing and Black agency (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Anna Julia Cooper were among the first Black female social scientists to emphasize the overlapping and intersectionality of institutional racism and sexism (Feagin, 2013). Both developed theories regarding gendered racism and how the dominant racial hierarchy is gendered. Separately, they analyzed data to assess the effect of segregation on the experiences of Black men and women, and the discrimination experienced by women in general. They utilized counter-framing to specifically discuss the oppression, subordination. and repression that resulted from segregation. In the Progressive Era, Wells-Barnet contributed to social theory in analyzing the interaction between difference and power in the United States. Wells-Barnett contributed valuable sociological ideas regarding the ways in which white oppression was grounded in economic exploitation of American Americans and how gendering had resulted in the stereotyping of Black men and women (Lengermann & Niebrugge, 1998). Cooper contributed a new perspective to sociology on issues such as power, dominance, conflict, material resources, race, class, and gender. Central to Cooper's social theory was her vision of "domination as a system of oppression and privilege patterned by five factors – history, ideology, material resources, manners, and passion" (Lengermann & Niebrugge, 1998, p.65). As with many research discoveries and inventions created by African Americans in the past, the work of Wells-Barnett and Cooper was ignored by mainstream researchers and they were not given the respect,

recognition, or prestige that their theories warranted. Wells-Barnett and Cooper, like other educated African American women of this era, such as, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and Mary Church Terrell, contributed to Black feminist thought and combined intellectual pursuits with activism. This research provided ammunition for Blacks to use in their arguments regarding oppression and provided an intellectual counter-framing of the issue that challenged academics who used a white racial frame through which to analyze issues of race, privilege, and oppression.

In 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois developed the view that institutional racism was pervasive in the United States. Du Bois assessed the role of history and the hierarchal social structure to challenge racism and acknowledge that double consciousness, as Du Bois termed it, provides African Americans with a unique viewpoint regarding the pain of oppression and the value of agency (Feagin, 2013). In *The Souls of Black Folk* (Du Bois, 1903), he describes the double-consciousness that African Americans experience daily responding to racial oppression. This sense of twoness, and the dual roles flowing out of it, was a necessity for Blacks to survive (Feagin, 2013). Du Bois stated that "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (Du Bois, 1903, p.25). Du Bois argued that countering whites' framing required a solid knowledge of the Black counter-frame and a continuous affirmation of it by maintaining safe places for its expression (Feagin, 2013).

In the 1930s, sociologist Oliver Cox developed a counter-framed analysis of U.S. racism as fundamentally structural and institutionalized. Cox explained that the continued oppression of African Americans is grounded in the hierarchical structure of

white racial classes with white Americans at the top of the hierarchy. He dismissed individual prejudice as a key determinant of racism, but rather focused on the exploitative relationship between the dominant white race and African Americans (Feagin, 2013).

During the 1960s civil rights movement, African American activists continued to sharpen an institutional racism frame. In their book*, Black Power*, activist Stokely Carmichael (later Kwame Ture) and historian Charles Hamilton illustrated the importance of identifying and understanding institutional racism in the United States and the patterns of racism ingrained in major institutions of American society. Similar to Cox, they contrasted their counter-framed view of institutional racism with the older "race relations" approaches, which emphasized individual white prejudice and discrimination. They refuted the idea that institutional racism was merely about the actions and beliefs of some white bigots. They advocated for Black Power to be demonstrated in the assertion of Black political power and for the positive reinforcement and framing of Black people and culture. Their use of mantras such as "Black is beautiful" and "Black Power" stoked resentment among whites, provoking a strong backlash (Feagin, 2013). This counter-framing rejected white derogatory language to describe Blacks. Rather than submissively accept or quietly reject the white racial frame that categorized Blacks as animals, childlike, and inferior, the Black Power movement showed African Americans asserting their own view of themselves, framing their own statement about who they were, proclaiming their power, beauty and racial pride. The Black Power ideology was infused in Black culture; its music, movies, community organizing efforts, church sermons, and political campaigns during the 1960s.

These counter-frames espoused by Black leaders and scholars through American history not only identified the fundamental issues generated by institutional racism but also affirmed the value of Black agency. There have been many attempts to dilute acknowledgement and respect for the role that Black agency has played in the resistance to racial oppression by explaining that white elites play important roles in sustaining oppression but that oppressed African Americans have had minimal impact or agency in shaping their own lives or influencing the broader society (Feagin, 2013).

Hunter deems this lack of scholarship regarding Black agency to be an exclusionary practice, which perpetuates the continued dominance of white histories to the exclusion of other histories (Hunter, 2013). This misguided view regarding Black agency is widespread and can be found among even well-respected sociologists. For example, in his analysis of the decline of civic participation among Americans, sociologist Robert D. Putnam contends that African Americans did not engage in civic involvement at the level of whites (Skocpol & Oser, 2004). Putnam's negative assessment of civic engagement among Blacks stems from the way in which he frames civic engagement and social capital. Putnam values engagement as members in small groups like church groups or bowling leagues. He dismisses membership in large groups describing these groups as impersonal, providing few opportunities for interaction among members (Putnam, 2000). This framing of what constitutes quality civic engagement demonstrates a lack of value for the role that benevolent societies, fraternal orders, social justice movements played in promoting civic engagement among African Americans not just locally but nationally. Putnam describes social capital as the "features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate

coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1995, p. 67). Putnam fails to acknowledge the informal forms of building social capital and civic engagement in the Black community through fraternal orders, social clubs, sports teams, business associations, women's clubs, literary societies, and activists' groups.

Scholars who have researched Black agency, community involvement, and activism challenge Putnam's assessment of the level of African American civic engagement. Theda Skocpol refutes Putnam's claim, indicating that it "flies in the face of much scholarship to the contrary – indeed, contradicts the standard judgment of earlier generations of scholars" (Skocpol & Oser, 2004, p. 369). Robert Austin Warner also found that the civic achievements of African Americans were quite impressive and that despite racial oppression and cultural barriers, Blacks were able to achieve significant social, economic, and educational progress by creating their own churches, clubs, and traditions. (Skocpol & Oser, 2004). The existence and impact of Black social welfare and civic participation has not been well documented in most mainstream social welfare history. This lack of scholarship reflects the ability of white elites to exert power to exclude, serves as an exclusionary practice, and reflects the marginalization of Black lives (Hunter 2006). I contend that discounting Black agency serves an oppressive purpose. Historically, Blacks were often excluded from membership in some mainstream social and civic groups.

National policies that upheld segregated spaces and organizations were not designed to support African American efforts to effectively operate separate systems, institutions, or organizations. Even when Blacks pursued civic engagement in their own communities, Jim Crow laws, established in the late 1800s to control Blacks, promoted

surveillance of and restrictions on the meetings among Blacks. Some states even enacted laws that made it illegal for Blacks to organize benevolent societies. This treatment relegated African Americans to being viewed as commodities, merely bodies needed for labor rather than as individuals with full citizenships rights; the control of the Black body initiated by the enslavement of African Americans was perpetuated long after Blacks were emancipated. The American power regime was "coercive and oppressive with practices of policing, patrolling, and ultimately controlling the Black body" (Liazos, 2012, p.142). Despite oppressive actions taken to diminish Black agency and control Black bodies, history and current day events confirm that Black agency continues to provide needed benefits to the Black community and to actively resist oppression.

Some social policy educators have also dismissed the agency Blacks exhibited in creating a separate social welfare system (Hunter, 2006; Skocpol & Oser, 2004). Critics label Black social welfare efforts as "residual activities" that were intentionally provided to a select group, African Americans. Because these were not mainstream or institutionalized, universal activities, some critics argue that the social welfare services provided by African Americans should not be considered legitimate social welfare activities. From their perspective, social welfare history should primarily describe institutionalized and universal services, not selective services provided to a specific group (Peeples-Wilkins, 2006). This demonstrates how oppression functions. Rather than acknowledge the positive work of African Americans in providing services, being civically engagement and involved in self-help activities, whites identify the provision of social welfare by Blacks to Blacks as illegitimate. This is an example of how the white

racial frame is used to marginalize the positive work of African Americans, to demean Black's use of their home culture of mutual aid and collective responsibility to provide for African Americans in need of services. This perspective ignores the fact that African Americans were excluded from even receiving services, let alone providing services. It marginalizes the work of African Americans working in voluntary associations, mutual aid organizations, churches, fraternal orders, social justice agencies, women's clubs, literary clubs, and civil rights organizations in segregated communities and fails to acknowledge the impact of Black agency. This false narrative paints a negative picture of Blacks helping Blacks to ensure African Americans' dependence on institutions that are controlled by whites and that function as systems of oppression. This racial framing laid the foundation for a social welfare system implemented by African Americans to provide support to African Americans to be supplanted by a decentralized social welfare system funded by government and delivered primarily by white-led community-based organizations (Hunter 2006).

Scholars provide a useful frame for understanding the importance of Black agency, institutions, and community infrastructure. Black organizations and agency are critical to the African American communities' ability to mitigate the effects of oppression and to create techniques for survival (West, 1993). African Americans created an extensive tradition of social welfare and community development, which originated in West African social and cultural practices and necessitated by an American history of racial exclusion and oppression (Soss, Fording & Schram, 2008; Schiele, Jackson & Fairfax, 2005). From slavery to the present, African Americans created and maintained institutional infrastructures that served them separate from mainstream society. History

confirms the broad network of social welfare and agency of African Americans. This was necessary to confront the American system of rampant violence and surveillance created to maintain white power and a racial order that structured the ways in which society functions (Walker, 2005).

Despite these barriers, many Blacks have actively pursued opportunities for civic and social engagement in the African American community and used these opportunities to advance African American values of racial solidarity, collective responsibility, and unity. They also used their membership in groups to work for mutual benefit by resisting oppression, advocating for racial equality, and working for social justice. Black agency and community solidarity, rather than dependence on benevolence, paternalism, and external social control development, have been essential in rebuilding Black neighborhoods. However, market exploitation, racial oppression, and segregation impacted the ability of African American religious and civic organizations to buffer African American communities from hopelessness. (West, 1993). Despite the obstacles imposed by racism, the social welfare system created by African Americans developed an institutional infrastructure that served them well, and separate from mainstream society (Trattner, 1999). The significance of Black agency and institutional infrastructure in the Black community is critical as explained by Edward Blyden, the father of Pan Africanism, when he wrote in 1903, “Every race has a soul and the soul of the race finds expression in its institutions. No people can profit by or be helped under institutions which are not the outcome of their own character” (Robinson, 2000, p.1). This affirms the need for societal support for Black agency and

Black institutions as a way to address the effects of racism, to promote positive resolution of community issues, and to promote dignity and pride in African Americans.

Because mainstream society discounts Black agency, the government and other mainstream entities can justify the delivery of services to the African American community from a European American perspective devoid of the influence of African American history, culture, and tradition. This dismissal of the value of African American history can result in culturally inappropriate or ineffective service provision. It also strengthens white superiority, social control, and racial hierarchy, and justifies resource allocations that sustain the racial hierarchy and marginalization of African Americans. This marginalizes and weakens the African American community and maintains dependence on mainstream America, thus solidifying racial domination.

Section Three: Background and Methods for Community-Based Research

Government institutions collaborate with the nonprofit sector to form public/private partnerships in order to provide social welfares services. Such partnerships have operated effectively at times, addressing critical needs of citizens facing social welfare challenges. However, the partnerships also have served as a purveyor of services based on Eurocentric values and perspectives, enforcing societal norms that categorize some citizens as "Other," maintain racial inequality, and foster a system of oppression. My research aimed to assess the extent to which a system of oppression designed to control African Americans is ingrained in the United States social welfare system, and specifically, in systems in the City of Milwaukee. My goal is to identify how the system can be unmasked and deconstructed. Thus, the research questions are:

1. How does the current system of oppression perpetuate a history of racialized social control?
2. How do American governmental institutions maintain broader systems of oppression through the decentralized provision of social welfare to the African American community?
3. How do systems of oppression influence the inclusion of Black agency (knowledge and organizational infrastructure) in state-led community development activities?

A criticism of Critical Theories of Race is that they fail to provide operationalized tools or methods needed to unmask and deconstruct systems of oppression and structures of domination (Golash-Boza, 2013). Mainstream researchers have often

focused their studies on the oppressed by analyzing African American family structure (Furstenberg, 2011; Cherlin, 2009; MaLanahan & Percheski, 2008.); family instability and welfare (Moynihan, 1965; Murray, 1984); female-headed households (Smeeding, Garfinkel & Mincy, 2011), single parenthood (Amato, 2005; Carlson & England, 2011); McLanahan, 2009). However, emerging research addresses the need to study organizations that oppress. This focus aligns with and can be used to operationalize Theories of Critical Race. To reduce oppression against African Americans, the propensity to study the lives of the oppressed must be balanced with adequate study of "the organizations that structure their lives, the systems in which these organizations are embedded, and the institutions that regulate the operation of both" (Allard & Small, 2013, p.8; Maxwell, 2007; Sampson, 2010). While no structured methodology has been identified, the acknowledgement for the need to study these organizations, systems, and institutions provides opportunities for significant research to be conducted that helps shape methodology. Aligned with this emerging research perspective, my research focuses on analyzing the institutions that operate as part of the social welfare system rather than analyzing African American residents receiving services. The voices of African American residents and leaders of Black-led organizations provide the opportunity to view institutions and systems through a different frame. This approach is unique in that attention is focused on American institutions that normalize racial oppression and on the systems that house structures, processes, and tools of oppression (Dhamoon, 2011). It is also unique because it brings in the voices of the oppressed to provide counter-knowledge; a strategy advocated by Critical Race

Theorists to illuminate the experiences of the oppressed and to highlight Black agency and resistance to racism (Delgado, 1995).

Dismantling systems of oppression requires an understanding of the ways in which these systems function (Allard & Small 2013; Marwell & McQuarrie 2013). I argue that a framework is needed to analyze the role of public/private partnerships in the maintenance of racialized social control and systems of oppression. This framework would provide insight into the factors that generate regimes of power and inequality. It also would increase understanding of the ways in which systems of oppression are perpetuated and how specific system changes could increase opportunities for equal and fair treatment of the oppressed.

My approach utilizes Critical Race Theories, Dhamoon's processes of differentiation and systems of domination, and Feagin's Racial Framing to illustrate the ways in which systems of oppression function in public/private partnerships in the social welfare system and how this oppression undermines African American's efforts to contribute to society, to foster a healthy and strong Black community, and to realize their full potential. Critical Theories of Race and Dhamoon's intersectional approach provide the language and concepts that identify the ways in which the process of differentiation is used to marginalize African Americans. Critical Theories of Race assert that systems of oppression are based on categorization, differentiation, and racialization of a group of people in order to justify implementation of processes that privilege one group and penalize those differentiated as "Other."

Frames produced by the powerful to maintain their power are the foundation of racialized social control and systems of oppression. American society operates with a

white worldview that frames whites as courageous, intelligent, kind, generous, and superior; this same society frames Blacks as lazy, immoral, criminal, oversexed, and inferior. Black counter-knowledge presents a contrasting set of frames using experiential data, revised history, and counter-narratives that resist racism and challenges racial oppression. Oppression administered by the powerful in America was experienced and perceived by most African Americans differently than by the oppressors. The knowledge and insight gained as citizens defined as sub-humans to justify racism, as the powerless working to navigate through the maze of injustice, and as the oppressed resisting the consequences of racial bigotry, provide an important perspective that is seldom documented and rarely incorporated into research. This failure perpetuates the worldview of the powerful and promotes solipsism and white innocence. The counter-knowledge and counter-framing presented by Blacks plays a significant role in providing a different worldview. In this research, a critical worldview prevalent in the African American community is affirmed through interviews with African American residents and leaders of community-based organizations.

My approach unmasks and deconstructs the ways in which a system of oppression operates in municipal government by analyzing institutional structures and systems and processes of oppression, the uses of racialized discourse and practice, and the assignment of power through privilege and penalty. Specifically,, my approach consists of the following:

1. Analysis of how structures of oppression (i.e., racism, capitalism, and paternalism) have historically oppressed African Americans in Milwaukee and how these structures are contained in the City of Milwaukee's Community

Development Block Grant (CDBG) Community Organizing program today. Structures of oppression are often used to exclude, marginalize, render powerless, and achieve submission through violence, and assert dominance, privilege, and superiority of the mainstream culture.

2. Analysis of how processes of oppression (i.e., differentiation, racialization, and acculturalization) historically have affected African Americans in Milwaukee and how these processes are used today in the CDBG Community Organizing Program. Specifically, I focus on the processes of discourse and practice as tools for oppression (framing, solipsism, white innocence, history, and mainstream culture and tradition) and for the resistance to oppression (i.e., counter-frames, counter-knowledge, narratives, storytelling, revisionist history, community organizing, and engagement with Black cultures and traditions).
3. Analysis of the ways in which oppression interconnects with power, assigning privilege to the oppressor and penalty to the oppressed. For this research, the vehicles of power used to assign privilege and penalty in the CDBG Community Organizing Program include citizen participation, funding, competition for funding, ideology, strategy, and outcomes.
4. Analysis of the data regarding the operation of the CDBG Community Organizing Program to the counter knowledge provided by African Americans in Milwaukee.

5. Utilization of the counter knowledge and perspectives of African Americans to assess how mainstream actions and government practices are perceived by Africans Americans.

The multiple factors and dynamics interwoven into institutions warrant a complex approach to the deconstruction of oppression. Because the white racial frame is the predominant frame in American society, the perspective of African American residents regarding the impact of the decentralized, institutionalized social welfare system on the Black community—from their perspective as leaders and critical thinkers rather than exclusively as passive recipients—receives minimal attention. Understanding the importance of the counter-knowledge possessed by many African Americans has shaped my research to ensure these perspectives are included, valued, and compared with documentation and data provided by the City of Milwaukee and community-based organizations funded by the city's Community Development Block Grant to provide services in its Community Organizing program. My use of this counter knowledge has enabled me to conduct research that diverges from social service research that positions African Americans merely as the subjects of research, analysis, and critique. In contrast to much of the research studying the social welfare systems that provide services to African Americans, my research engages African Americans as members of the research team and as valuable consumers/residents with first-hand knowledge of and experience with government and government-funded institutions.

Overview of HUD's Community Development Block Grant in Milwaukee

The subject studied in this research is the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant's Community Organizing Program. In 1974, Congress passed

the Housing and Community Development Act, which merged seven categorical grants (urban renewal, model cities, water and sewer facilities, open spaces, neighborhood facilities, rehabilitation loans, and public facilities loans) into one block grant with fewer regulatory constraints and with considerable local discretion over program priorities. The act created the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which through Housing and Urban Development (HUD), funds municipalities and other units of government in the development of viable urban communities. HUD statutory program goals are decent housing, suitable living environments and expanded economic opportunities with long-term goals of availability/accessibility, affordability, and sustainability. The statutes for the Federal formula grant programs determine the goals HUD uses to evaluate the plans and performance of municipalities. Local governments create programs and establish funding priorities to adhere to the HUD national objectives that ensure the work of local governments achieves the following objectives: principally benefits low/moderate income persons, prevents or eliminates slum or blight, and addresses urgent needs or problems in the community, such as a natural disaster (Milwaukee Consolidation Plan, 2015-2019).

As a Participating Jurisdiction and Entitlement Community, the City of Milwaukee Community Development Grants Administration (CDGA) receives annual allocations from the Federal government to fund activities that seek to achieve the national objectives. The City of Milwaukee must submit an annual Funding Allocation Plan (FAP) to HUD that outlines how the city will utilize Federal funds to meet the national objectives to achieve the greatest measurable impact on the community. The city's CDGA developed its specific outcomes to meet HUD compliance requirements and

national objectives. The city's current goals are: reduce crime, increase property values, increase economic vitality, and improve quality of life (Milwaukee Consolidation Plan, 2015-2019).

In July 2013, the City of Milwaukee's population was 594,833 (U.S. Census). For the Community Development Block Grant Program, the City of Milwaukee established Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs) based on Census data and identified the areas of the city that had the highest number of low-income persons in the City of Milwaukee. In each of the NRSAs, at least 70% of the total population falls within the HUD-defined low/moderate income category. Funding is also allocated for low-income persons in non-NRSA census tracts within the City of Milwaukee. The major emphasis is on targeting resources to effectuate neighborhood revitalization by integrating housing, economic development, and public services in a tightly defined geographic area through a clear development strategy.

Milwaukee has two Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas; NRSA #1 is on the north side of Milwaukee, and NRSA #2 is on the south side of Milwaukee. The NRSAs consist of 19 Neighborhood Strategic Planning Areas (NSPAs). The sixteen NSPAs that comprise NRSA #1 include Parklawn, Northwest Side, Lincoln Park, United Community, Sherman Park, Harambee, Riverwest, Metcalfe Park, Amani, WAICO/YMCA, Grandview/Walnut Hill, Midtown, Hillside, Westside, Historic Grandville, and a new NSPA in the Thurston Wood neighborhood. As of the 2010 Census data, the total population of NRSA #1 of 207,434 consisted of 155,782 residents (75.1%) identified as being within the HUD-defined low-moderate income category.

Table 3.1 Community Development Block Grant Data Regarding Population in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs)

NRSA Areas	Total Population*	Total Low/Moderate Income Population*	Total Percent Low/Moderate Income Persons*
NRSA #1 (North)	207,434	155,782	75.1%
NRSA #2 (South)	78,889	60,552	76.8%

Source: U.S. Department of HUD; Milwaukee CDBG "Draft" 2015 – 2019 Five Year

The CDBG's Funding Allocation Plan indicates that the city targets funding to the NRSAs, the areas of greatest need in the city (2017 Funding Allocation Plan, C). However, the reality is that the NRSAs do not receive the majority of the funding allocation. As the table below identifies, city departments received almost half of the allocated funds. Organizations providing services outside of the NRSAs also received funding.

Table 3.2 Total Proposed CDBG Allocation

Total Proposed Allocations to City Departments	**$ 5,696,000**
City Departments' CDBG activities	**$4,264,500**
Mandated Administration of CDBG	**$1,431,500**
Total Proposed Allocations to the Community	**$ 5,804,000**
Public Service	**$ 4,311,150**
Planning	**$ 100,000**
Economic Development	**$ 300,000**
Capacity Building	**$ 75,000**
Housing	**$ 1,017,850**
Total Proposed Allocations of CDBG	**$11,500,000**

Source: 2018 Proposed CDBG Entitlement Allocation by Category

With the majority of African Americans living in poverty residing in NRSA #1, it would be expected that the majority of CDBG funding would be directly invested into NRSA #1 or allocated to community-based organizations providing services in NRSA #1. However, as the 2018 proposed CDBG allocations illustrate, that is not the reality. The allocation for NRSA #1 is only 40%, or $4,600,000 of the total annual CDBG allocation for the City of Milwaukee, when 72% of the poor live in NRSA #1, and 28% live NRSA #2. This is disconcerting because the funding is disproportionately low compared to need.

Table 3.3 Poverty Status – Milwaukee Wisconsin

Race	Population	Number Below Poverty Line	Percent Below Poverty Line
Black	230,476	90,532	39.3%
white	212,633	32,555	15.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin	100,498	31,159	31.0%
American Indian & Alaska Native	3,565	989	27.7%
Asian	20,694	5,224	25.2%
Native American & Island Pacific American	315	23	7.3%
Total	568,181	160,482	28.0%

Based on the chart above, a total of 160,482 or 28% of Milwaukee residents, live below the poverty line. The majority of residents, 127,927, or 80% of residents living below the poverty line, are people of color. Many of these residents reside in NRSA #1. However, the funding is allocated to white-led organizations; there is no data that documents how much of this funding is invested into NRSA #1. Based on the level of poverty in Milwaukee's communities of color, I assert that the total CDBG level of funding is inadequate to address the issues plaguing the poor, particularly the African

American community. The inadequacy of the level of funding is relevant to the African American community, specifically those living in NRSA #1. The editor of the *Milwaukee Community Journal* supports this view, saying that, "the city will award over $11 million in CDBG funds this year, a miniscule, and ever-dwindling sum to address the myriad of problems in the Black community, where the poverty rate hovers around 50%, and the majority of Black men are unemployed" (Milwaukee Community Journal March 14, 2018, p. 5***).*** To address these problems without additional funding demands highly effective services; this demonstration of highly efficient services that significantly reduce black male unemployment and other critical issues in the African American community has not been realized.

Because the federal government has significantly reduced its level of CDBG funding to municipalities, allocation of funding to the neighborhoods with the greatest need is critical. However, this is not the practice. Milwaukee has revised its distribution practices to allocate almost 50% of the CDBG funds to city departments. Of the remaining funds, the city allocates funds to both organizations delivering services outside of and inside the two NRSAs. This funding strategy results in the funding not being allocated to the neighborhoods where most low- and moderate-income African Americans live, which are also the neighborhoods that contain the highest level of concentrated poverty. These practices of the federal government allocating inadequate funding to cities and the distribution decisions at the local level perpetuate racial oppression through the CDBG allocation system. The allocation decisions at both the federal and local level are made by the powerful elites to the detriment of African Americans.

One of the categories of CDBG funding is the Public Service category, which includes Community Organizing, Homebuyer Counseling, Homeless Shelters, and General Public Services. This study focuses on the Community Organizing initiative, which has been referred to in the past as the Strategic Planning/Community Organizing/Crime Prevention grant. The strategic goal for the Community Organizing efforts, as stated in the City's Consolidated Plan (2014), is to "Promote a suitable living environment through public safety initiatives, community organizing, and other efforts which engage residents in accessing and maximizing the use of law enforcement resources to reduce crime, fear and disorder which hinder community development." Thus, "community organizing" in this category focuses on engaging residents to work with law enforcement to reduce crime, fear, and disorder. In the Community Organizing category, the city awards contracts to community-based organizations that provide services on the north side in NRSA #1 and on the south side in NRSA #2. In 2016, community-based organizations were allocated $1,010,910 to provide Community Organizing services in NRSA #1. The funding distribution is illustrated below.

Table 3.4: 2016 Allocations of CDBG Community Organizing Contract Funds

Community Organizing Category	**NRSA #1**	**NRSA #2**	**Totals**
Neighborhood Strategic Planning	$ 720,000	$135,000	$ 855,000
Community Partners *	$ 150,000	$ 50,000	$ 200,000
Community Prosecution Unit*	$ 140,910	$109,010	$ 250,000
Totals	$1,010,910	$294,010	$1,305,000

*Denotes the components where contracts were award in a non-competitive process.

The Community Organizing funding was allocated between NRSA #1 and NRSA #2, with NRSA #1 receiving approximately $1,010,910 (77%), and NRSA #2 receiving approximately $244,090 (23%). The Community Partners' allocation of funds provides services in both NRSA #1 and NRSA #2; the funding allocation was a 75%/25% split for these calculations.

The allocation in 2016 for the NRSA #1 Neighborhood Strategic Planning component was $720,000. For this component, a community-based organization was selected for each of the sixteen NSPs and each allocated $45,000 to work in that specific NSP area. The allocation in 2016 for the NRSA #1 was approximately $150,000 for Community Partners, a program whose community organizers go house - to-house in a neighborhood to engage residents in conversation, provide resource information, and connect residents to community activities, such as block watches, picnics, and community meetings, and $140,910 for the Community Prosecution Unit, a program that works with the police and district attorney to gather information from residents to prosecute certain crimes in specific neighborhoods in NRSA #1.

In 2015, there was a competitive process for six NSPs in NRSA #1 totaling $270,000, and a non-competitive process for ten NSPs in NRSA #1 totaling $450,000. In 2015, there was a competitive Request for Proposal process for the Neighborhood Strategic Planning component, but not for the Community Partners Initiative or the Community Prosecution Unit. In 2016, the City implemented a competitive process for all of the components. Still, there was very limited competition. Of the approximately twenty community-based organizations that applied for funding, only three organizations were denied funding for 2016.

The Community Partners Initiative received an allocation of $200,000 for NRSA #1 in 2016. For this component, the funded agency collaborated with the Milwaukee Police, Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, and the Milwaukee High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area program (HIDTA), in activities designed to reduce crime, improve neighborhoods, connect with residents in high-crime areas, create block clubs, and hold community meetings. For 2017 funding, the Community Partners grant was competitive.

In 2016, the Community Prosecution Unit received an allocation of $140,910 for NRSA #1. The funded agency collaborated with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office to lessen criminal activity, nuisance properties, and nuisance behavior in neighborhoods. For years, the city has used a non-competitive process to award the total amount allocated for this component. In 2017, the city increased funding to more than $200,000. For 2017, funding was awarded through a competitive process and focused only on Milwaukee Police Districts 2 and 4, and the grant recipient was required to work with a crime prevention partnership that included the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, Milwaukee Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), MPD, Milwaukee Department of Neighborhood Services, Milwaukee Public Works, community-based organizations, residents, and businesses targeting CDBG neighborhoods within specific MPD Districts. Per the 2017 RFP, organizations were required to obtain letters of support from Milwaukee HITDA, Milwaukee County DA's Office, and Milwaukee Police Department to submit with their applications.

This funding process also creates a conflict of interest, as it requests that competing organizations obtain letters of support from individuals of law enforcement entities that

are represented on the Board of the grant incumbent. This demonstrates a conflict of interest in that the incumbent is given a competitive advantage; its Board representatives can deny providing letters of endorsement to its competitors even though the letters are a required element of the funding process. Thus, the city can state that it has a fair and competitive process when it has a system where a racial and patriarchal hierarchy controls access to "competitive" funding opportunities. These funding requirements also conflict with traditional community organizing strategies in the African American community where requesting permission from law enforcement to engage in community organizing is not the norm. Further, they raise a host of questions about what "community organizing" means from the city's perspective and about how the city's perspective supports maintenance of a system of oppression.

Researchers have raised issues regarding funding allocation decisions, citizen participation, and outcome achievement in the CDBG program for forty years. Those studies, detailed below, have shown that meeting the needs of low-income residents living in the areas of greatest need is only one of many factors that influence program management and governance, and often is not the priority (Nathan, 1977; Kettl, 1979; Lovell, 1983; Gleiber & Seger, 1983; Handley & Howell-Moroney 2010). The views expressed by African American residents and leaders of Black-led community-based organizations in Project Central Voice and my findings from analyzing CDBG data are congruent with past research findings regarding allocation decisions, citizen participation, and outcome achievement.

Eight years after the inception of CDBG in 1974, researchers studied whether increased decentralization and the transfer of control from HUD to local governments

had increased the power of neighborhood organizations. Although local governments now had autonomy to make decisions about allocation, critics found that program revisions did not significantly reduce federal control or result in a major change from past policies and strategies (Schmandt et al., 1983). Lovell studied the degree to which local governments adhered to federal policies when policies were flexible and provided local governments considerable autonomy compared to when policies were required and enforced. Lovell found that relaxed regulations resulted in funds that were legally diverted from areas of need to government departments and non-needy areas of the urban community (Lovell, 1983). Gleiber and Seger (1983) analyzed geographic distribution of CDBG funds across 23 neighborhoods in Milwaukee, WI. They found that the allocation of funds was not always distributed based on need even when the City's targeting mechanism aligned with community need. They concluded that the Milwaukee program achieved results through a mix of adherence to targeting rules and allegiance to political influences. Gleiber and Seger focused solely on the City's funding allocation process and did not discuss specific results. While the NRSAs contained the majority of residents living in poverty, cities allocated funds to other parts of the city. Through the years, several cities, including Milwaukee, have increased allocations to city departments.

Nathan et al. (1977) found that HUD public hearing and citizen participation requirements did not guarantee that the majority of residents who participated represented target populations. Further, the expansion of citizen participation did not result in recommendations that reflected the needs of the target population. Citizen participation included not only residents of the target areas, but also redevelopment

agencies, city departments, and community-based organizations. While this approach is more inclusive of the broader community, it can negatively impact residents living in poverty. There is no guarantee that the interests of representatives of organizations and city departments converge with the interests of low-income individuals; thus, a more inclusive approach to citizen participation can result in the marginalization of the input and voices of the poor and oppressed. This inclusiveness can also facilitate a greater focus on addressing organizational needs and goals rather than on addressing the needs of low-income residents.

Kettl's (1979) study of four Connecticut cities to assess the effect of local discretion on the use of federal grants found that elected officials supported projects that advanced their political agendas and met the demands of their constituencies, resulting in an uncoordinated plan that lacked a cohesive antipoverty strategy. Kettl explained the divergent interests of higher-income and lower income neighborhoods. Wealthier residents advocated for physical neighborhood improvements, specifically parks, and public works projects, while residents of lower-income neighborhoods advocated for socials service projects, usually neighborhood-based projects that generated jobs in their neighborhoods and hired neighborhood residents. Since many of the poor residents lived in poor-quality housing in deteriorating neighborhoods, their priority was jobs in poor neighborhoods (Kettl, 1979).

Handley and Howell-Moroney (2010) conducted a national survey of the CDBG Program Administrators for municipalities that received CDBG funding to determine their attitudes about citizen engagement and the public hearings held as part of the CDBG process. The study showed that when administrators feel greater accountability

to citizens, there is higher citizen participation in CDBG decisions. But, local administrators are accountable to multiple stakeholders, including other governmental units, special interests in the business and nonprofit sectors, and residents. Because the influence citizens have depended on their position in the power hierarchy, low-income residents may have little influence even though they live in the areas of greatest need (Handley & Howell-Moroney 2010).

Together, Nathan (1977), Kettl (1979), and Handley and Howell-Moroney (2010), make the case that significant citizen participation does not necessarily result in the significant inclusion of low-income residents in the CDBG participatory process. As studies indicate, citizen participation can be defined in very broad terms to include city staff, affluent residents, leaders of community-based organizations, and corporations whose interest may not converge with those of low-income African American residents. The studies also showed that city officials might value the input of some stakeholders over others, which further diminishes the voice of the poor.

Handley (2007) also learned that municipalities found it a challenge to manage intergovernmental funds effectively and to implement quality performance measurements. These issues raised concerns regarding local government capacity and effectiveness in delivering programs and achieving quality outcomes. Handley argued that cities must adhere to CDBG performance measurements or risk losing federal funding regardless of whether the regulations are appropriate (Handley, 2007).

Based on my research, I argue that several key components contribute to the maintenance of a system of oppression: the consistent pattern of funding of white-led organizations to provide services in the African American community; use of a funding

process that limits competition and awards a competitive advantage to white-led organizations; practices that limit the voice and participation of Blacks; and sanctioning outcomes that minimal effect on the positive development of the African American community infrastructure. Other components are operational processes that conflict with accepted Black community organizing strategies: law enforcement's significant role in community organizing in the Black community despite a history of unresolved community/police tensions, and the failure of city government to make substantive program changes despite data that demonstrates significant program flaws.

Milwaukee's lack of support for community-based organizations led by African Americans is nothing new. More than a decade ago, Dr. Michaels Bonds, professor in the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, analyzed the city's CDBG data for 1975 – 1997 and identified the allocation of funds designated to address problems of urban blight and poverty. His 2014 book, Race, Politics, and Community Development Funding: The Discolor of Money, reported the following findings:

First, successful Black-led CDBG programs had their funding cut or eliminated. These agencies were penalized under Mayor Norquist's administrations because of inaccurate and biased write-ups in the local press; at the same time, poorly run, white-led CBOs flourished and grew into multimillion dollar CBOs. Although the mayor was willing to veto funding for a successfully operated African-American-led CBO, he was not willing to take punitive action against problematic white-led CBOs who had funding, program service, outcome achievement, or reporting issues (Bonds, 2004).

Second, while the Community Block Grant Administration (CBGA) did not provide technical assistance or establish a special committee for problematic Black-led CBOs, it

did provide technical assistance to two white-led CBOs in 1996. Also the problems of two Black-led CBOs were presented to the full Common Council for public debate, while the same was not true of white-led CBOs. Finally, CBGA bent its existing policies to assist ineligible white CBOs to receive CDBG funds while denying CDBG funds to eligible Black-led CBOs (Bonds, 2004). This unequal treatment based on race demonstrates how power and the politics of privilege are utilized to penalize Black-led organizations regardless of the quality of their program performance while maintaining funding even for those white-led organizations that performed poorly. These actions reflect how a system of oppression operates based on differentiation and racialization rather than on the merits of an organization. This system of power and oppression has existed for decades in the CDBG program but is often framed and justified as evidence of the inability of Black-led organizations to perform or to adhere to mainstream norms. The fact that Black-led organizations that performed well are penalized and slandered while white-led organizations that performed poorly are funded, re-funded, and protected illustrates the basis for the distrust and apprehension that African Americans have toward government. It adds to the environment of differentiation, inequality, and oppression created throughout American history by governmental acts of housing, employment, and educational discrimination and by racist practices in the criminal justice and social welfare systems. Oppression has a culminative effect on the lives of African Americans and on their perception of government and society.

The use of power and privilege to maintain white superiority is also reflected in the ability of white-led organizations to receive funding to work in the African American community while Black-led organizations receive little, if any, funding to work in

predominantly white neighborhoods. My analysis of Bond's data indicates that in 1990, of the nine districts that received CDBG funding, white-led organizations received 100% of the funding in all nine (100%). Black-led organizations received funding to deliver services in five (55%). white-led organizations received allocations of $5,612,000, or 63% of the total funds allocated, and Black-led organizations received allocations totaling $3,360,000, or 37% (Bonds, 2004).

Third, the CDBG data that Bond analyzed revealed that although some CDBG dollars were going to districts represented by an African-American alderperson, a large share of those dollars was awarded to white-led CBOs working in those districts. In none of the aldermanic districts represented by white alderpersons did Black-led CBOs receive a large share of CDBG funds (Bonds, 2004). Bonds' research confirms that city government differentiated their treatment of Black-led and white-led organizations. While white-led organizations experienced opportunity and support, Black-led organizations experienced barriers and resistance in the distribution of resources, political power, and assistance (Bonds, 2004).

Fourth, the defunding of Black-led CBOs resulted in white-led CBOs taking over their duties. These white-led CBOs had fewer ties and commitment to the community being served, which reduced their performance and advocacy. When the Commandos experienced issues regarding tax payments, its cash advance was rescinded even though the agency was meeting its production goals. Eventually the Commandos was defunded due to fiscal and management issues and a white led-organization, Milwaukee Christian Center, was awarded contracts for work previously awarded to the Commandos. However, when the white–led ESHAC experienced

legal issues, dire financial problems, and poor program performance, it was allowed to retain its cash advancement and was allocated new CDBG funding. A special city committee was created to help ESHAC resolve its organizational issues. (Bonds, 2004).

City officials I interviewed indicated that significant changes have been made in the administration of the CDBG process since the years analyzed by Dr. Bonds. They explained that CDBG transitioned from a process in which an ad hoc committee made decisions without much external input to a formal, structured process that includes public hearings and citizen input. Still, as the data we collected and analyzed shows, funding patterns similar to those identified by Dr. Bonds persist. This continued pattern demonstrates a structure of exclusion that has been normalized and ingrained into City government over the last 40 years. Unless key actors, such as the mayor, the Director of CDGA, and the Common Council recognize and address this pattern and structure of exclusion, it will continue to exist, alienating residents, excluding African American community organizations, and undermining the potential for quality community development. As identified in the studies previously discussed, the components in the city's system of oppression have been entrenched into the institution of city government for more than 40 years and consist of lack of funding of African American organizations, limited competition, employment of Eurocentric states, diversion of funds away from neighborhoods with highest need, acceptance of flawed outcomes, la ck of technical support, policies that limit competition for funding, and assignment of privilege and penalty through discourse and practices.

Research Framework

Research utilizing social constructivism incorporates qualitative sources of data. To ensure collection of comparative data, I used a mixed-method approach that consists of community-based participatory research, qualitative, and quantitative methodologies. The interviewers used questionnaires designed to elicit both qualitative and quantitative data in the structured interviews. The questionnaire was used as a tool to obtain input from African American reside nts, the opinions of community-based organization leaders and City of Milwaukee officials, and information about government policies, practices, and processes regarding the execution of the CDBG program.

I used the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant Program's Strategic Planning/Community Organizing/Crime Prevention project as a case study. I collected qualitative and quantitative data from a number of secondary sources: government documents pertaining to the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant program, reports provided by community-based organizations funded by CDBG, historical data regarding the experiences of African Americans in Milwaukee, newspaper articles, feedback from public presentation of the research findings, and I made recommendations to key stakeholders.

Community-Based Participatory Research Methodology

In the 1970s, Paolo Freire advocated for the inclusion of the community in research, stressing that community residents possess valuable knowledge that can significantly inform research (Wallerstein & Duran, 2003). Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) values resident participation in all phases of the

research process, from research design, development, and utilization of interview tools, to analysis of findings and dissemination of results. CBPR is designed to support and enhance social structures and social processes to increase the effectiveness and equitable participation of community members working collaboratively together to improve community conditions (Israel et al., 1998).

Historically, African American recipients of social services have not had significant roles in research regarding these services. This pattern of exclusion continues the paternalistic relationship between social welfare systems and African Americans that subject Blacks to a silenced and powerless position in those systems. Thus, CBPR partners include people who have experienced discrimination, marginalization, or exclusion by society (Minkler et al., 2012).

CBPR can support the mobilization of residents impacted by racial inequities to work for social and systems change. The CBPR approach refines researchers' understanding of a community; promotes shared knowledge, perspectives, and trust; and supports opportunities to increase effective community engagement. Thus, CBPR can lead to the development of more effective methods to address community needs and resolve community issues through the identification of common goals and respect for cultural differences, and can strengthen commitment for transformational change and social justice (Minkler et al., 2012).

Research Project: Project Central Voice

In 2015 I submitted a proposal for Greater Milwaukee Foundation's (GMF) Racial Equity and Inclusion grant. I had already contacted three community leaders: Fred Royal, President of NAACP; Clayborn Benson, Executive Director of the Wisconsin

Black Historical Society; and Katie Pritchard, Executive Director of Data You Can Use; all three agreed to partner with me on this initiative. We created Project Central Voice (PCV), an informal research group, which received $70,000 over two years from the GMF Racial Equity and Inclusion Initiative. The Wisconsin Black Historical Society, an incorporated 501(c) 3 nonprofit, functioned as the fiscal agent for the project.

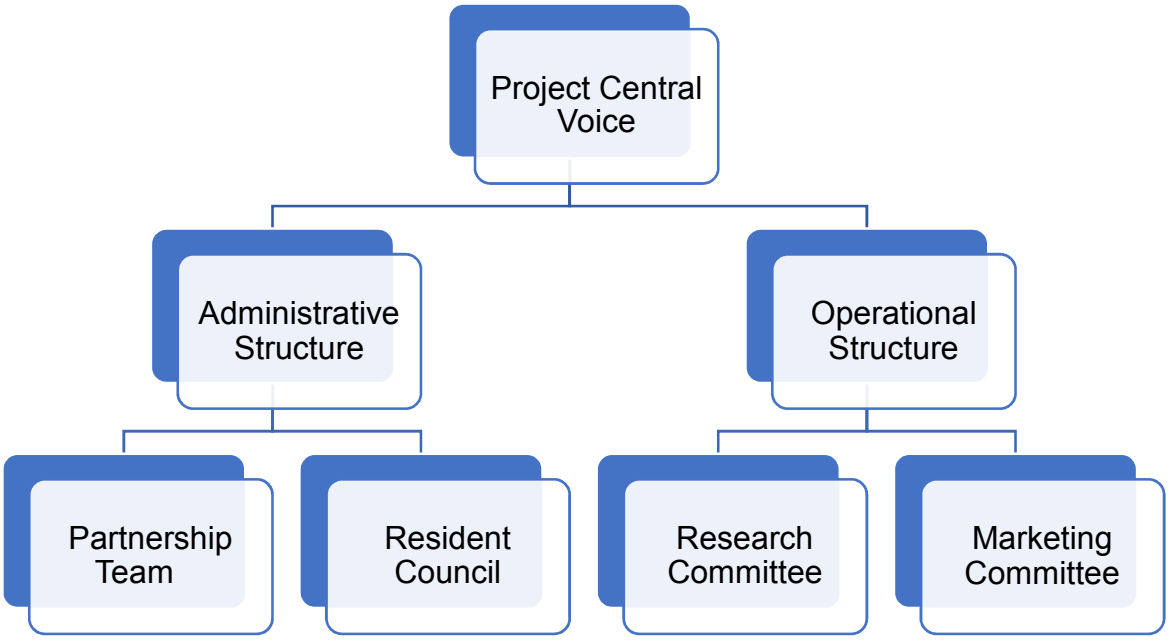
The Partnership Team chose to analyze the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant Program, specifically its Community Organizing, Crime Prevention, and Strategic Planning components. This program was selected because the program operates in NRSA #1, where most of Milwaukee's African Americans live; resident participation in this program was optiona; the program does not have eligibility criteria for participation that excludes residents; it is one of many Black-led organizations operating in NRSA #1; several CDBG funded, white-led organizations also provide community organizing services in NRSA #1; and documentation exists regarding the impact of CDBG- funded programs on the Black community. CDBG also provides an opportunity to analyze the role of public/private partnerships in the maintenance of systems of oppression.

Two foundational beliefs of the Partnership Team were that research teams focused on issues impacting the Black community must include African Americans in primary roles, and that the voices of African Americans, especially those affected by specific problems, must be a central part of the research. The Partnership Team chose to form a Project team that consisted of our team and approximately eight residents in a community based participatory research (CBPR) project. I had experience with CBPR from a project that I had led in 2008 at the Social Development Commission (SDC), in

which we worked with representatives from four small Black-led community agencies to identify reasons for youth violence in Milwaukee's African American community.

The Partnership Team and Resident Council began meeting in October 2015 to discuss issues impacting Milwaukee's African American community and our ideas for implementing an effective research project. In early 2016 we designed our marketing and research strategies. We divided into two teams: The Marketing Team and the Research Team. I took the lead on preparing the Institutional Review Board (IRB) document to receive approval of our interview process and questions; approval was granted in June 2016. Several of us were trained and received CITI certification. We also assessed each interviewers' interview styles.

Table 3.5 Project Central Voice: Organizational Chart



Organizationally, the two branches create a structure for grant administration and for implementation of community-based participatory research. The administrative

structure consisted of a Partnership Team, comprised of myself and three leaders of community-based organizations, and the Resident Council, comprised of residents. The Partnership Team developed the overarching theme of the research, contributed ideas for the grant that I wrote, and managed the administrative functions of the project. Members of the Partnership Team identified and recruited residents we felt were interested in participating in the project and worked closely with the Resident Council. The Partnership Team and the Resident Council participated jointly in discussions about the dynamic between government and community, the scope of the research, the methodology and goals for PCV, and concerns about project implementation.

Operationally, the Partnership Team and the Resident Council worked as one Project Team. All members of the Project Team were African American except for Ms. Pritchard. The Project Team met jointly, and at times its committees, a Research Committee and a Marketing Committee, met separately. The interview protocol was approved through UWM IRB. The Research Committee developed a questionnaire to interview residents. We tested our interview questions on each other while team members observed and critiqued the interview process. We found that our original questions gave us information that was interesting, but not focused on our areas of examination, so I developed new questionnaires for residents, leaders of the community- based organizations, and government officials. The Research Committee retested the questionnaires and agreed they obtained information relevant to the focus of our research. Members of the Research Committee received training in research ethics and interviewing techniques and obtained certification regarding the protection of human subjects through online CITI training and other credible sources. Members of the

Research Committee then interviewed residents, community-based organizational leaders, and city officials.

The Marketing Committee developed strategies for promoting the project to prospective interviewees and identified specific locations for recruiting interviewees. They assisted in testing the interview and survey instruments used in our research. Everyone who was a part of the team received a monthly stipend for their participation. We also hired a Research Intern who worked with us for a few months. When that person resigned, one of our residents stepped into that role. She took the lead in scheduling team members to conduct resident interviews.

The project team created a comprehensive timeline for implementation of the community-based participatory research. In June 2016, we received our IRB approval and began our interviews. Our strategy was as follows:

1. Emails were sent to city officials and administrators requesting an interview. I conducted all of these interviews at the offices of the city officials.
2. Emails were sent to leaders of nonprofit agencies to request interviews that would be conducted by Katie Pritchard or myself. These interviews were conducted primarily at the nonprofit offices, but sometimes off-site.
3. Flyers were distributed to solicit resident interviews. We would schedule residents to come to either the Wisconsin Black Historical Society or the NAACP offices for interviews. Quickly, we realized that we were not being efficient and were not attracting many people to these locations for interviews. We revised our strategy to focus on recruiting people on-site at different community events

and locations and usually interviewed them immediately, on-the-spot, which proved much more effective.

Our strategy allowed us to interview approximately 120 people, primarily Milwaukee residents. In our first year, we interviewed leaders of African-American community-based organizations (CBO). In the second year, we wanted to find out more about the extent to which Black-led agencies existed. Did the Milwaukee community have an unidentified network of Black agencies? What motivated them to operate community-based organizations? What did they feel their strengths and weaknesses were, and how did they feel about the current funding environment in Milwaukee?

African American residents who were interview subjects were given $5 gift cards at the completion of the interview. Several weeks after interviews had taken place, stakeholders (primarily residents of NRSA #1) were invited to a dinner, which was held to provide feedback and research findings to the community.

We developed and disseminated a report and gave three major presentations:

1. In October 2015, at GMF, we presented an overview of PCV's first year of research to primarily Black residents, many of whom indicated that they were involved in doing positive work in their community, in order to obtain feedback.
2. In December 2016, we presented a review of our first year of research, findings, and recommendations at GMF to approximately 70 people, primarily leaders and staff of community-based organizations, government representatives, and staff of private foundations. The PCV team also distributed our report.
3. In March 2018, at GMF, we presented to approximately 45 people, primarily leaders and staff of community-based organizations. Representatives of city

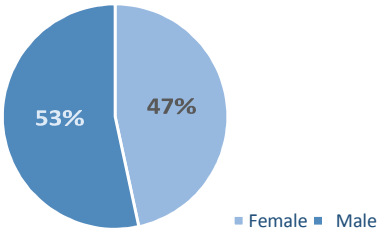
government and private foundations also attended. The team reviewed two years of research and showcased our mapping of approximately 150 Black-led organizations.

Demographics of the Residents Interviewed

The Project Central Voice research team interviewed approximately 120 individuals, including leaders of community-based organizations and government officials. While all of the 90 residents we interviewed are African American, they are diverse in many ways, as the charts below illustrate. Our project team wanted to listen to those individuals who at times feel marginalized; we also wanted to listen to those who had experience working in social service, social justice, education, and youth-serving organizations.

Efforts were made to assure that the demographics of the residents interviewed represented those of residents in the CDBG area. The input of residents regarding issues that impact their lives is critical. No matter what the data may tell us, the voices of residents complete the story. Our research reflects the opinion of men and women, with men being slightly in the majority of those interviewed. Often organizations providing social and community development services cater to women and children and unfortunately fail to connect with the men in the community. Because of this the voices of African American men are minimized. We worked to ensure and represent the intersectionality of age, gender, and class in our work. Thus, the voices of men and women were heard in our research.

Table 3.6 Percent of Residents by Gender



To ensure a variety of perspectives, we listened to voices of adults ranging in age from millennials to elders. While age may have tempered the tone of their comments, many communicated similar views. Elders communicated a lifetime of experience, parents discussed commitment to addressing their children's needs, youth expressed their sense of an uncaring Milwaukee, and many residents regardless of age expressed their belief in an urgent need for change.

Table 3.7 Percentage of Residents Interviewed by Age

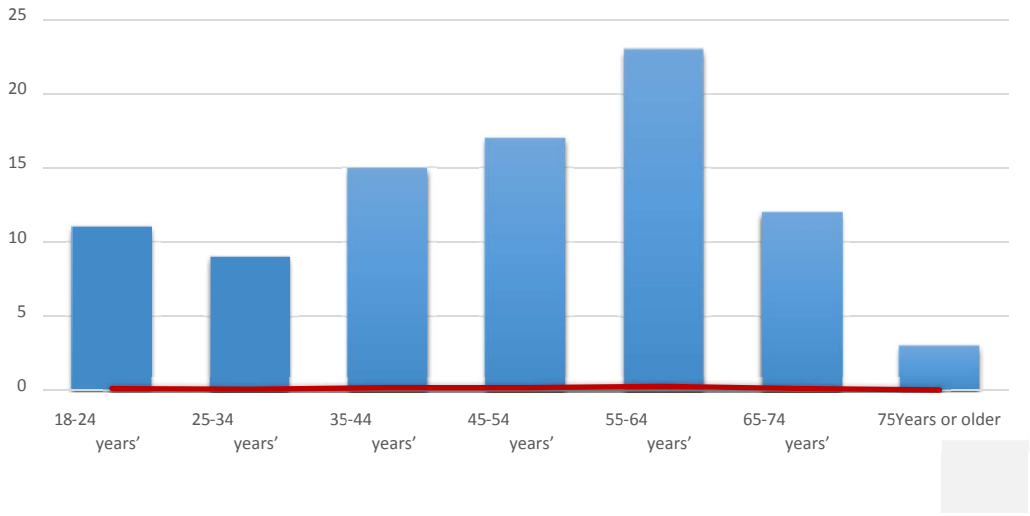
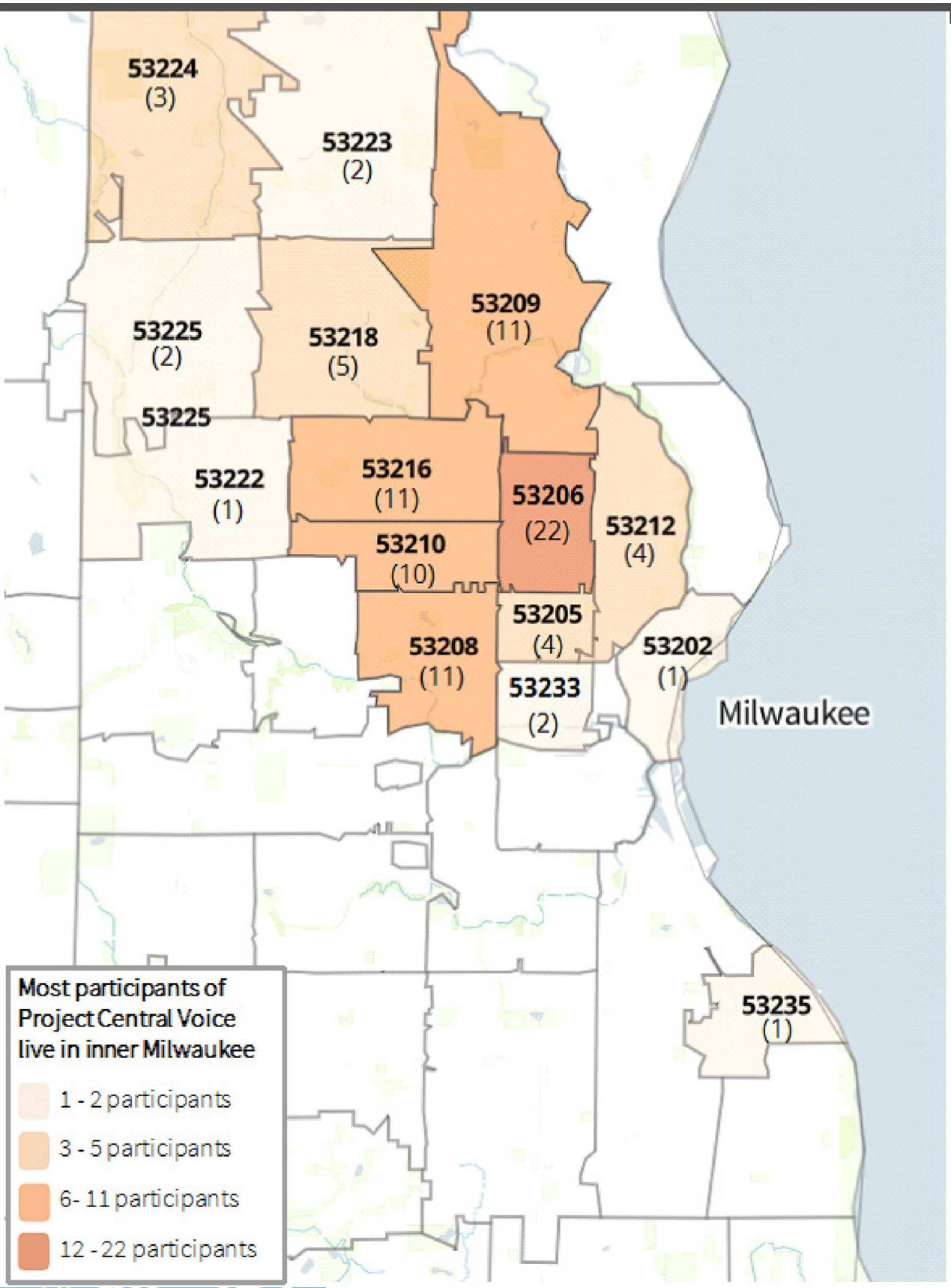


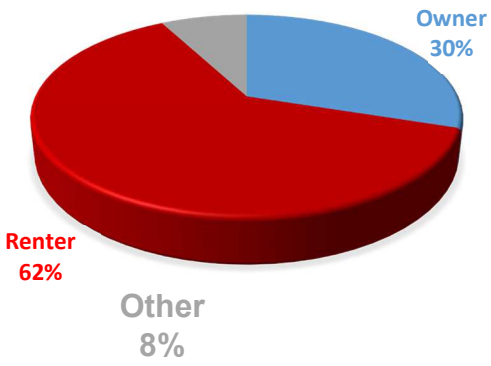
Figure 3.1: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION FOR INTERVIEWED RESIDENTS

We interviewed residents from all of the ZIP codes in the City's Northside Revitalization Area. The following map provides a sense of where the residents who were interviewed lived. The darker the colors on the map, the more residents who lived in the ZIP codes were interviewed.



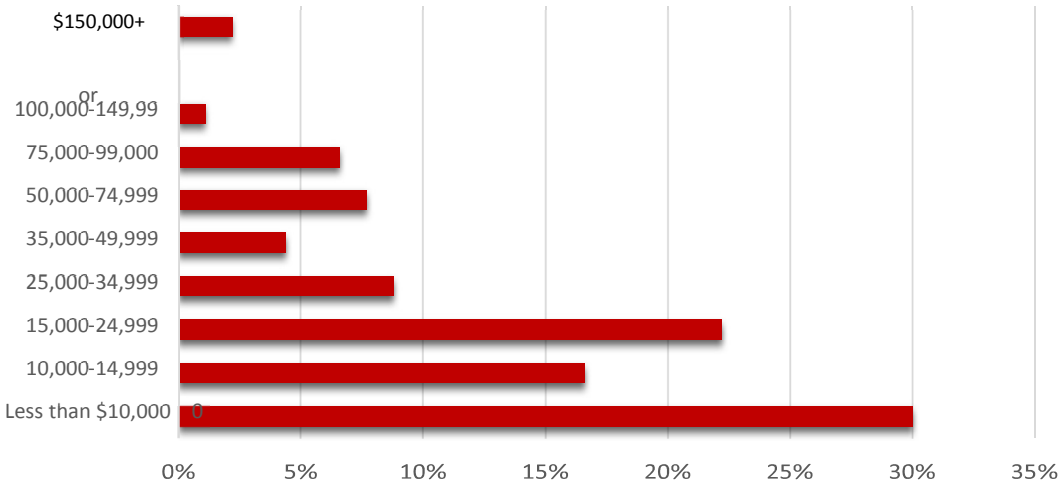
The residents we interviewed came from all of the ZIP codes in NRSA #1. Some residents had lived in their neighborhoods for more than 30 years; others had lived there for only 30 days. Some were homeowners, some renters, and others were living with family or friends.

Table 3.8 Housing Patterns of Residents



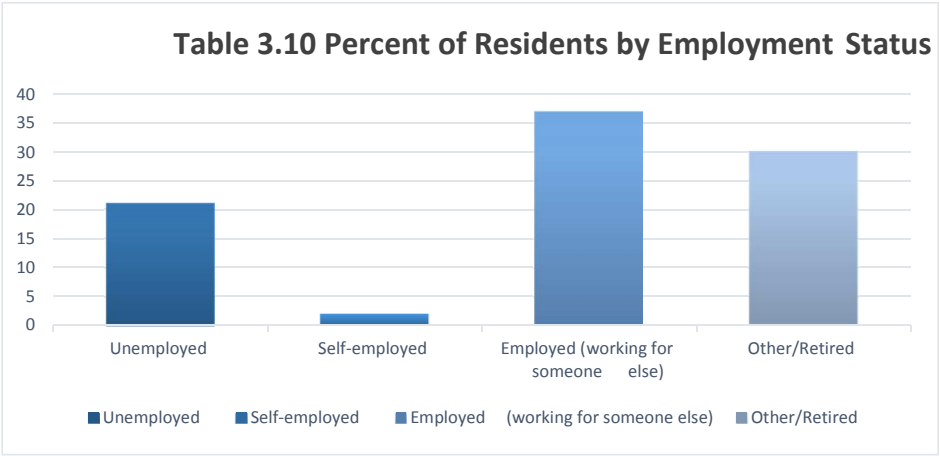
Three additional areas of demographic information, including annual income, employment, and education, further confirmed that we interviewed residents who reflected different socio-economic levels. Our goal was to talk to a diverse group of African American residents, especially those who may not often be contacted for their input or connected with government initiatives. While the residents we interviewed reflected a range of annual incomes, more than 48% had annual incomes of less than $15,000; almost 70% had annual incomes of less than $25,000. The chart below indicates the annual income range and the percentage of residents whose income falls within a specific income range.

Table 3.9 Percent of Residents by Annual Income



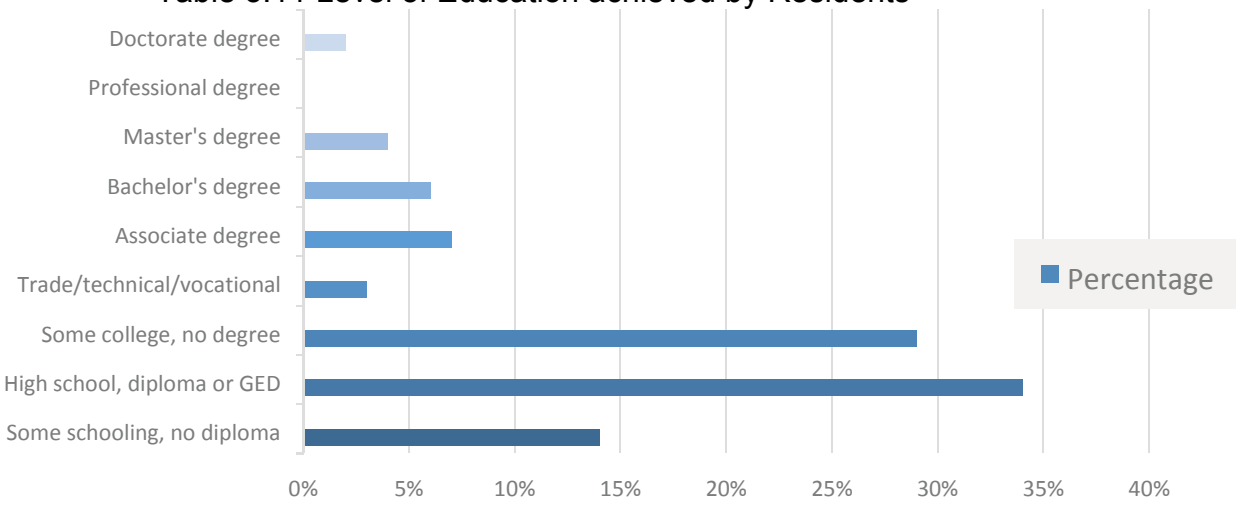
The annual income levels combined with the employment data we collected indicate that we interviewed many individuals who are living in poverty and some who might be considered the working poor.

Table 3.10 Percent of Residents by Employment Status



The chart below illustrates the educational levels of the residents we interviewed. There is a wide range of educational achievement; almost 50% of the residents interviewed had not completed any education beyond high school.

Table 3.11 Level of Education achieved by Residents



African Americans are often characterized as non-patriotic, lacking the incentive to be active in civic engagement, and as victims in need of the white Savior to rescue them. The ability to frame African Americans in a negative light provides the foundation to justify paternalistic decisions being made on their behalf, to rationalize funding of white-led organizations to work in the Black community, and to diminish the capacity of Black-led organizations to take leadership roles in civic engagement activities in their communities. To differentiate Blacks as apathetic, unpatriotic, and disengaged is a false narrative used to question the loyalty of African Americans and to categorize them as "un-American," as inferior citizens who lack American values and ethics. Diminishing the patriotism, contributions and loyalty of African Americans allows mainstream

individuals to justify treatment that denies the full rights of citizenship to African Americans based on a lack of merit, worthiness and deservingness. At the same time, this framing perpetuates the false belief that whites are superior in part because of their strong civic engagement and willingness to "rescue" African Americans from the dysfunctionality of Black families, culture, and behavior. These frames support the white superiority/Black inferiority myth used to validate systems of oppression and to justify funding of white-led community-based organizations to deliver services in the African American community.

Such false narratives have been promoted by scholars, such as Putnam (Putnam, 2004), who presented the negative frames about the civic engagement of African Americans and their participation in community activities. In contrast, Skocpol and Oser (2004) and Hunter (2013) provided data that demonstrates a strong commitment to civic engagement among African Americans. In fact, several historians and scholars, including Lerone Bennett, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Theda Skocpol, Corey Walker, and Ariane Liaozs, have provided significant data that confirms the participation of African Americans in a myriad of civic engagement functions and organizations, including mutual aid societies, fraternal orders, social clubs, and literary clubs. African Americans' participation in civil rights movements, activist churches, and social justice organizations are another form of civic engagement. Some of these organizations challenged the status quo and did not conform to mainstream's idea of civic engagement, but were critical organizations that engaged African American citizens in building community and combating racism and oppression.

Putnam has argued that African Americans are not involved in civic engagement in their communities. We questioned Putnam's thesis about the lack of civic engagement of African Americans and asked African American residents about their involvement in specific civic engagement activities identified by the CDBG Community Organizing program as valuable. Residents that were interviewed acknowledged that they participated in a variety of activities similar to those that CDBG funded agencies implement. Their involvement provided residents with experiences similar to those facilitated in the CDBG community organizing the program. This engagement, whether as led by CDBG, church or other nonprofit initiatives validates their expertise regarding civic engagement and validates the counter knowledge residents contributed to the research. The residents described their participation in the following activities:

Table 3.12 Resident Reported Participation in Community Activities

Specific Activity	Percent of Residents Participating
Block Clean – Up	68
Neighborhood Meeting/Planning	55
Acquire/Sell/Rehab House	49
Nuisances Reporting	48
Block Club Participation	35
Lead Removal Program	28
Drug House Reporting	17
Other	15
Graffiti Removal Program	11

While these are activities that CDBG funded organizations provide, many of the residents did not connect their participation in these activities with CDBG and seldom mentioned CDBG funded agencies as the source of their involvement. For example, one resident indicated that he participated in a neighborhood clean-up that was organized by his landlord. Thus, the residents interviewed had an understanding of

these activities and participated in them with many different community organizations. Contrary to Putnam's thesis, the residents also indicated participation in church, social clubs, community advocacy, cultural programs, recreational events, and garden projects. Residents were often recruited to be interviewed for this research project while attending community events sponsored by Black-led community-based organizations.

In our second year, we found that it was difficult to identify African American CBOs for the following reasons:

- Many African American CBOs are small, have fewer than three staff, and have not incorporated as nonprofits.
- Many African American CBOs do not have websites but use Facebook and face-to-face contact to promote their organization.
- Few African American CBOs recieve local, state, or federal government or philanthropic funding, so they do not appear on funders' websites or in promotional materials.
- There is not a directory or list that identifies African American CBOs.
- Many mainstream funders and the general public are not familiar with most African American CBOs.

To identify African American CBOs, we incorporated non-traditional methods including using word of mouth, asking for referrals, networking, and attending government and community meetings. We also:

- Invited leaders or staff of Black agencies to meetings to talk about their motivations, their obstacles, their successes, and their support needs.
- Emailed people to ask them about their organizations or to provide contact information about other African Americans operating organizations or doing good work in the community.
- Created the Human Assets Inventory Form, which we used to collect data about organizations.
- Reached out to the religious community to include African-American churches in our efforts.
- Attended the City of Milwaukee's Common Council's Economic Development Committee's regular, community, and special meetings in July 2017 to network with leaders of small African American CBOs who were present.

Each survey tool contained questions designed to elicit the interviewee's assessment of community-organizing and crime-prevention efforts initiated in NRSA #1, especially those receiving CDBG funding. The questionnaires developed for each of the groups identified below received approval by the UWM Institutional Review Board (IRB). These questionnaires are in the appendix of this proposal.

- Interviews with African American Community Residents of Milwaukee's NRSA #1, adults ages 18 and older (goal of 100 interviews)
- Interviews with Community-Based Organizational Leaders (some of whom had applied and received CDBG funding) (goal of 25 interviews)
- Interviews with government officials; city administrators and members of the Common Council (goal of 10 interviews)

Some of the sites where interviews were conducted include:

- Wisconsin Black Historical Society
- UWM Golda Meir Library
- NAACP, Milwaukee Branch
- Urban Ecology – NAACP Resource Fair (Washington Park)
- Office Building at 78th and Capitol
- Coffee Makes U Black
- Garfield Days (4th & Garfield)
- Brady Street Days (Locust & Holton)
- Friendship Inc. (2245 W. Fond du Lac)
- 12 Step Club (42 and Townsend)
- College Court (3334 W. Highland)
- Wendy Scott Complex (28th Wright)
- National Negro College Walk (Lakefront)
- Community Gardens
- Residents' Homes
- Residents' Offices

Explanation of Interview Protocol

To gain the perspectives of many individuals, the PCV team designed a questionnaire and utilized it in a structured interview process. The questionnaire was an appropriate methodology because the goal was to collect data that we could compare and data we could quantify from several people. Questionnaires can be used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in structured interviews. While open-ended

interviews can provide more in-depth responses than questionnaires, questionnaires helped structure the process for CBPR in which several people were interviewers.

There is a risk that sharing personal opinions might cause discomfort, anxiety, or privacy concerns on the part of interviewees. IRB classifies the project's target group, low-income African American citizens, as vulnerable subjects. Our safeguard was to inform participants in the introductions to the interviews and in the consent form of these risks and to let participants know that they could stop the interview at any time to take a break, or to postpone or end the interview.

Gathering information using the questionnaires was only part of the data collection process. A document analysis involves obtaining data from existing documents without having to question people through interviews or questionnaires, or observe their behavior. The documentary analysis is the main way that historians obtain data about their research topics, but it can also be a valuable tool for contemporary social scientists.

For this project, we gathered public documents concerning the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant's funding of community-based organizations. We conducted a document analysis in order to assess*:*

- The plans organizations submitted as a part of their funding applications.
- The parameters established by the city regarding programs operations.
- The type and quality of citizen engagement connected to this grant.
- The racial composition of the executive leader and the board of the funded organizations.
- The allocations distributed for this contract.

- The percent of funding allocated to Black-led organizations to provide services in NRSA #1, an area with a predominantly Black population.
- The type of outcomes achieved by funded organizations.
- The level of success organizations had in meeting the city's goals.

A major goal was to identify whether a pattern existed between systems of oppression implemented in Milwaukee in the past and those that are in operation today. In confirming that systems of oppression operated in Milwaukee to produce housing and employment discrimination and segregation, our work clearly identified a pattern. In addition, the biased, harsh practices and impact of government decisions regarding urban renewal and highway construction 50 years ago continue today. A second goal was to identify whether city documents and data provide information that correspond to or conflict with the data provided by interview subjects and to assess whether the community organizing program perpetuates oppression. Thus, key elements of the program, including allocation decisions, competition for funding, ideology, strategy, and outcomes, were assessed to identify whether they demonstrate a system of oppression. Specifically, I identify whether government processes and systems marginalize, exclude, or segregate African Americans. I assess whether differentiation based on race is implemented in CDBG through discourse and practices. I analyze whether the exertion of oppressive power by a racially hierarch assigned privilege and penalty, specifically regarding the degree to which African Americans are provided opportunities in key areas including citizen participation, representation, funding, competition, and outcomes. I evaluate the ways in which the funder's ideological and strategic

preferences complement or conflict with those of African American residents. I compare programmatic elements of the community organizing program to the views regarding funding, competition, outcomes, hiring philosophy, leadership, and organizing activities expressed by African American residents and leaders of Black-led community-based organizations. I interviewed residents who expressed ideological and strategic preferences; and their opinions about grassroots and government organizing, mistrust in government and law enforcement, community organizing outcomes, the value of hiring residents, and the funding of white-led organization providing services in the Black community. I also analyze the following data.

Community Development Grant Administration Documents

- Milwaukee CDBG "Draft" 2015 – 2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy
- City of Milwaukee 2014 Final Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER)
- The year 2014 Request for Proposals for Community Development Funding
- The year 2015 Request for Proposals for Community Development Funding
- The year 2016 Request for Proposals for Community Development Funding
- The year 2015 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds
- CDBG Year 2016 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds
- CDBG Year 2017 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds
- CDBG Year 2018 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds

CDBG Community Based Organization Documents

- Community Development Grants Administration – Application Executive Summary – Funding Year 2015

- Community Development Grants Administration – Application Executive Summary – Funding Year 2016
- Individual Agency 990 Forms
- Agency's 2014 Report to the City of Milwaukee Community Development Grant Administration
- Agency's 2016 Reports and Marketing Material

While the interviews and the document analysis provided important information regarding how Milwaukeeans perceive today's racial climate and the city's funding priorities, it is important to be able to compare what is going on in today's society with what has gone on previously. This historical perspective provides the opportunity to identify whether a pattern exists and whether a systemic process has functioned over decades. The historical research also provides the ability to assess how racism has evolved, how systems of oppression are deeply embedded in Milwaukee society, the roles of government and individuals in systems of oppression, and the methods Blacks use to resist oppression and build community.

Data Analysis Methods

With the implementation of a mixed-method research approach, it is important to use several data analysis methods. While the two main data analysis methods used for this research are thematic analysis and triangulation, the quantitative element of the project helped ground the project with concrete, objective data. Data available from the city and reports submitted to the city by funded organizations provided significant quantifiable data regarding funding levels and numbers of Black-led and white-led

organizations funded by CDBG. The structured questionnaires used in the interviews also included questions that asked respondents to quantify their responses by using numerical scales to rank their preferences between certain choices. The use of quantitative methods added to the validity of the project by providing a source of comparison of the quantifiable and the quantitative data. For example, some leaders of Black-led organizations expressed a sense of being excluded from funding opportunities; the numerical data show that white-led organizations do receive funding through Community Organizing grants.

Thematic analysis is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns, or “themes”, within data. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated with a specific research question. The themes become the categories for analysis. As a part of this analysis, I coded text and developed descriptive themes. The use of qualitative, quantitative, and archival data allows for the identification of themes and issues from a variety of sources.

Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Patton, 1999). Triangulation also has been viewed as a qualitative research strategy used to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources. Given that this research focuses on divergent worldviews, and incorporates framing and counter framing, history, and the revision of history, there are opportunities to identify specific areas of dissonance and incongruence. The combined use of thematic analysis and

triangulation provides a valuable prism through which it is possible to analyze quantitative and qualitative data.

Positionality and Reflexivity

I am an African American female researcher, and am proud of my credentials and experience. I have worked in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and possess considerable professional and personal experience. My professional experiences have also included extensive work on the local, state, regional and national Boards of Directors including tenures as Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Executive Committee member. What is most important is how these professional experiences inform my research, how they cultivate my understanding of the ways in which government systems interface with African Americans residents, and how they provide insight into the resistance of African Americans to racism and paternalism. Thus, my experiences provide me with a valuable vantage point from which to efficiently execute the research necessary for this dissertation and to effectively analyze the data in order to generate quality findings and recommendations.

A double-consciousness, and the opportunity to act as both an Insider and an Outsider, were strengths I used in the research and analysis processes. Many African Americans operate with what W.E.B. DuBois described as “double consciousness” (DuBois 1903). I view double-consciousness as an asset; it provides the ability to understand both mainstream and African American culture, norms, and systems; operate effectively in both mainstream and ethnic environments; and identify factors that can be strengths and weaknesses in both environments. Understanding my position as

both Insider and Outsider enables me to assess how one's position is not necessarily determined based on merit or qualifications but does affect one's power and privilege. Double-consciousness gives me an opportunity to be inclusive, to learn from those in power and those oppressed; and to value the knowledge and perspectives provided by residents who often feel voiceless and unheard. This is important because in mainstream society, "Privilege validates the exclusion of others and the power to exclusively define knowledge and truth" (Kruks, 2005, p. 180). Understanding these dynamics strengthen my effectiveness as a researcher.

While researching the City of Milwaukee's CDBG program, I drew on my experiences working in government institutions as Director of the Procurement Division in the City of Milwaukee's Department of Administration, Joint Certification Manager and Director of Disadvantaged Business Development Division in Milwaukee County's Department of Public Works, and Deputy Director and Intake Officer in the Champaign County's State Attorney's Office. As the City's Procurement Director, I managed the city's purchasing process including contract award decisions and appeals by businesses. At the County, I advocated for the utilization of Minority/Women/Disadvantaged-Owned Businesses (MBEs, WBEs, DBEs). I established contract goals that general contractors and County departments were required to meet regarding utilization of these businesses for construction, professional services, and supplier contracts. I also was the initial manager of the County's Joint Certification Program that established criteria for certification as a Minority/Women/Disadvantaged-Owned Business. In this capacity, I was responsible evaluating the eligibility of businesses applying for certification with the City, County,

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), and Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District (MMSD). In these positions, I became comfortable with the realization that with any decision some constituency will disagree, even when the rules are fair, the process communicated, and the decision equitable.

Early in my career, I was able to provide direct services to individuals as an Insider in the criminal justice system during my time as Intake Officer of the Adult Diversion Program. I obtained the release of individuals from Champaign County's Arraignment Court and Jail by interviewing these and other individuals charged with committing a crime and referring them to the Program as an alternative to criminal prosecution. I made recommendations to approve or reject an individual's application to participate in the program to a Citizen Advisory Board who made the final decision.

These positions provided me with insight regarding how government systems operate, how politics influences decision making, and how the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government is, at times, strained. In my roles, I met with the county executive and county board, and with the mayor and common council, gaining experience appearing before the county board and common council committees as an Insider. After I left government employment, on occasion, I met with the county executive, mayor, county board, and common council committees as an Outsider.

I left City employment to become the CEO of the Social Development Commission (SDC), a community action agency established as a method for Mayor Maier to address issues of housing, poverty, and blight identified in the Report commissioned by Mayor Frank Zeidler. A year later the city, county, Milwaukee Public

Schools, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and the State of Wisconsin designated SDC as the community action agency for the county and instituted city and county ordinances and state statutes to provide some oversight to the organization. For the most part, SDC operated on a daily basis as an independent agency, with its board. SDC leadership met with government officials periodically to provide them with updates, to respond to concerns, or to advocate for support from the government. Even though SDC is an intergovernmental agency, it was often treated by the city as an Outsider organization. Before I joined SDC in 1997, the city, county, and state had been involved in resolving critical issues about SDC in part because the previous CEO had lied about her credentials and some program performance issues emerged. Ironically, members of the African American community and others involved in social justice work incorrectly assumed that Mayor Norquist had sent me to SDC "to destroy the agency." Thus, I was initially met with distrust from many community residents and leaders of community-based organizations, both collaborators and competitors of SDC, who questioned whether I was committed to the community or was at SDC to carry through directives from the Mayor. The city and other government entities used the scandal to justify ending SDC's Area Councils which were community groups organized in areas across the city that provided direct input to SDC and selected residents to serve on the agency's board of directors. A new process which was approved by government for selection of residents to serve on the SDC Board was minimally effective. Turnout for these elections was small. The process required residents be elected through a county-wide process that divided the county into six districts. This electoral process was costly and labor intensive and generated low turnout, few candidates, and dismal community

interest. The largest turnout in a district was approximately 600 votes for a race in which three candidates competed. Some elections generated less than ten votes total in a district. Recommendations by SDC to tie this election with local government elections generated little interest from government officials. The change in the selection of community representatives significantly diminished the community's interest in serving on the SDC Board. Government entities also began to withdraw financial support. In the past, the five local government entities, the City of Milwaukee, County of Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Schools, and Milwaukee Area Technical College, had collectively provided "local shares," discretionary funding that totaled $300,000 - $500,000 annually to SDC. From 1997 – 2000, this funding was discontinued as governments experienced fiscal concerns due to changes in federal funding priorities, the rising cost of administering government operations and increased community needs.

Of the six government entities represented on the SDC Board, all but one appointed African Americans to the SDC Board during my tenure as CEO. During my fifteen years as CEO, despite my recommendations to the Mayor's Office of viable African American candidates, the City only appointed white females to serve on the SDC Board. While city representatives on the board offered quality recommendations and often served as an officer of the board, some also displayed a sense of white superiority. A city representative directed the agency's internal auditor to investigate whether my staff and I treated a white-led organization fairly in business transactions in which we sold a facility and transferred a program to them because the program better fit their business portfolio than it did ours. The internal auditor could not find any areas

in which we had treated the agency unfairly but could identify how we worked with the funding agencies and the white-led organization to ensure a smooth transition of funds and program responsibilities, and worked collaboratively to transition the affected program staff from our organization to the organization assuming the program.

Because SDC was an intergovernmental organization rather than a private nonprofit, it was subject to the Open Records and Open Meetings Laws. Dissatisfied board members used these procedures to keep the press informed of SDC activities and on occasion a board member or board committee advocated for the discussion of confidential or human resources matter in open meetings rather than go into closed session. Board members, including representatives of government entities, would discuss their differences with the leadership of the organization with the media and would inform the media of SDC documents to request under the Open Records statute. Mainstream media cultivated and maintained a pattern of highly scrutinizing SDC for decades.

During my more than 15 years as CEO, SDC applied for and received some CDBG funding for youth services, a homeless shelter, and housing improvement programs. I also served on some city committees and participated in city–led initiatives. I attended several Community and Economic Development Committee meetings of the Common Council to advocate for the continuation of SDC funding or consideration of SDC for new funding opportunities. The city and all entities represented on the SDC Board contributed in very positive ways to the growth of the organization; some City representatives were very supportive of the work of the organization. However, it is also

clear that politics, power, and divergent interests impacted the decisions of Board members and their relationships with me as the leader of the organization.

In my capacity as CEO of SDC, I was an Outsider in my work with the government. My previous experiences with government aided me in understanding how government works when the interests of its leadership do not converge with those of Black-led organizations. I appreciate the lessons learned because it helped me have a greater understanding of how systems of oppression work.

Direct Service provision was also a critical component of my work with community-based organizations. I also provided counseling services to some program participations. At Browndale Child Welfare Agency, I was the Manager of a small group home for emotionally disturbed teenagers. In this capacity, I was responsible for the young residents' educational, medical, physical, and emotional wellbeing. Two volunteer experiences provide me life-changing insight. I volunteered as a counselor for the Champaign County Crisis Hotline and talked with numerous callers who were experiencing depression or trauma, or were contemplating suicide. I also volunteered for the Champaign Options Program teaching life skills training to jail inmates convicted and sentenced for murder, rape, armed robbery, and battery. These inmates were awaiting transfer to prison. All of these direct service experiences helped me hone my client-centered philosophy, approach, and values. It also gave me the opportunity to connect with low-income people of all races who were experiencing trauma, but in most cases, were seeking alternatives to past behavior and negative experiences. The lessons learned from these experiences helped me in my work in government and community-based organizations.

` My experience in direct service provision, as CEO, and as a board member provides a unique perspective on the operations of community-based organizations. What adds another layer to my knowledge is being an African American woman in this society. From growing up in the Civil Rights era, attending segregated elementary and high schools, being raised by young parents who moved to the South to attend college, being raised on St. Augustine's College campus in faculty housing because my father became a professor and coach for the college, all provided me with conflicting experiences of racism and community unity and pride.

My life as a single parent who divorced when my son was less than a year old also has impacted my knowledge of systems. As I tried to collect child support, when my ex-husband lived in Chicago and I lived in Milwaukee, but the process was extremely difficult and I eventually gave up. Milwaukee County was mainly interested in collecting child support from fathers when the child's mother was on public assistance. The interstate process was not a priority even though I provided the county with all the information they requested and more. The manner in which I was treated at times was demeaning and unprofessional. I gave up the idea of receiving the $100 monthly child support mandated in the 1979 divorce decree. But I clearly understood that, while that loss was not serious for me, many parents were dependent on the support and had to endure an oppressive system in their attempts to collect it. I understand that Milwaukee County has significantly improved the Child Support Division.

These experiences increased my knowledge and insight and strengthened my ability to view systems as an Insider and an Outsider, and to enhance my ability to utilize my double consciousness to understand conflicting perspectives and to engage

in quality objective research. My goal is to support efforts to unmask and deconstruct systems of oppression and make the United States a land of equality and equity. To contribute to this, I have created a nonprofit, Mutual Aid Network, Inc., focused on providing capacity building support to small community based organizations, especially Black-led agencies. This is aligned with the tradtion established in the nineteenth-century by educated Black females such as Anna J. Cooper, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Ida B. Wells Barnett and Mary Church Terrell who merged intellectual work with activism. Critical Race Theorists continue this tradition and advocate for the use of theory and research to effect community change.

Section Four: Historical Framework: Evolution of Institutional Racism in Milwaukee (1835–1970)

This chapter examines the history of African Americans in Milwaukee and how systems of oppression that segregate, marginalize, and control Blacks are normalized in American institutions (Bell 1995). As Critical Race Theory indicates, it is vitally important to examine society and culture in relationship to categorizations of race, law, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

The argument at the foundation of this dissertation and this chapter is that institutional racism has been infused throughout and embedded deeply within American society, manifested in overt and covert ways in government, private, and community sectors. These government entities, corporations, and community-based organizations are part of mainstream society and have reproduced structures of domination and systems of oppression. This chapter will unmask systems and structures in Milwaukee that have perpetuated racism against African Americans, specifically, oppressive housing and employment policies and practices that restrict and constrain African Americans without the use of coercive actions. Historically, Black Milwaukeeans have been active individual and collective agents of resistance to counter oppression and to protect their home culture.

As the African American population continued to expand in the 1900s, mainstream Milwaukee responded to the perceived threat by sanctioning institutional racism, specifically in the areas of housing, employment, urban renewal, and highway construction. A strategy implemented by mainstream Milwaukee to separate, contain, and exclude African Americans included:

- Framing African Americans and their culture as inferior, dysfunctional, disorganized, and underserving.
- Enforcing “separate but equal” doctrines when possible.
- Deciding on the quality and quantity of resources allocated to residents based on race.
- Restricting African Americans to segregated housing.
- Controlling access to employment opportunities.
- Exerting racialized social control through an established racial hierarchy and infrastructure.
- Maintaining societal norms and biases through the criminal justice system.

This chapter provides insight into how and why Milwaukee transitioned away from being a place of refuge during slavery and of opportunity for African Americans during the Reconstruction era to one that consistently ranks in the top five nationally in poverty, unemployment, and segregation of African American residents.

Milwaukee’s Early Years: 1835 – 1890

During slavery, Wisconsin was a free northern state in which residents could not legally own slaves. While there was some vocal opposition to abolition, Milwaukee developed a reputation for its anti-slavery sentiments, abolitionist citizens, and participation in the Underground Railroad network (Gurda, 1999). In 1835, Joe Oliver was the first African American to settle in Milwaukee. Blacks who came to Milwaukee in the 1800s sought job opportunities, a refuge from slavery, and a safe place to raise their families; Milwaukee’s population of free Blacks and fugitive slaves grew from one individual in 1835 to 25 in 1842, to more than 100 in 1850. Still, in 1850 Black

population was miniscule compared to the city's white population of 20,061. The Black population posed no danger to white Milwaukee. Blacks, for example, did not threaten the employment opportunities of whites. Blacks worked in jobs that whites were not interested in pursuing, especially jobs in which the work was low-paying, labor intensive, and in extremely hot and harsh conditions.

Critical Race Theory asserts that law is used to exert control over African Americans. Because many Blacks in Milwaukee were runaway slaves, they lived in constant fear, because slave hunters came to the city to capture and return slaves to their owners. Many Blacks lived under assumed names (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, national legislation exerted power and control over slaves and free Blacks. The fragile sense of security that Black Milwaukeeans felt was shattered when the federal government passed the Compromise of 1850, which increased the powers of slave hunters to apprehend runaway slaves. Despite widespread fears, the Fugitive Slave Law did not have a devastating impact on Milwaukee's Blacks (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Blacks continued to move to Milwaukee because of the favorable abolitionist sentiment, a tolerant attitude toward African Americans, and available economic opportunities.

In the mid-1850s, Milwaukee's Blacks lived throughout the city; many Blacks lived in the same desirable residential neighborhoods as prominent white citizens (Hatala & Wenger, 1986; Gurda, 1999). Even as the African American population grew in the 1860s, African Americans did not live in a defined area of the city but rather lived in the downtown area, in the lower Third Ward, and on the south side of Milwaukee in Walker's Point. This population distribution continued until late in the nineteenth century.

The relationship between Blacks and whites in Milwaukee began to shift once slaves were emancipated. White residents worked to limit the number of African Americans in Wisconsin and legalized segregation, socially and politically. Blacks could not vote or serve in the local militia, but they could own property and businesses, travel freely, attend public schools, seek justice in courts, testify against whites, serve on juries, and hold public assemblies. Even with these restraints, Milwaukee Black residents enjoyed a greater level of freedom than Blacks who lived in other parts of the Midwest (Hatala & Wenger, 1986; Gurda, 1999).

The Black community was politically active, sought to expand their rights, and obtained the right to vote in 1865 (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). The lack of suffrage for African Americans reflected the societal view of African Americans as the unworthy "Other" whose rights should be differentiated from mainstream society. Critical Race Theory argues that a part of oppression is the silencing of the voices of the oppressed. The vote in a democratic society gives individuals a voice in the governing decisions of the society.

Systems of Oppression and the Deterioration of Race Relations (1890 – 1950)

A main focus of the Progressive Era, which ran from 1890 – 1915, was the exclusion of African Americans from mainstream American society. By 1890, dwindling job opportunities and increased racial intolerance slowed the migration of Blacks to Milwaukee. Blacks who moved to Milwaukee joined an increasingly segregated Black community (Hatala & Wenger 1986; Gurda, 1999). The inability of African Americans to improve their housing conditions, financial stability, or upward mobility was intensified by insufficient employment opportunities. After 1890 Milwaukee's Blacks experienced

difficulty in finding employment. Most Blacks in Milwaukee worked as waiters, porters, servants, cooks, or unskilled laborers. Blacks were seldom hired for industrial jobs even though Milwaukee played a central role in the industrialization of the nation after the Civil War. Because Unions barred Blacks from being members and hired European immigrants, Blacks were willing to cross picket lines as strikebreakers; this exacerbated the relationship between the Blacks and white workers, including new European immigrants (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

By 1890, racial attitudes had toughened into racial prejudice and intentional acts of discrimination against Blacks increased. Racial intolerance of white residents resulted in the creation of major social and economic barriers that impeded the efforts of Milwaukee Blacks to improve their lives. European immigrants could overcome the discrimination they experienced initially in America by achieving educationally or economically; Blacks could not because their skin color was used by whites as a determination of unworthiness. Race relations in Milwaukee had deteriorated and contact between Blacks and whites decreased (Hatala & Wenger, 1986; Riordan, 2016). With the end of slavery and the northern migration of African Americans, urban communities were forced to accept more African Americans willing to move to northern communities and to compete for jobs. This phenomenon changed the way in which northern cities reacted to Blacks.

In 1896, the United States Supreme Court, in Plessy vs. Ferguson, established the legal doctrine of “separate but equal” which laid the foundation for institutionalized racism in America. Eventually the doctrine of “separate but equal” was ingrained into every level of government, legitimizing a two-tier system of racial justice: one for whites,

and another for Blacks. As white support for equality and fairness for Blacks dwindled, Blacks worked together to defend their legal status as first-class citizens. To confront growing discrimination, Blacks in Milwaukee formed protective leagues, such as a branch of the National Afro-American League. The leagues were unsuccessful in countering the actions of Milwaukee whites that fortified racial barriers in the areas of employment, housing, transportation, education, and public access (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

By the first decade of the 1900s, housing for Blacks was concentrated in an area adjacent to Milwaukee's central business district, which was growing north and purchasing residential land for commercial purposes, displacing Black residents. On the east, the African American neighborhood was bordered by the thriving North Third Street commercial corridor. The only available direction in which Milwaukee's Black neighborhood could expand was north and west (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

As the African American population grew and the interests of African Americans conflicted with those of whites, racial intolerance increased. In 1896, there were two ideologies in the Milwaukee Black community – full integration and self-help/racial solidarity. One group supported working for full integration of Blacks into mainstream American society to gain first class citizenship for Blacks. Some Black professionals, business owners, and educators had formed strong relationships with whites. These Blacks felt they had gained status in the white community and that the division between whites and Blacks could be resolved (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Other Blacks believed in the doctrine of self-help, pride, and race solidarity espoused by Booker T.

Washington, which stressed limited social contact with mainstream society and concentration on building a separate community (Hatala & Wenger 1986).

Blacks exhibited agency in their attempts to support a separate Black community independent of the larger community. They also found ways to contribute to the economic health of the city and to integrate into mainstream Milwaukee. Rather than support these strategies, white political leaders implemented actions of social control and paternalism that marginalized, excluded, and discounted African Americans.

The social welfare system that African Americans created provided social services, resisted racism, and developed community leadership "to counter the specter of uncontrolled and uncontrollable Black bodies" (Walker, 2005, p.142). By 1905, Black fraternal societies, including the Masons Widows Son, No Lodge, the Black Knights of Phytias, and the Grand United Order of Odd Fellow were active in Milwaukee's Black community. Like mutual aid societies in the past, Black fraternal orders provided sick and death benefits, a critical service because most white insurance companies would either not insure Blacks or would charge exorbitant prices (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

Fraternal orders also focused on social change and racial equality. The efforts of Black fraternal orders met with strong resistance from white fraternal orders. In 1904, leaders of three major white fraternal orders launched a nationally coordinated legislative and legal campaign to force their Black counterparts out of existence. This confrontation resulted in African American fraternal orders achieving victories before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1912 and 1929. These fraternal networks were critical mechanisms for the development of oppositional traditions, organization infrastructures, and leadership ties

that maintained vigilant resistance during the Jim Crow era and were the cornerstone for future political and civil rights work.

By the start of World War I in 1914, the popularity of the full integration philosophy had substantially declined. By 1915, prejudice and discrimination were a source of tension between Blacks and whites and Blacks focused on their community rather than trying to integrate. To counter racism, Blacks depended on all-Black institutions including churches, social clubs, literary societies, self-improvement societies, women's clubs, mutual aid societies, and fraternal orders, which provided a variety of services, membership, and leadership opportunities (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

In the 1920s, despite the discrimination that kept African Americans at the bottom of the economic ladder and in segregated housing, Bronzeville residents started creating service businesses, financial institutions, churches, self-help agencies, unions, sports, and entertainment options for themselves (Geenen, 2006). African Americans worked to create a cultural and economic center in their community. It was not uncommon for African Americans to work to advance the strategies simultaneously, hence the connection with Du Bois double consciousness; understanding mainstream America and working to assimilate while also supporting independent African American institutions as vehicles for community economic and social growth and as mechanisms for opposing oppression.

Black churches became the most important social institutions in the Black community (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Black churches would often pool their resources to purchase older houses and convert them into rooming houses for Blacks who were homeless because of the low amount of available housing and high rent. These

facilities also housed Black visitors and those denied rooms at public hotels (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

By 1920, St. Mark African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Calvary Baptist, St. Benedict the Moor Mission and School, and the Church of God in Christ served the diverse needs of African Americans in Bronzeville. In an interview with Paul Geenen, Harpole indicated that "These churches supported clubs and other social outlets to give to poor families arriving from the South an opportunity to mingle with the families already living in Bronzeville. They also established schools, employment agencies, and community social welfare agencies such as the Urban League and the Booker T. Washington Social and Industrial Center to serve the community" (Geenen, 2006**).** African American churches were part of the network of organizations that worked to minimize the negative impact of racism, address the needs of residents, and partner with other entities to foster independence from the mainstream hierarchy of power.

Black churches, benevolent societies, and fraternal organizations played distinct roles in social welfare and social protest. These organizations were integral to the Black community's efforts to resolve social, political, and economic problems (Gray, 2004). These and other organizations demonstrated the ideology of self-help and racial solidarity through providing services to and engaging with Black residents. These organizations utilized their home culture as a source of strength to provide services, foster unity, and develop leadership within the Black community (Geenen, 2006).

Because of their culture and life experiences, African Americans were often unified against oppression and working to improve their environment. Internally, many Black organizations worked to provide services and to fight against injustice. The community

created an infrastructure that consisted of churches, benevolent societies, fraternal orders, social justice organizations, social clubs, businesses, and the press. Collectively they actively resisted oppression and provided services to improve their plight.

While African Americans migrated from the South to escape the oppressive Jim Crow system, they experienced a different type of racism in the north. In the south segregation was de jure, or "by law," segregation. In the South, school segregation was achieved because of a law that required the segregation of schools. In the North, de facto segregation was as "a matter of fact" and was often instituted through a pattern of discriminatory actions. For instance, housing segregation was enforced by private covenants, gentlemen's agreements, and predatory financial lending practices. The North's practice of de facto racism did not require passage of legislation by a governing body; it simply required institutions to implement discriminatory, oppressive policies and practices (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2018).

This de facto segregation was utilized by the Milwaukee Real Estate Board to confine Milwaukee's Black population to a single Black Belt; this was similar to the tactics employed by other major urban centers. Restrictive housing covenants and redlining were barriers to homeownership for Blacks. Blacks could only purchase homes in a specific area of the city. The white real estate staff could refuse to work with Blacks interested in purchasing homes, and Black owners were often charged high rates that exceeded the value of the home. These structural tactics were implemented without the real estate industry experiencing any negative consequences from government leaders (Honer, 2015).

Although there were many issues that Blacks wanted to challenge politically, Blacks downplayed their political aspirations during the Depression and focused on their economic survival. The political clout of Black political candidates was limited because of white voter resistance and the small Black population base in Milwaukee. Political representation by Black leaders remained a secondary goal (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Despite racial discrimination, Blacks gained a foothold into the industrial workforce during the boom years of the 1920s. This increased the threat whites felt because of the expanding size of the Black community and competition for jobs. By 1925 the Black population had grown significantly, and Black workers were integrated into the industrial workforce in the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs. This progress was erased during the Great Depression of the 1930s when Blacks were disproportionately unemployed, and whites transitioned into jobs previously held by Blacks (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

During the Depression African Americans suffered severely, being the last hired in the 1920s and the first fired in 1930s (Gurda, 1999). The high level of Black male unemployment threatened the social fabric of Black Milwaukee and forced more Black women back into the workforce (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). Harpole, a historian and activist, found the replacement of female African American domestic workers with European immigrants during the Depression was indicative of the economic fluctuation brought about by the rapid expansion of the economy impacted by two world wars (Geenen, 2006). Due to racial discrimination, employment of Black women was usually restricted to domestic and personal service (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). But ultimately their employment was based on the interest of those in power. During the wars, African American women were employed in the plants because of the demand for workers.

After the wars ended, African American women were replaced by white women and relegated back into domestic service jobs for less pay (Geenen, 2006).

White labor agents scoured Southern cities to find Black workers for industrial and manufacturing companies. By 1930 the Black workforce in industrial jobs had tripled. However, white employers considered Blacks fit only to perform dirty, unpleasant, and low-paying jobs. Union workers supported this perception, and white employers used it to depress the wage structure. Blacks worked in extremely loud, hot, and harsh conditions. For example, the A.O. Smith Corporation, a large producer of bombs, hired Black laborers during the war to work in an environment that exceeded 105 degrees Fahrenheit. Mississippi sharecroppers were recruited for these positions based on the belief that they could handle the heat and noise. This recruitment shifted the demographics of A.O. Smith employees to over 80% Black (Hatala & Wenger, 1986; Riordan, 2016). Other companies also hired Blacks for the most undesirable positions, such as removing hair from hides at local tanneries, or as janitors, porters, and common laborers. Black laborers seldom received promotions. It was common for locally based Allis-Chalmers and other companies to deny promotions to skilled Black laborers based solely on race (Hatala & Wenger, 1986; Riordan, 2016).

In the 1930s, the Wehr Steel Foundry and other companies employed a small group of Black workers for the hot and challenging jobs. Employers expected loyalty from this group especially when white workers were threatening to organize unions. When whites went on strike against Wehr Steel in 1934, Blacks were not informed that a walkout was going to take place. As strikebreakers, Blacks were held in contempt by labor unions and white workers. The intent of the strike was in part to increase the

dismissal of and incite violence against Black workers. The Wehr Steel Strike was the first incident of racial violence in Milwaukee's industrial labor market (Trotter, 1985).

Having experienced racism, both the working class Blacks and the professional Blacks were motivated to work together. The economic hardships of the Depression all Blacks had experienced acted as an incentive to reduce class divisions and intra-racial conflicts. Public relief programs for unemployed Blacks were inadequate and discriminatory. After 1935 Milwaukee's Black middle class pressured local government officials to provide Blacks with a greater share of relief funds and public works jobs with little success (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). These actions fostered racial unity.

Many Black leaders in the city were concerned about the restrictive hiring policies that excluded Blacks from working in industry jobs and maintained barriers to employment for Black professional and business people. The Milwaukee Urban League (MUL) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) charged Milwaukee's breweries with maintaining racially restrictive hiring policies that prevented Blacks from being hired. The cooperative efforts of MUL and the NAACP to address racially destructive hiring policies in the city's brewing industry forged a stronger bond between the Black middle class and Black working class in Milwaukee (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

In the 1940s Blacks continued to migrate to Milwaukee's northwest side, working class neighborhoods. Most of the neighborhoods that whites abandoned as Blacks moved into them were deteriorating and blighted. A 1939 survey conducted by the Works Progress Administration found that 75% of the homes in Milwaukee's inner city were considered substandard. In 1946, 67% of the homes that Blacks lived in were

deemed unfit for occupancy or greatly dilapidated. By late 1940s, local and federal governments were compelled to take action. Thus, Blacks inherited substandard housing as white immigrant residents moved out to newer, cleaner, neighborhoods. The issues that negatively impacted Blacks were driven by institutional racism including housing and employment discrimination, which affected the location, quality, availability, and affordability of homes that Blacks were able to purchase or rent. Because of this Blacks were forced to live in dilapidated, segregated neighborhoods (Riordan, 2016).

Whites could blame their decisions to move out of Milwaukee on African American intrusion into their neighborhoods. This provided them an alternative to blaming white government leadership for the poor housing quality in Milwaukee. The post-war white flight from the city to the Milwaukee suburbs included residents and major industries that either closed or moved to new locations outside of the Inner Core. As a result, the city suffered a significant loss in its tax base (Riordan, 2016). African Americans became the scapegoats for institutional and societal issues over which they had little to no control. Blaming African Americans for government and economic inadequacies was a way to maintain white superiority and privilege.

Not only were African Americans forced to live in a segregated area, but white elites took action to ensure that the area was substandard by employing additional racist tactics. Developers initiated few new housing construction projects and property owners provided limited maintenance of existing housing which aided the decay of the housing stock in Black neighborhoods. This inaction promoted the growth of blight as the Black population expanded. City planners uses the issue of blight to control the growth of African American residential areas and to justify implementation of plans

which engineered effective racial segregation in the city. The City used a broad interpretation of blight, from chipped house paint to dilapidated structure, to advance their agenda (Niemuth, 2014). To hide blatant discrimination and to demonstrate the effect of racial framing, some historians have theorized that Blacks preferred to live in an environment with other Blacks to avoid white prejudice or to retain their cultural customs. The reality is that Blacks were not given a choice; the residential choices of African Americans were very restricted, and not by their design (Riordan, 2016).

Many Blacks faced a dilemma of low wages, limited supply of housing stock and exorbitant rental costs. Because approximately 98% of Blacks in Milwaukee were renters and there was a housing shortage, landlords could increase rents by up to 200%. As factories closed or relocated out of Milwaukee, many Blacks lost their family-supporting jobs and had to work in lower paying jobs; they were often paid lower than whites for the same jobs. Low wages and high housing costs meant that Blacks used a large percentage of their wages to pay for overpriced housing (Riordan, 2016).

In the neighborhoods where Blacks could live many landlords also chose to not invest in the homes or the neighborhoods and simply left the houses in disrepair. Thus Blacks rented aging homes from absentee landlords who had little incentive to maintain the property, who charged exorbitant rent for homes located in undesirable locations, and were not motivated to reinvest in these neighborhoods (Honer, 2015; Riordan, 2016). This was the result of racialized social control and a racial frame that justified the inhumane oppression of individuals based on race (Honer, 2015).

The lack of a convergence of interest often results in the exertion of institutional racism which created a system of oppression. Blacks saw Milwaukee as a land of

opportunity; whites viewed Blacks as a nuisance, a threat to the white social norms, and an economic burden on their community. There was little interest shown by white elites in government or industry to find common ground, a way for Black and whites to work together to achieve goals that benefitted them all and the city. Because the racial hierarchy was one where whites held power, Blacks were often placed in subservient positions and had to adhere to the rules of the powerful.

Despite these major challenges, southern African Americans continued to migrate to Milwaukee between 1943 and the mid-1950s for employment, financial stability, and the strong kinship networks that connected Southern Blacks to family and friends in the North (Honer, 2015). Many African Americans preferred the covert, de facto racism of the North over the blatant, overt racism of the South. Blacks viewed Bronzeville, with its own Mayor, commercial districts, organizational power, and social network as providing an infrastructure independent of mainstream Milwaukee and a place where African American culture and tradition could be celebrated.

In 1940, 51% of Milwaukee's African American adults were either on work relief or unemployed (Gurda, 1999). More than 50% of African American men were unemployed due in part to discrimination in the workplace. However, Milwaukee employers increased their hiring of Black laborers because of a labor shortage in desirable positions in the 1940s. With the outbreak of World War II, African Americans were needed in the workforce. By 1942, African Americans were employed in significant numbers in the defense industry (Hatala & Wenger, 1986). In 1943, a representative of the Milwaukee Urban League (MUL) stated, "For the first time in over a decade Negro labor was sought by heavy industry. Today there is hardly a Negro man in Milwaukee

who is physically able and willing to work who is not employed" (Gurda, 1999, p.311; Riordan, 2016). Through the war years, Blacks were employed by the industrial and manufacturing firms of Milwaukee and worked their way up to higher positions in companies like A.O. Smith and American Motors (Riordan, 2016).

African Americans embraced entrepreneurship as a viable option to employment in Milwaukee's white-owned industries. In the 1940s taverns, jazz clubs, barbershops, drugstores, and funeral homes were established in Bronzeville to meet the demands of Milwaukee's growing African American population. The number of African American - owned businesses increased from 109 to 210 (Geenen, 2006). However, this centralization of Black capital could not counter the flight of white capital (Geenen, 2006; Niemuth, 2014).

Even though racial solidarity was a goal, social differences heightened class divisions between the Black working and middle classes and threated racial unity with the ideas of the emerging urban industrial working class conflicting with those of the new Black middle class and older elites. Blacks were also divided along ideological lines; most Black leaders advocated that the Black community pursue separate or parallel institutions while the older elites were firmly supporting the integrationist philosophy. Although the integrationist view was almost eliminated during the 1920s and 1930s, it gained new young middle-class supporters during the 1940s and emerged as the dominant philosophy in the 1950s and 1960s. The national civil rights movement reflected this trend as well.

relief funds and public works jobs with little success (Hatala & Wenger, 1986).

After WWII, Black laborers were not in demand because the need for war supplies dramatically declined; this decline in demand crippled many Milwaukee manufacturing companies. Black laborers were often fired to accommodate returning veterans, resulting in financially stressed Black families. By the 1960s, Black male unemployment figures hovered around 10%. In the 1970s, almost 80 companies closed, leaving more than 16,000 workers without jobs. Companies hired Blacks into nontraditional jobs. Blacks were encouraged to apply for jobs as brewery workers, nurses, salespeople, and trolley drivers (Riordan, 2016).

Urban Renewal and the Leveling of Bronzeville

The overt racist actions of the past continued to contribute to significant decline in the physical and structural issues in Black neighborhoods. Absentee landlords and discriminatory real-estate practices caused the physical conditions of the Inner Core to continue to deteriorate into the 1960s. Due to the redlining of the area, banks refused to provide home improvement loans and there was a general disinvestment. A lack of mortgage financing for the area forced many who wished to buy or sell a home to do so through land contracts. Housing was restricted for African Americans in the rest of the city, inflating prices in the Inner Core. Land contracts and inflated prices forced minority buyers to default on their contracts, allowing owners to sell the property again, while white owners and landlords failed to maintain properties. The Inner Core contained 898 structures; 76% were considered blighted, and an additional 8.4% were considered to be in a condition that contributed to the deterioration of the neighborhood (Honer, 2015).

The infrastructure that African Americans created through the establishment of Bronzeville and the collective power of its organizations was destroyed by the actions

taken during the Urban Renewal and Highway Construction initiatives of the city. These two initiatives are discussed in depth below to illustrate the ways in which a system of oppression can be utilized to significantly and negatively affect the lives of African Americans and their neighborhoods. The data illustrates that when faced with a plan that could have greatly benefited African Americans, improved their housing and financial status, and demonstrating respect for them as Milwaukee citizens, city administrators chose a more intrusive, destructive, racist, and oppressive alternative, one that had a cumulative, continuing, and negative effect on the Black community.

In 1948 Frank P. Zeidler was elected Mayor of Milwaukee, having run a campaign promising that he would not increase Milwaukee's existing debt or negatively affect the city's quality credit rating. Because the city did not have adequate funds to solve inner-city problems, Milwaukee, under Mayor Zeidler's leadership, borrowed $55 million to fund "quality of life" projects. Projects were recommended to the Mayor by the 1948 Corporation later known as the Greater Milwaukee Committee, which formed a non-partisan group that took the lead on these projects, including the Convention Arena, constructed in 1950, and the Milwaukee County Stadium for professional baseball, in 1954 (Riordan, 2016). While these "quality of life" projects were being successfully undertaken, projects that were critical to Milwaukee's African Americans were postponed or canceled due to political conflicts and a lack of public support. From 1944 – 1950, the construction of Hillside Terrace, a much needed public housing project in the Black community, was postponed (Riordan, 2016).

After the Great Depression and World War II, the 1949 federal Housing Act was implemented to redevelop American cities and address the housing shortage through

urban renewal, clearance of slums, private development, construction of public housing, and an increase in the Federal Housing Administration's mortgage insurance (Honer, 2015). The use of public housing as a tool to achieve the goals of the Housing Act aligned with the goals of the Zeidler administration from 1948 to 1951, when it built several integrated housing projects, locating one in an all-white neighborhood. The administration planned to use the Housing Act to advance the demolition of substandard homes and the relocation of displaced inner-city residents to integrated, scattered site public housing throughout Milwaukee. However, Zeidler's achievements in public housing were short lived because the Housing Act of 1949 exempted federally financed housing projects from local property taxes. This provision in the Housing Act exposed the underlying racial tensions that significantly impacted urban renewal in the city (Honer, 2015).

Without federal funding, Zeidler was dependent on local funding to build scatter site housing projects. There was strong local opposition from the city's Common Council, realtors and property owners, and the general public who did not want public housing sites with Black residents scattered across the city. The City Council, with support from many city residents, created two bills that halted Zeidler's agenda of public housing construction and slum clearance. The inability of Zeidler to construct public housing stalled major urban renewal efforts in Milwaukee and fostered further deterioration of inner city conditions. Thus, the combination of racialized fears of public housing and Mayor Frank Zeidler's decision to not proceed with slum clearance without integrated, scattered site public housing delayed the implementation of urban renewal

and slum clearance. At the end of Frank Zeidler's term, it was obvious that actions were needed to alleviate conditions in the "Inner Core" (Honer, 2015).

The Milwaukee Board of Realtors, the Certified Rental Operators' Alliance, and the Milwaukee County Property Owner's Association opposed public housing, claiming that the private sector was best qualified to build homes and to rebuild the inner city. The President of Milwaukee County's Property Owners Association stated there was a severe lack of housing and lack of major redevelopment in the Black neighborhoods. He indicated that an adequate housing supply would attract Blacks to Milwaukee and inferred that the severe housing shortage was a strategy used to deter Blacks from relocating to Milwaukee.(Honer, 2015). Richard Perrin, the Director of City Development, shared the sentiments of members of the president of the property owners' association regarding Blacks, saying "Nobody wants these people in their neighborhood" (Honer, 2015, p.33). This sentiment framed the actions taken to curtail the construction of public housing. The racially biased sentiment reflected the racist policies and practices designed to segregate, contain, and control African Americans. The substantial growth of the African American population from 1945 to1960 generated concern among white residents and solidified the opposition to public housing and urban renewal.

By 1954, the federal government acknowledged that the Housing Act's slum clearance and public housing strategy accelerated the rate at which neighborhoods were deteriorating and did not address long-term urban redevelopment goals. The Federal Housing Act was revised to remedy these criticisms and eliminate the shortcomings identified in earlier urban renewal efforts. The Act was changed from slum

clearance and public housing to rehabilitation and private redevelopment (Riordan, 2016).

To improve the urban renewal initiative, a federal oversight program, the Workable Program, was established to require that municipalities prove they had adequate planning and resources to implement an urban renewal project. Under the Workable Program provisions contained in the 1954 revisions, cities were required to resolve the fundamental factors that created slums and to demonstrate progress toward eliminating slums to remain eligible to receive federal urban renewal funds. Municipalities were required to enforce building codes, create a comprehensive plan, ensure meaningful citizen participation, and have adequate relocation resources available for displaced residents. However, the Act failed to identify racism, segregation, and containment policies as critical foundational factors. The Workable Program ignored the impact that race had on the creation of slums and as a result funded systems of oppression and institutional racism at the local level. The facts were demonstrated that local government officials, realtors, property owners, and the public were highly race-conscious in their approach to public housing, and in their discriminatory practices that resulted in segregated, over-priced, substandard housing in the Black community (Honer, 2015).

Milwaukee's commitment to neighborhood segregation and racist real estate practices undermined the federal oversight efforts of the Workable Program and allowed the city to utilize urban renewal funds to continue to isolate minority neighborhoods without addressing continual slum creation. Local officials demonstrated their racial bias when they used race as a determinant of the solutions selected to address relocation

issues, the level of citizen involvement, and the selection of neighborhoods for renewal projects. While the Workable Program oversight suspended Milwaukee' urban renewal efforts several times, the city regained control of the program by making minimal adjustments to thew Workable Program to appease the federal government (Honer, 2015). The federal government failed to hold Milwaukee accountable for the lack of substantive, racially equitable change and allowed Milwaukee to continue its race-based segregation and containment policies which guaranteed the continuation of slums. Thus, the federal government was complicit in the perpetuation of institutional racism (Honer, 2015).

Between 1952 and 1973 the City of Milwaukee, like many other American cities, undertook major planning and redevelopment to address inadequate and substandard housing, poor transportation networks, and underdeveloped inner cities. The federal and local governments failed to acknowledge the ways in which segregation and racism affected implementation of urban renewal plans. In fact, several official and unofficial actions implemented in the Milwaukee urban renewal program restricted the mobility and opportunities of African Americans and directed their movement to certain areas where they could be confined and controlled (Niemuth, 2015).

Real estate entities, such as the Home Owners Loan Corporation and the National Association of Real Estate Brokers, advocated for the bulldozer, or complete elimination, approach to eliminating dilapidated housing and eradicating blight. They argued that rehabilitation of the property would only perpetuate problems without ensuring a long-range solution to urban blight. Employment of the bulldozer approach destroyed Black neighborhoods and displaced Black people. As a result, Blacks sought

alternate housing options and dealt with the overcrowding of limited available housing (Riordan, 2016).

Overall, Milwaukee's urban renewal was completed through several programs, including assisting the expansion of major institutions, undertaking several neighborhood projects, and initiating freeway construction. Neighborhood projects were designed to address deteriorating or threatened neighborhoods through clearance and redevelopment or intensive building code enforcement and rehabilitation (Honer, 2015). This was an opportunity for the government to empower African Americans, to provide job opportunities, and to support their work in building community. Unfortunately, few of the decisions made by the government, developers, and property owners regarding urban renewal considered the Black perspective or implemented plans that resulted in positive outcomes for Blacks but rather served the interest of those with political power and their white constituents. Regardless of the stated goal, the large construction projects required massive demolition of neighborhoods; these projects included the University of Wisconsin –Milwaukee in 1956 and the War Memorial and Milwaukee Art Center in 1957. As the number of residents displaced because of these projects grew, African Americans' negative views of urban renewal increased (Riordan, 2016).

In line with the federal Housing Act of 1949 and its 1954 amendment, Milwaukee created a Redevelopment Authority in 1958 after the Wisconsin Legislature passed the Wisconsin Blight Elimination and Slum Clearance Act, which encouraged cities to create positions for public authorities who would guide renewal programs. In 1959 when Congress approved grants for comprehensive Community Renewal Programs, Milwaukee was able to fund its urban renewal plans (Niemuth, 2014).

Between the years of 1952 and 1973, the City of Milwaukee conducted seven urban renewal projects, mainly clearance, and completed a highway system. The last urban renewal clearance project that the city conducted was known as Kilbourntown-3 or K-3. The neighborhood was located in Milwaukee's north side, near the city center, and in the years after WWII, housed a large part of Milwaukee's African American and minority communities. The City of Milwaukee, citing poor housing conditions and poor land use, selected K-3 as a slum clearance and redevelopment area (Honer, 2015). K-3 was also the first project undertaken as part of Milwaukee's Community Renewal Plan (CRP), which guided the redevelopment of Milwaukee's Inner Core through several urban renewal projects, including a conservation project in the predominantly white Midtown neighborhood.

In a 1966 sociological study of regarding the demolition of the K-3 neighborhood, Jospeh Tamney, chair of Marquette's Sociology Department, described Vliet Street as the area's main business district. It contained grocery stores, general shopping stores, a hat store, a pet store, two restaurants, a coffee shop, 15 bars, 3 churches, a restaurant machinery store and a plumbing supply store (Honer, 2015). Tamney identified K-3 as a community that lacked strong, structured social relations and where many people felt alienated. He stated that K-3 consisted of "an aggregated of people who are in the world but not of it, of people who keep their selves to themselves." (Honer, 2015). Tamney reflected the stereotypical view of Blacks held by those lacking knowledge about African American culture.

Tamney's comments demonstrate the use of racial framing to position African Americans as inferior, or the "Other," and to justify institutional racism. Tamney had the

opportunity to identify the assets of the Black community, the viability of Black institutions as the foundation for the Black community infrastructure, and positive attributes demonstrated by African Americans in severely adverse and oppressive situations. Instead, he chose to demean the culture and norms of African Americans. The ability of the powerful to advance the white frame, validate views of racism, and justify systems of oppression is considerable and can negatively influence society (Honer 2015).

Milwaukee's urban renewal program in the K-3 neighborhood is an example of how federal oversight of urban renewal programs created through the Workable Program failed to bring about positive change in cities unwilling to address the racist foundations of urban slums. The K-3 and Midtown projects were shaped, planned, and implemented to contain minority neighborhoods and conserve threatened white neighborhoods. For instance, while a bulldozer approach designed for slum clearance and private development was implemented in the predominantly Black K-3 neighborhood, the predominantly white Midtown neighborhood was designated for a conservation approach to urban renewal. This reflects differential treatment based on race to contain African Americans and to conserve white neighborhoods. The planners were not adhering to legislation that required these specific actions; rather, they chose to implement de facto racism in their radically different treatment of these two neighborhoods. Despite the differences in the approaches used in these two neighborhoods, residents in both areas could easily identify with the failure of urban renewal efforts in their neighborhood (Niemuth, 2014; Honer, 2015).

The city's plan for K-3 was intended to clear 104 acres in the low Inner Core of Milwaukee to make way for new multi-family residential units. The area was predominately residential and was the largest clearance project planned by the city. It involved the relocation of over 1,000 families, more than the previous five renewal projects combined. The stated goal was to make the land more marketable to developers by clearing badly deteriorating housing in the area, hoping that a blank slate would bring investment back to the inner city. The clearance also intentionally created a racial buffer zone, which reinforced the city's commitment to restrict and segregate housing in the African American community (Honer, 2015).

Eventually, the city cleared K-3 and built several private housing developments. The experience of K-3 exposed existing racial inequalities and the city's reluctance to address those inequalities. The K-3 clearance project exacerbated inequalities experienced by Inner Core residents by allowing complete deterioration of the neighborhood without providing adequate relocation to K-3 residents (Honer, 2015, p.34). The Inner Core because increasingly segregated through the 1950s and 1960s due to housing discrimination and population migrations. It was estimated in 1959 that 90% of Milwaukee's non-white population lived in the area (Honer, 2015). Thus, segregation was achieved.

The continuance of segregation and dislocation of African Americans into more substandard housing demonstrates the divergent interests at work with the interests of the powerful being upheld. White city officials, realtors, property owners, and many white residents identified with segregation as a goal while most African Americans viewed access to equal opportunity as a goal. Some Blacks would have easily

accepted segregation if it was not combined with employment and housing discrimination that resulted in inadequate, substandard housing, and low-paying menial employment or long-term unemployment. This racial segregation was intended to exclude African Americans from exercising their full rights as citizens, from being eligible for and deserving of access to opportunity, and for having their legitimate concerns heard and addressed. This pattern of oppression by a racial hierarchy has been continued from the writing of the Constitution and continues today.

While most of the families displaced were larger low-income families, the city constructed housing in the K-3 area was for smaller moderate-income families. The city achieved its goal of developing 985 new dwelling units in the K-3 but failed to address the needs of African American families. Thousands of Black residents were forced to leave their homes receiving little, if any, compensation, or assistance in relocating or in finding suitable alternative housing. While 10,000 housing units were demolished, the Hillside Terrace, a low-income housing project, was the only project constructed to provide housing to displaced residents and it contained significantly less than 10,000 units. Poor government decisions affected not just K-3 but the entire urban core, adversely impacting thousands of African American families (Honer, 2015).

The city did not develop proposals to construct scattered low-income public housing for the displaced. Because public housing would provide residences for African Americans, the white community vigorously opposed any new public housing being built in their neighborhood. The unwillingness of the Department of City Development and white Milwaukee residents to allow K-3 residents to locate into white neighborhoods caused increased transiency among Blacks and their use of temporary housing. The

city's strong opposition to public housing for more than two decades guaranteed an inadequate infrastructure for housing African Americans and demonstrated the ways in which systems of oppression utilize a racial hierarchy to perpetuate institutional racism.

The perpetuation of this oppression was an informed choice. Those in power could have chosen a different path that would have lessened the hardship experienced by African American residents. City leaders ignored the warning of impending problems in a 1960 report, which stated that "within a relatively short span of years it is anticipated that 6,000 families will be displaced by public action such as expressways, urban renewal, and through code enforcement. A substantial part of this displacement of people will occur in the inner core area where housing is already a serious problem and where mobility is restricted" (The Committee, 1960, p. 30). Despite this report, the City built senor housing instead of the much-needed scattered site public housing that would have integrated large minority families into white neighborhoods (Honer, 2015). Oppression was naturalized and normalized through a system approved of and supported by elected officials, industry officials, and the general public.

The story of K-3 demonstrates the ways in which government policies and individual actions play critical roles in sustaining institutional racism. The government and real estate associations directed actions that were supported by individual members of those entities and the general public. Both the state and the nation were pivotal in maintaining institutionalized racism. The failure of the K-3 project was a strong example of the interconnection between government power and oppression (Honer, 2015). What is often minimized and misaligned by the mainstream are the actions of resistance taken by the oppressed in the face of injustice. During much of the

urban renewal process, the voice of African Americans had been silenced, and politicians abdicated their responsibility to adequately represent the interests of their African American constituency. Blacks did not quietly accept the racialized social control directed toward them by the city government and some white residents. As Blacks have done throughout American history, Milwaukee Blacks exercised their individual and collective agency to counter the system of oppression used to marginalize them throughout the urban renewal process (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016).

For decades Blacks were governed by policies enacted by an all-white Common Council. The negative consequences Blacks experienced was in part due to a lack of political clout or quality representation in city government (Honer, 2015). The city's Common Council was integrated in 1956 when Attorney Vel Phillips became the first African American and the first woman elected to Milwaukee's Common Council. Alderwoman Phillips supported Mayor Zeidler's strategy of public housing constructed throughout the city. While Milwaukee had a fair housing law, it was very weak and did not cover all housing within the city. In 1962, Phillips introduced the Phillips Housing Ordinance, a bill that outlawed housing discrimination, to her peers in the Common Council. The bill was defeated 18–1 with only her vote in favor. From 1963 and 1967, Phillips reintroduced the fair housing bill three additional times, only to have it defeated each time.

The K-3 urban renewal project, conceived in 1958 but not implemented until 1967, catalyzed the Open Housing Marches. In 1967, Phillips and the Milwaukee NAACP Youth Council, along with their adviser, Father Groppi, joined forces to rally

support for the passing of an open housing bill and to generate opposition to the K-3 projects. To dramatize the open housing issue, the Youth Council organized marches across the 16th Street Bridge to the south side of the city for 200 consecutive days and was met at times by angry crowds who screamed, carried posters with racist messages, and threw eggs, rocks, and bottles at the marchers.

During the open housing marches, Milwaukee Chief of Police Harold Breier ordered all police officers assigned to protect the Youth Council not to wear their police badges so that they could not be identified if they were seen committing acts of police brutality. After the march on the second day, the Youth Council returned from the south side to the Freedom House which caught fire. Fortunately, everyone escaped safely. Many Youth Council members maintained that the fire was started when hostile police officers shot a tear gas canister into the house. The police prevented fire department staff from coming near the house until it was burned beyond repair (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016).

Brier's tenure as Police Chief was dangerous to Blacks because of his blatant racism against them and his maintenance of a racially segregated police force. Because of his political support from many white voters, most local and state officials did not challenge Brier's authority. Thus, the government hierarchy and many white constituents sanctioned police brutality during Brier's twenty-year tenure as the Chief from 1964 – 1984. Institutional policies and public prejudice worked collectively to suppress the agency of African Americans (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016).

Despite the violence directed toward them by the public and the police, Youth Council members and their supporters marched for 200 consecutive nights between

August 1967 and March 1968 and used the boycott to hurt the city financially, all to create pressure, to get an open housing law enacted. Shortly after the assassination of civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the federal government passed an open housing law. A few days later, on April 30, 1968, the Milwaukee Common Council finally moved to pass a city-wide open housing ordinance stronger than the federal law (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2016).

Highway Construction and the Destruction of Bronzeville

In the post-World War II era, many urban communities in the United States initiated freeway construction to ease traffic congestion, increase economic capacity, alleviate population concentration, and suppress urban decay decline in Midwest industrial cities (Niemuth, 2014). The passage of Interstate Highway Act of 1956 provided federal funding for urban centers such as Milwaukee to construct highway systems. Planners in federal and local governments set efficient highways as a priority. In many United States cities including Milwaukee, the accepted strategy was for the U. S. highway system to cut through the African American community rather than be built around urban populations. This facilitated the movement of white suburbanites and their wealth back to the city (Niemuth, 2014).

In the 1960s, the city faced decisions similar to those made regarding urban renewal. Once again, Black community residents were concerned that the highway construction plan selected by government leaders would be invasive to the community. Civic leaders were critical, stating that the lack of forethought in developing highway plans was “Similar to the lack of forethought given to dual renewal projects that displaced African Americans without adequate, available and affordable housing, public

and private" (Niemuth, 2014; The Committee, 1960). Execution of the highway project confirmed the lack of concern that the city placed on the health, welfare, and financial stability of its Black residents.

City leaders and highway planners were warned of the extreme hardship constructing the highway through the Black community would cause. Officials were alerted to the fact that construction would significantly diminish the amount of residential space in neighborhoods where overcrowding was already a concern. In fact, of the estimated 148.8 acres of land that would be used in the highway project, the accepted plan would use 95 acres of residential land and only 1.53 of vacant land (Niemuth, 2014; The Committee, 1960).

DeLeuw, Cather, and Company submitted an alternative highway construction plan to the City that would have caused minimal destruction to the community; displaced relatively few residents; and aligned with the city's population patterns and natural geography by building freeways in open areas, county park land, and along the lakefront (Niemuth, 2014). However, in 1962, when highway construction began in the African American community, the most destructive highway construction plan was implemented. City officials failed to listen to the voices and concerns of African American residents; they also failed to be the voice and the representative of their African American constituents. Alderpersons neglected to demonstrate concern or take actions to prevent the major upheaval, displacement, and destruction from occurring. Rather than voice concerns about the social and economic impact of displacing Black residents for urban renewal and highway projects, these leaders justified their decisions based on the city's priority of eliminating blight in the community (Riordan, 2016). City

leaders intentionally chose the Highway 43 construction plan that had the greatest negative impact on African American residents and neighborhoods, and that reinforced the city's established patterns of racial segregation (Riordan, 2016**).**

Highway 43 was constructed from 1962 – 1968 through the heart of Bronzeville, the center of Black life and entertainment in Milwaukee. This construction had devastating consequences for African American individuals, families, businesses, and the community. Though African Americans accounted for less than 10% of the city population when construction began of the North-South Highway now called Highway 43, they were more than half of the people displaced by the construction of Milwaukee's highway system in the 1960s (Niemuth, 2014; Riordan, 2016). By the end of the highway construction through the Inner Core in 1968, 8,535 housing units had been destroyed in the African American community, and 13,000 people had been displaced. In a demonstration of total disregard for the health and safety of African American residents, only 1,198 new housing units were built as viable replacements. As was the tradition in the city, displaced African American families faced a housing shortage in the segregated part of Milwaukee in which they were allowed to live (Niemuth, 2014). Local and state government failed to take responsibility for relocation or compensation of dislocated families. The Milwaukee County Expressway Commission Relocation Division provided relocation assistance by providing only $200 to eligible residents. The dismal and inadequate government responses to families displaced by these projects indicated there was no real desire to help African Americans who lived in targeted neighborhoods (Niemuth, 2014).

Urban renewal and highway construction gave city leaders the opportunity to gain control of the section of the city inhabited primarily by African Americans. With this control, they could transform the environment to suit their interests with little accountability to Black residents. Government interests did not converge with the interests of the African American community. The goal was not to improve the African American community; government interests centered on increasing tourism and employment in Milwaukee, attracting white residents back to the city from the suburbs, and revitalizing the downtown district.

Rather than utilize these projects to meet the needs of its Black residents and to improve their living conditions, the city chose to continue to reinforce racist policies of segregation, containment, and control over Black lives. Construction of Highway 43 clearly defined the part of the city in which African Americans would be permitted to reside. This result was not an accident but rather a well- planned and orchestrated strategy that the city and powerful white elites had worked to achieve for years. "Freeway construction was the culmination of six decades of efforts to control and confine Milwaukee's rapidly growing African American population. With the placement of the freeway system roughly along the Menomonee River Valley and the Milwaukee River, it reinforced the barriers that had been established by realtors, politicians, and private agreements" (Niemuth, 2014). As a result, the freeways fortified the city's ability to ensure residential segregation and the exclusion of African Americans. City officials blatantly imposed racism through a system of oppression that differentiated African Americans as the "Other," an Outsider meriting exclusion from mainstream Milwaukee and ineligible to receive the same rights and benefits of community citizens. The

policies and practices of city leaders regarding these major initiatives demonstrate the ways in which racism is manifested and how systems of oppression are maintained.

Mayoral Response to Violence and Poverty

Historically, the criminal justice system has been used to reinforce racism and sanction illegal, oppressive acts conducted in mainstream institutions. Milwaukee has a well-documented history of controversial actions by members of law enforcement, sparking public outrage in the Black community and police support among many whites. This was the case in the summer of 1959 when Sylvia Fink, a white woman, was murdered in her home by Roscoe Simpson, an African American man. The next day, the police killed Simpson. These two killings brought racial tensions to a fever pitch in the city, with Blacks and whites fearing violent retaliation from each other (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2016). Also, in 1959, twenty-two-year-old Daniel Bell was shot by police when he was fleeing from his car because he had a broken taillight. Many Black citizens were outraged about the police shooting of Bell and the Milwaukee Police Department's attempt to cover it up. In response, Reverend Raymond L. Lathan, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, a fast-growing African American congregation, organized a "prayer march." The march was canceled at the urging of the mayor who feared a riot similar to those occurring in other major urban communities across the country (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2016).

Concerned by the inaction of local Black leaders and the conservativeness of some local Black institutions, Calvin Sherard, and several of his co-workers, created an inquiry group called Citizens to Protest the Case of Daniel Bell (University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, 2016). The fate of Black men in the criminal justice system demonstrates

the categorization, differentiation, and abuse of power that results in legalized oppression and sanctioned murder.

In response to police violence, racial tensions, and protests, Mayor Frank Zeidler initiated the Mayor's Study Committee on Social Problems in the Inner Core Area of the City. The Committee focused on identifying social problems in the Inner Core and making suggestions to remedy these problems. The Committee's views were expressed in the 1960 publication of "The Final Report of the Mayor's Study Committee on Social Problems in the Inner Core Area of the City," commonly known as the Zeidler Report (The Committee, 1960). The report linked the problems experienced by Milwaukee's African American population with the breakdown of the traditional family structure in the Black community.

A recommendation of the Zeidler Study Committee was the creation of the Social Development Commission (SDC). The SDC was established in 1963 by state legislation (section 66.433) as a quasi-public intergovernmental agency created jointly by the City and County of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Board of School Directors, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and United Way. As a part of President Johnson's War on Poverty and Equal Opportunity Act, the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County subsequently passed ordinances creating SDC as the community action agency for Milwaukee County and described its purpose as "to study analyze and recommend solutions for major social, economic and cultural problems which affect people residing or working within the municipality" (Blanks, 2015). The SDC was given the flexibility to identify structural issues as potential solutions.

Initially, the decisions that SDC leadership made reinforced white superiority. The first executive director of the organization was white, and its original board was predominantly white, married, male, middle aged, and middle income. During its early years, many of the white Board members blocked the inclusion of members representing residents in poverty (Braun, 2001). African Americans objected to the lack of racial diversity in the composition of staff and the board. Increasingly, leaders from Milwaukee's African American community demanded that politicians include low-income residents in the political decision-making process (Braun, 2011).

One month after the SDC was formed, the racist remarks of Fred Lins, a County representative on the SDC board, entangled the agency in controversy and a confrontation with the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Lins remarked that the SDC should try to find a solution to prevent "the ignorant poor" from migrating to Milwaukee. Furthermore, referring to the fact that his teenage son had been recently beaten by two minorities, he declared, "Negros look so much alike that you cannot identify the ones that committed the crime…an awful mess of them has an IQ of nothing" (Braun, 2001, p.30). These remarks from a Board member representing an anti-poverty organization shocked and appalled many Milwaukee residents, especially African Americans. CORE reacted to Lins' comments by staging sit-ins and protests during which twenty-six CORE members were arrested. In spite of CORE's protest, Lins retained his seat on the SDC board, and Mayor Maier would not denounce Lin or his comments. Because of Maier's inaction, CORE staged a sit-in at the mayor's office (Braun, 2011). A group of 34 prominent African American leaders repeated Lin's comments and criticized the slow response of the mayor and other white leaders to the

needs of African Americans. These African American leaders demanded that city end housing and employment discrimination. When Lins resigned from the SDC board later that year, he cited poor health as the reason (Braun, 2001).

Another issue that damaged SDC's relationship with the Black community was its violation of the federal Office of Equal Opportunity's (OEO) maximum feasible participation requirement, which mandated that community action agencies have equal representation of public, private, and low-income Board representation. Many of the white members of the SDC board blocked the inclusion of representation of the poor on the Board (Braun, 2001). Mayor Henry Maier and County Executive John Doyne attempted to prevent maximum feasible participation which prompted low-income residents and community leaders to ask the OEO for assistance. In 1966, OEO officials directed SDC to add representatives of the poor to its Board; SDC ignored the directive. Black community activists brought SDC's continued violation of the directive to OEO's attention, and SDC was required to diversify its Board immediately. The SDC board increased from ten to twenty-one members and included several members who represented residents living in poverty. The changes in the makeup of the SDC had been recommended by low-income residents in 1964 (Braun, 2001).

The expansion of democratic participation and political access for African Americans during Milwaukee's civil rights era resulted in the transformation of the SDC. Donald Sykes, an African American, was hired as the new executive director. The SDC became one of the most powerful Black-led organizations in Milwaukee.

Black Population Growth and Systems of Oppression

The systems of oppression discussed in this chapter were designed to control the African American population, segregate Black from white citizens and create inequality based on race. As the chart below illustrates, the Black population was a fraction of the white population. However, as discussed in this chapter the growth of the Black population from 1930 to 1970 spurred the evolution of systems of oppression.

Table 4.1 Black Population Growth in the City of Milwaukee, 1930 – 1970

Year	Total Population	Black Population	% Black pop.	% Increase in Black Pop.
1930	578,249	7,501	1.29%	236*
1940	587,472	8,821	1.50	18
1950	637,392	21,772	3.40	147
1960	741,324	62,458	8.42	187
1970	717,372	105,088	14.65	68

Source on page 16: United States Census Population (Riordan,2016)

Section Five: Deconstructing A System of Oppression: Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant Program's Community Organizing Initiative

The goal of this dissertation is to deconstruct how a system of oppression operates by synthesizing theories and concepts contained in Critical Theories of Race and the concepts of framing and counter-framing. Key steps of deconstruction include identifying how categorization and differentiation take place through discourse and practice. Critical Race Theorists assert that "our social world, with its rules, practices and assignments of prestige and power is not fixed, rather, we construct it with words, stories, and silence" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 108). Mainstream American discourse frames African Americans as inferior. Racism fosters discourse that supports practices which perpetuate injustice, inequality, and oppression. These discourses and practices strengthen white superiority and justify maintenance of a system in which African Americans are exploited and oppressed. (Goss, 2015; Warren & Mapp, 2011) Racism is deeply embedded into the fabric of America through programs, practices, institutions, and structures. This aggregate ensures social and racial order that sustains white oppression of Blacks. (Goss, 2015; Warren & Mapp, 2011).

Because of the pervasive policies, practices, and narratives that perpetuate racism, the powerful do not have to speak in racial terms. Rather, rhetoric is used to frame African Americans as scapegoats, framing the failure of the government to achieve critical outcomes as the fault of African American citizens. Despite these racist actions and negative framing, African Americans are neither submissive nor hegemonic. African Americans have always had to "carefully navigate the spaces between 'deference and defiance.' The submission to white rule in the Jim Crow era

was a façade" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 194). Black people have a "fighting spirit that needed only a viable outlet to demonstrate and to express itself in subtle ways every day." (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 104) Throughout American history, African Americans have utilized counter knowledge, provided a counter narrative and resisted oppression to maintain the African tradition of self-help, collective responsibility, unity, and purpose. However, these traditions are ignored and underutilized by a government that unwittingly engages in solipsism, unable to see beyond its narrow world view or its self-interests. By doing so, the government maintains its power and privilege, weakens tenuous ties with the African American community, and squanders opportunities to value the knowledge and traditions of African Americans. This negatively affects the government's ability to achieve positive outcomes, to significantly improve the health and stability of the African American community, and to strengthen the larger community. Perhaps, that is by design. It is this tension, this strained dynamic between oppressive systems of government and the counter-knowledge and resistance of African Americans that is at the heart of this dissertation. The City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant program's Community Organizing contract is used as a case study to identify and discuss these dynamics.

On the surface the CDBG Program can appear racially benign, a well-intentioned effort to improve neighborhoods mired in poverty. The program exceeds its goals each year, signaling to some that it effectively addresses critical needs in Milwaukee's central city. This research demonstrates the ways in which a system of oppression exists in an environment where goals are achieved and the makeup of

the City government is more racially diverse than in the past. In doing so, it also demonstrates how increased representation of oppressed groups does not automatically end a system of oppression. Representation is important; it reserves a seat at the table of power, it provides a voice that can speak on behalf of the underrepresented and disenfranchised, it promotes greater understanding of the African American community. But representation alone is not sufficient to change racial hierarchies or the decision-making processes within those hierarchies. Representation does not ensure inclusion of African American residents in key decision-making processes, increase equity in the distribution of resources, ensure the utilization of culturally competent ideologies and strategies, or guarantee direct investment in the Black community. Representation does not automatically resolve the myriad of problems faced by African Americans and cultivated by decades of ineffective government interventions.

I contend that many government officials, regardless of race, find it difficult to recognize the existence of covert racism and the damage done by a system of oppression in a government- sponsored and -sanctioned community development initiative. There are many elements that have contributed to the generation and maintenance of a system of oppression that substantially and negatively impacts Milwaukee's African American community. This system is based on resource allocation, ideology and strategy, the use of nonprofit intermediates, and outcomes that reinforce racism, inequality, and exclusion. Thus, the system sustains racism as an endemic force woven into city government, making that racism difficult to identify and address.

This is reflected in past and current policies that sustain a process of primarily funding white-led organizations that act as intermediaries. These policies and procedures protect these organizations and the maintenance of white privilege. While the program is framed as community organizing, it promotes surveillance and exacts outcomes that focus on decreasing crime rather than eradicating structural issues perpetuated by decades of racism. These methods are used to ensure that African Americans remain relegated to second-class citizenship, labeled as inferior sub-humans, and exposed to exploitation, oppression, and subordination Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

The executive branch of the City of Milwaukee's government structure is led by the Mayor as the Chief Executive. The Mayor's office has several departments, including the Department of Administration, and the Community Development Grant Administration Division. The CDGA administers the CDBG program, which includes managing the proposal process, making recommendations to the Common Council regarding funding allocations, and ensuring that funded organizations comply with federal and local rules and achieve outcomes.

The Common Council, the legislative branch of city government, consists of fifteen members elected to four-year terms. A Common Council President is also elected to a four-year term. The Common Council has several standing committees, one of which is the Community and Economic Development Committee, which receives the CDBG recommendations from the Mayor's administrative staff and approves or rejects recommendations (city.milwaukee.gov).

The current composition of the Common Council includes an African American President, and 40% of the Common Council elected members are African American. The Chair of the Community and Economic Development Committee is African American, and several members of the committee are African American as well. While the Mayor is white, the head of the Department of Administration and the head of that Department's Community Development Grant Administration are African American. All are well-respected in the African American community. The reality is that a racial hierarchy of power exists and has existed in Milwaukee city government since its inception even though the representation of African Americans has increased significantly since Vel Phillips, the first African American Alderperson, was elected in 1956. While African American Alderpersons have spoken out at times to call attention to issues of racial disparity, social injustice, and the need for racial equality, they also participate, perhaps unknowingly, in maintaining many policies and procedures that reinforce systems of oppression.

This research contends that, despite the fact that African American representation is improving in Milwaukee's city government, the Community Organizing program in CDBG reproduces and normalizes the framing of African Americans as subordinate, inferior, and unworthy. Historically African Americans have been subjected to racial categorizations as inferior, while they function within a system of oppression that utilizes the dominant structures of racism, capitalism, and paternalism. African Americans are differentiated and penalized by American society, which privileges whiteness. These structures exert power and control over African Americans through the assigning of privilege and penalty based on race.

Social and economic differentiation through race is achieved through racialized narratives focused on characterizing African American culture, family structures, and behavior as deficient. Racialization also occurs through practices of systemic marginalization, racialized social control, endemic racism, coercion, repression, and discrimination. African Americans are differentiated and further penalized in the CDBG community organizing program in a variety of ways: limited engagement with Black citizens in decision making, funding of primarily white-led organizations, limited competition in grant-making, implementation of criminological ideology and strategies, and achievement of transactional outcomes. Simultaneously, this system maintains the self-interest of whites by increasing the allocation of privilege to whites and the framing of whites as superior.

The City of Milwaukee is an ideal focal point for this research because of its failure, like most urban centers, to effectively address structural issues that perpetuate racism. The City has consistently linked African American poverty with African American crime, family disorganization, and social disorder, as a justification for the city's failure to eradicate racial inequality. Excerpts of a 2008 Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Report, which was included in the City of Milwaukee Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) document, "DRAFT" 2015-2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy, indicated that economic development in the Black community could not take place until crime was reduced. In the 1960s, Mayor Frank Zeidler assessed the problems plaguing the African American community and cited Blacks as the cause of the problems in the Inner Core (The Committee, 1960, p. 2). In the 1960s, Zeidler's views connected with the national discussion about welfare, the role

of cultural or structural issues in generating inequality in African American communities, and causal factors in the reproduction of generational poverty. In 1965, Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan released a report called, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action” (Moynihan Report, 1965). While Moynihan acknowledged the effect of structural racism, he focused on cultural descriptions that demeaned African Americans and characterized the African American community as disorganized and dysfunctional.

Moynihan, Zeidler, and current mayor Tom Barrett all point to perceived deficiencies of the Black community as the leading causes for Black poverty rather than to structural racism, allowing for the continued normalization of endemic racism. The chart below highlights rhetoric used by Moynihan and the Zeidler and Barrett administrations to discuss the African American community. While the language differs, the core themes are that African American families are dysfunctional, African Americans engage in inappropriate social behavior, and that crime is largely committed by members of the African American community. From Moynihan in President Johnson’s Administration to the Zeidler Administration in Milwaukee government in the 1950s and 1960s, to the Barrett Administration today, a narrative is used to negatively frame African Americans, limit government’s responsibility in ameliorating racism, and justify the elites’ inability to resolve problems of poverty, crime and segregation. These narratives provide a foundation for the perpetuation of systems of oppression, negative framing of Blacks, and the maintenance of white privilege. In a capitalistic society, the benefits for whites to sustain racism are huge. These narratives continue the pattern initiated during slavery, sharecropping, convict leasing, and peonage to frame Blacks as

inferior in order to justify systems of oppression and to gain a capitalitic advantage for institutions controlled by white elites.

Table 5.1: Issues Cited in the Negative Framinig of African Americans		
Moynihan	**Zeidler Administration**	**Barrett Administration**
Dysfunctional families, disorganized matriarchal families, breakdown of the family, ineffective culture, Black male behavior as "cocking roosters"; non-marital childbearing, child abandonment, child abuse, tangle of pathology.	Problem families, fragmented families; parenting quality, Black male unemployment, unwed mothers, blight, single-parent families, non-custodial fathers, welfare recipients, concentration of low-income families, Blacks obstruction of police	Behavioral disorders, physical disorders, social disorder, blight, concentrated poverty, disadvantaged, weak social control, delinquency, unlawful activities, high rate of violent crime.

The language used by Moynihan and the Zeidler and Barrett administrations maintains the categorization of African Americans as the "Other" which is used to validate the racialization of poverty, crime, and family dysfunction and to frame African Americans as inferior, unworthy, and incompetent. This frame permeates many interactions between African Americans and governmental institutions, including the City of Milwaukee, its administration of the CDBG program, and its administration of the community organizing program within CDBG. An anlysis of the CDBG community organizing program illustrates how the consistent framing of African Americans as members of dysfunctional families that exhibit criminal and anti-social behavior sets the foundation for the operation of a program that perpetuates oppression sanctioned by a racial heirarchy. This legitimizes limiting the allocation of resources, power, and

privilege to African Americans and justifies the continued penalization of Blacks based on race. The resultant programs implemented to decrease racial disparities in the African American community are dependent on the benevolence of white elites and maintain the power and control of those elites.

This discourse is used to pressure African Americans into submission, and to strip them of their culture, history, and identify. This racial discourse excludes the voices, perspectives and values of African Americans and supports maintenance of white superiority. This racial discourse is rooted in mainstream institutions (economic, political, educational, and social) which maintain the racial order that relegates African Americans to the bottom of society. False narratives about the character and behavior of African American individuals and families provide racialized evidence used to justify this racial order. Through this process African Americans are differentiated and categorized as an inferior race that is liberated not oppressed by this racial order. Thus, the rhetoric of white superiority describes racism as benevolence and promotes white superiority as acts of normalization and acculturation required to provide order and structure for dysfunctional African Americans (Delgado & Stefancic, 2011).

The negative framing of African Americans justifies the marginalization and exclusion of the Black voice, Black knowledge, and Black participation in key decision-making roles. However, Critical Race Theorists assert that those subjected to racism on a regular basis understand it better than those who perpetuate it. While ideologies developed from white worldviews often do not fully acknowledge racism, many African Americans have gained experiential knowledge about racism from everyday occurrences (Sleeter, 2017). Because the voices of the oppressed are seldom

acknowledged or valued, it is extremely useful to hear opinions from oppressed groups to confirm or counter the narratives so often conveyed by the dominant group.

Citizen Participation in the Community Development Block Grant Program

The CDBG program provides an opportunity to assess the ways in which government decisions, policies, practices regarding citizen participation, funding, competition, service delivery, strategies, and outcomes serve as inclusionary or exclusionary tactics that perpetuate a paternalistic system of oppression. For instance, while African American residents possess valuable counter knowledge gained through experience and culture, mainstream society does not always view this counter knowledge as valuable. Thus, the inclusion of African Americans in program planning and evaluation roles are often minimized. Still, the City of Milwaukee touts the involvement of citizens in the CDBG process, specifically in public hearings. The city's Citizen Participation Plan requires public hearings to obtain citizen input on funding proposals and requires resident involvement at all stages of development, including the Consolidated Plan and Annual Funding Allocation Plan (FAP), and reviews of proposed activities and program performance. In 2014, during formulation of the 2015 – 2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy, the Community Development Grants Administration (CDGA) worked to ensure that citizens were aware of the City's plans regarding CDBG and to provide citizens with the opportunity to provide their opinions about funding priorities. In a 2016 interview, Steve Mahan, Director of the city's Community Development Grant Administration, indicated that the city makes a concerted effort to involve residents in this process. The staff member further claimed

the city worked to provide more opportunities than required by HUD and possibly more than many other cities as well.

During 2014, CDGA held approximately 25 community meetings throughout Milwaukee at the offices of many community-based organizations. They notified residents of the meetings through email, newspapers, and word of mouth. CDGA also collaborated with CDBG funded organizations to canvas door-to-door in the neighborhoods, discussing issues with residents and conducting surveys on community priorities. The city's Department of City Development also conducted many community meetings, focus groups, and face-to-face surveys over several years as part of the city's comprehensive planning process.

The CDGA sponsored a Consolidated Plan Task Force featuring the broad-based participation of residents, community leaders, faith-based institutions, businesses, schools, and neighborhood groups. The task force assisted in the formulation of the goals and objectives of this plan. While there was significant cross-sector representation on the Strategic Planning Committee that developed the 2015 – 2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy, fewer than 25% of the individuals listed in the city's plan as having been consulted regarding the development of the plan were African American. This racial mismatch in representation excludes African Americans from having their voices heard regarding major decisions that impact them. Limiting the participation of the oppressed in these key decision-making roles maintains hierarchies of power. white elites maintain a system of oppression while appearing benevolent. However, their decisions are paternalistic in that they make decisions for and exert control over the Black body. African Americans can choose

to provide their experiential knowledge to inform other key decision makers regarding the inherent racism often entrenched in seemingly "benevolent" policies, actions and systems. Representation by African Americans in key roles in the planning and development of the CDBG plan could have a positive impact. Conversely, these representatives can choose to support the existing norms, curry favor with the elites in power, and serve to minimize the concerns of the oppressed. Representation can provide a foundation on which more critical elements of equality and inclusion are created and enforced. While representation is not a panacea for the issues that sustain a system of oppression, the value of inclusion is significant given decades of government and mainstream exclusion of African Americans in the making of decisions that impact their lives, families, and communities. Still, increased representation does not guarantee that a focused approach will be implemented to identify and eradicate policies, practices, and procedures critical to the perpetuation of systems of oppression. The engagement of African American residents can be used to signal resolution of oppression when in fact, racism remains entrenched. Thus, representation alone is not the answer for the unmasking and deconstruction of systems of oppression.

The city can claim resident engagement while failing to value Black voices, experience, or knowledge. Excluding the Black voice allows for the framing of African Americans as reactors, rather than actors actively involved in shaping the world around them. This false narrative ignores Black agency and activism. White privilege allows this process to unfold oblivious to how different worldviews contribute to effective decision making and how the inclusion of African Americans can benefit

the process in meaningful ways. In meetings held by the CDGA staff and the Community and Economic Development Committee of the Common Council, I observed a specific pattern year after year. Leaders of CDBG funded organizations speak on behalf of the good work their agencies have achieved, thank the committee for the funding, indicate the need for continued funding of their organization, and organize residents to speak on the effectiveness of the organization in providing services to their neighborhoods. At times, leaders of unfunded organizations request consideration of their organization for funding or a change in an administration or Common Council decision. Other residents may speak on the need for the city to address specific community needs. However, the main role that African Americans play in the CDBG process is not as members of the planning team or as leaders of funded agencies, but as recipients of services, which are provided primarily by white-led organizations. The voice of African Americans is used to confirm the superiority and benevolence of whites in their willingness to act as missionaries in their quest to rescue Blacks through the provision of services. The assets and knowledge held by Black residents are not sought, acknowledged, or validated through this process.

African Americans we interviewed expressed concern about the under-representation of African Americans at the table where resource allocation and strategic decisions regarding community development are made. As one African American organizational leader stated:

> "We bring the community to the table when things are already in place and then we say 'oh ok well what you think about this'? It's never a conversation like, 'We want to involve you all in the

beginning process because we may think we know what's important but you all know best" (CBO Leader 1, 2016).

The data suggests that the engagement of African American residents in the CDBG process is limited and superficial. The voices of African Americans are not valued and thus are not reflected in CDBG plans, priorities, and operations. While the city's community meetings are facilitated to engage residents in providing their input into CDBG activities, residents are not asked for their ideas but rather to rank the pre-established CDBG funding priorities. As the chart below (Table 4.11) illustrates, this is a process to confirm decisions already made by CDBG officials with input from the Strategic Planning Committee. The categories were already established by the city which provided residents with a forced choice of selections from the categories the city identified as important, reinforcing their decisions and their knowledge of community needs. This process limited the transfer of counter-knowledge by Black residents and prevented the city from knowing whether their categories were aligned with the priorities of Black residents.

Table 5.2 Results of Surveys of Community Residents and Stakeholders	
Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area #1	
Funding category	**Total**
Housing – NIP Forgivable loans to very low-	**511**
Housing Production Pool	**478**
Housing Rental Rehab Projects Matching grants	**524**
Housing – Owner Occupied: Low interest Loans and	**515**
Employment Services	**511**
Economic Development / Business Assistance	**488**
Crime Prevention / Community Organizing and Planning	**502**
Youth Programs	**505**
Senior Services	**498**
Homebuyer Counseling	**490**
Other	**4**
Total	**5,026**

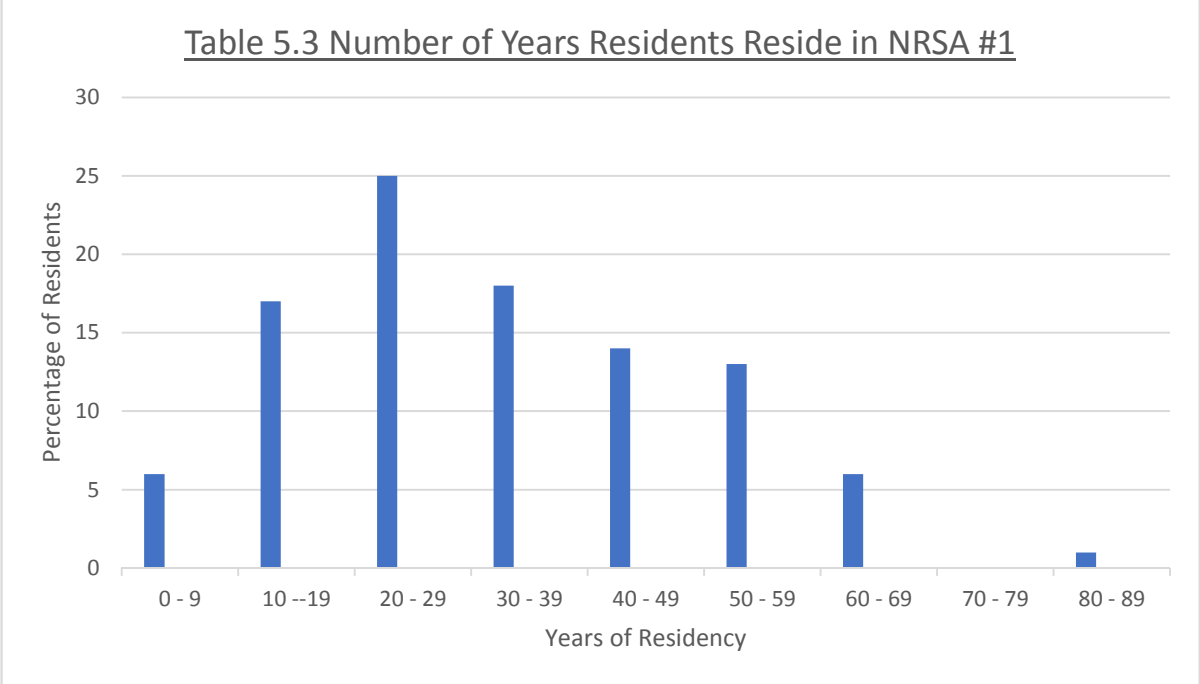
Source: Milwaukee CDBG "Draft" 2015 – 2019 Five Year Consolidated Plan and Strategy

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation defines citizen participation that provides residents opportunities to complete surveys and attend informative meetings as tokenism. Arnstein also defines citizen participation on committees that provide input with little guarantee that the committee's input will be heeded as tokenism. Conversely, Arnstein identifies partnerships, such as the city's public/private partnership with agencies that manage programs funded by CDBG, as a base of power and control. Based on Arnstein's analysis of citizen participation, Milwaukee African Americans are rountinely engaged in token citizen participation while primarily white-led organizations are at the table of power and control, in partnership with the city through their receipt of community organizing funds and management of community organizing programs.

The Counter-Knowledge of African American Residents

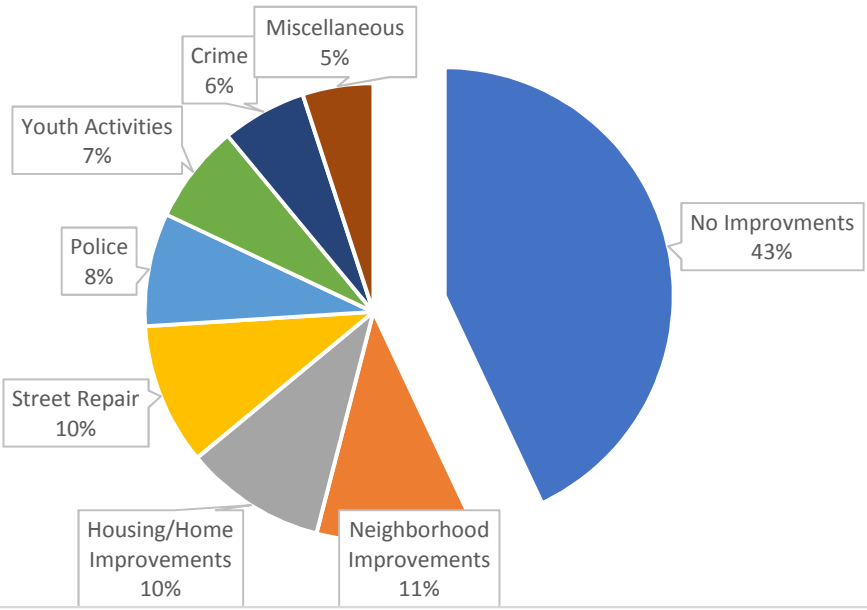
While Arnstein's argument regarding effective citizen participation is important, I would argue that valuing the counter knowledge and counter-narratives that African American residents can provide is important as well. The African American community possesses an abundance of counter-knowledge, history, and tradition that often goes untapped by the powerful, by white elites who adhere to a view of white superiority and a narrow world view. As Sampson has indicated, residential tenure and homeownership as critical factors in promoting the collective efforts needed by neighbors to maintain social control (Sampson, 2011). Thirty percent of the residents we interviewed were homeowners. The 90 Black residents we interviewed in 2016 had lived in NRSA #1 for a total of 2,966 years; the average length of residency was 33 years. This data suggests less transiency in the Black community than is often

associated in research regarding African American residents and suggests a high level of emotional attachment and personal investment in the neighborhood. This longevity could also confirm that poverty, racism, unemployment, and segregation continue to restrict African American residential choices today. The wealth of life experiences, spatial and cultural knowledge, and worldviews of the residents were invaluable to this research and could inform government decisions that affect their lives. A resident reiterated the importance of learning from citizens by explaining, "You learn from the people that have been in the neighborhood for 20 years. They know what's going on" (Resident 1, 2018). The chart below illustrates the length of time 90 residents resided in NRSA #1 before their 2016 interview.



In contrast to the information provided by the CDBG funded organizations, the residents provided insight regarding their views about areas of neighborhood improvement and of neighborhood decline. When African American residents were asked open-ended questions about what improvements they had seen in their neighborhoods, they provided the responses illustrated in the chart below.

Table 5.4: Residents' Identification of Areas of Neighborhood Improvements n = 90

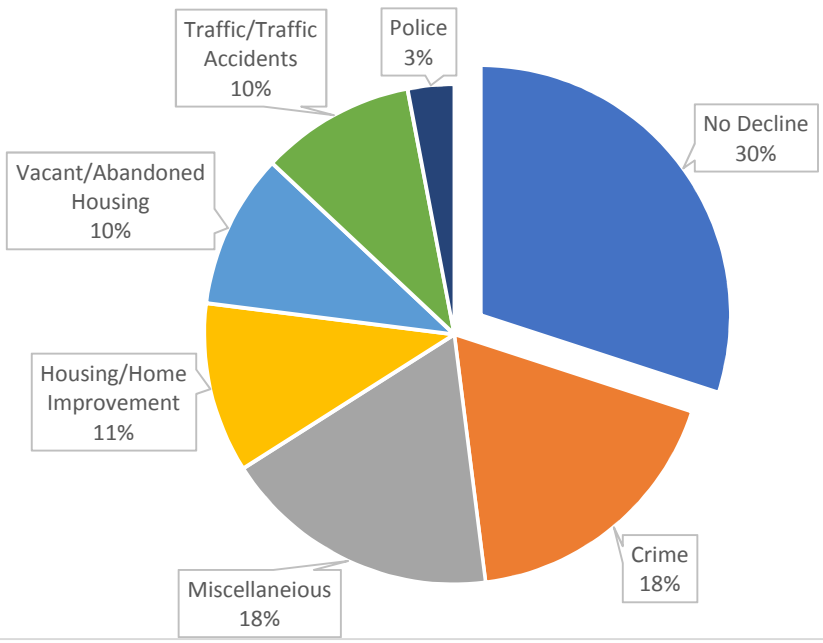


The improvements that residents cited focused on six areas, with 11% of the residents identifying neighborhood improvement, 10% identifying housing/home improvement, 10% identifying street repair, 8% identifying improved policing, 7%

identifying improvement in youth activities, and 6% identifying a decrease in crime. Some residents acknowledged outcomes that the CDBG funded organizations directed. For instance, a resident indicated that they "had a neighborhood clean-up and rehabbed some homes" (Resident 2, 2016). Another resident stated that the neighborhood improvement consisted of "fixing the street, that's it" Resident 3, 2016). A resident indicated that a "vacant lot was turned into a garden" (Resident 4, 2016). Some residents were attuned to a change in the level of crime, with one resident indicating that there was "more police presence, fewer break-ins." (Resident 5, 2016) Another resident indicated that "Crime has gotten better" (Resident 6, 2016). One resident was not impressed with area improvement telling us that "In twenty years, I haven't seen any improvements." Unfortunately, 43% of the residents agreed that they had not seen any improvements in their neighborhood. Residents provided miscellaneious responses including improvements in gentrification and business growth. Three residents did not comment, indicating that they were new to the neighborhood.

African American residents were also asked open-ended questions about any decline they had seen in their neighborhoods; their responses are illustrated in the chart below.

Chart 5.5 :Residents' Identification of Areas of Neighborhood Decline n = 90



The areas of neighborhood decline that residents cited focused on five topics with 18% of the residents identifying increased crime, 11% identifying housing/home improvements, 10% citing vacant/abandoned housing, 10% citing traffic/traffic accidents, and 3% identifying a decline in policing. Thirty percent indicated that there was no decline, often stating that things had stayed the same. The comments made regarding the issue of neighborhood decline were significant. One resident indicated that there was “more drug dealing, more prostitution, more gunshots, and not enough police patrols” (Resident 7, 2016). One resident discussed the fact that crime had increased significantly resulting in “less homeowners, depreciated values, and no neighborhood improvement” (Resident 8, 2016). Finally, a resident stated that “there are better conditions in white neighborhoods” (Resident 9, 2016). The miscellaneous

category included comments regarding the decline in youth activities/summer jobs, access to grocery stores/businesses, and parenting/supervision, as well as the closing of three MPS Schools, and increases in homelessness and adult unemployment. Three residents indicated that they were too new to the neighborhood to comment.

The opinions expressed by the residents indicate that more than 40% feel that improvements have not been made. Maintenance of the status quo is not to be celebrated. What is also informative is what is lacking from the comments. Residents commented primarily on quality of life issues much more than structural issues, such as education, employment, segregation, criminal justice, and racism. However, structural issues were identified as important when residents expressed their opinions regarding what causes poverty and crime which is discussed later in this chapter. Whether the views of African American residents differ from the views of mainstream is important because without a convergence of interest, it is unlikely that the powerful elites will take actions that meet the needs or address the interests of African American residents. This interview process provided African American residents an opportunity to give their opinions regarding conditions in their neighborhoods based on their knowledge and experience without being guided to reinforce mainstream perspectives or to validate government funding priorities. Critical Race Theorists find that the "centrality of experiential knowledge of historically marginalized groups is given little credence – individually and collectively" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2011 p. 291). A responsibility of Critical Race Theorist is to" decenter the common white, Western-European Christian male perspective and re-center the stories of African Americans" to identify effective methods to address issues impacting African Americans" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2011 p.

291). The valuing and utilization of the stories, experiences, and knowledge held by African Americans generate confidence, trust, and support by African Americans in government actions. This also provides critical information, seldom collected by government, which can be used to formulate more effective strategies that achieve higher quality outcomes. The failure of the city to utilize the counter-knowledge of African Americans is chronicled in Chapter Four, specifically regarding its implementation of Urban Renewal and Highway construction projects that drastically and negatively affected Milwaukee's African American community.

Ultimately, the power to shape and influence CDBG is held by the privileged, which is contrary to the concept of maximum feasible participation, an element of the Community Action era that preceded the development of the CDBG. Maximum feasible particiation aimed to provide citizens with opportunities to actively participate in the policy and operational decision making of organizations, exert control over some aspects of the organization, and participate in program delivery. However, many federal, state, and local elected officials did not value maximum feasible participation because it bypassed many government officials and directly provided local community action agencies (CAAs) and citizens with power and control. Thus, politicians revised the community action requirements to regain power and control over citizens, excluding them from the table of power and relegating them to token participation. Scholars (Nathan (1977), Kettl (1979), and Handley and Howell-Moroney (2010), have previously documented that even when CDBG administers had solicited citizen input there was little guarantee that this input would influence government decisions.

CDBG Funding of Community Organizing Program

A closer examination of a specific CDBG program provides the opportunity to analyze how a government system of oppression operates through funding of nonprofits as intermediaries providing services in the African American community. While the CDBG program has a multitude of services, this dissertation focuses specifically on the CDBG contract for Strategic Planning/Community Organizing/Crime Prevention collectively referred to as Community Organizing, which provides over $1 million annually in funding to community-based organizations. White-led organizations, defined as agencies in which the CEO is white, and the majority of Board members are white, receive the majority of the funding allocated to community- based organizations for community organizing in the African American community (see Table 5.6). The funding dynamic reflects the value placed on white leadership and maintains the dynamic of whites as superior and Blacks as subordinates or service recipients.

The two charts below demonstrate the levels of funding in 2016 received by organizations led by African Americans and whites. On the north side of Milwaukee, CDBG funds agencies to provide community organizing in 16 Neighborhood Strategic Planning Areas (NSPs). Using the 2016 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds, I developed the chart below to illustrate the level of funding received and the racial composition of the agency leadership for agencies that are funded to provide planning and community organizing in one or more Neighborhood Strategic Planning areas in NRSA #1.

Table 5.6 Leadership Composition of Funded Agencies in NRSA #1 Providing Strategic Planning in the 16 Neighborhood Strategic Planning areas (Executive and Board)

Agency Leadership Composition	Number of Agencies Funded	Number of NSPs allocated to agencies	Total Funding Allocation	
Agencies with Black Executive & Board	4	4	$180,000	(25%)
Agencies with Black Exec/Majority white Board	1	2	$ 90,000)	(13%)
Agencies with white Exec & Majority white Board	7	10	$450,000	(62%)
Total	12	16	$720,000	(100%)

Each of the four Black-led organizations, comprised of a Black CEO and a Board consisting of a majority of African American members, was funded to lead one NSP. These organizations received a total allocation of 25% of the funding. The agency with a Black executive and majority white Board was funded to lead two NSPs, receiving 13% of the funding. The seven white-led agencies were funded to lead ten NSPs for a total allocation of 62% of the funding. While the majority of residents in NRSA #1 are African American, the majority of organizations funded to deliver services in this grant were primarily white-led.

In 2016, each funded agency received $45,000 per year to perform community organizing services. Many of the funded agencies indicated that this level of funding was insufficient. My analysis of applications and budgets submitted by agencies funded to provide community organizing showed that most of the agencies budgeted the funds in the following manner: approximately $30,000 for staff, $8,000 for fringe benefits, and the balance for general services such as training, travel, printing, office supplies, and

administrative costs. Little, if any, money was invested into neighborhoods for community development. The city's decision to conduct community organizing with one organizer working in a large neighborhood with no capital resources to invest into the community demonstrates a lack of understanding and commitment to substantive, meaningful, community organizing and community development in the Black community. This underfunding of the program provides the city with the ability to take credit for implementation of community organizing and crime prevention initiatives without providing the necessary resources to enable these programs to be effective. Moreover, funding white-led organizations who make major decisions about the utilization of funds to organize the Black community illustrates a paternalistic frame in which Black agencies are not entrusted even with a relatively small amount of government funding.

The following chart focuses on all three areas of funding by CDBG for community organizing and crime prevention, which includes funding for a) the 16 NSPS, b) Community Partners, and c) the Crime Prosecution Unit (CPU). Using the 2016 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds, I developed the chart below to illustrate the funding allocated to organizations including all three components of the Community Organizing grant, and the racial composition of executive and board leadership.

Table 5.7 2016 Total Allocation for Community Organizing in NRSA #1 Including Community Partners and Community Prosecution Unit

Agency Leadership Composition	Number of Agencies Funded for NSPs	Number of Agencies for Community Partners & CPU*	Total Funding Allocated to Agencies
Agencies with Black Executive & Board	4	0	$180,000 (17%)
Agencies with Black Exec/white Board	1	0	$ 90,000) (8%)
Agencies with white Exec & white Board	7	1	$790,910 (75%)
Total	12	1	$1,060,910 (100%)

*The same agency receives funding for both Community Partners and the Crime Prosecution Unit.

As this chart shows,75% of the total funding in this category was awarded to agencies that did not have an African American executive director or a primarily African American board. Black-led organizations received less than twenty percent of the funding of the total grant. The CDBG funding process maintains white superiority through the unequal distribution of power, privilege, and material resources and protects the interest of the elites in power.

The framing of African Americans as the deficient, dysfunctional and criminalized "Other," is used to justify social control mechanisms, including paternalistic and benevolent measures that maintain a system of oppression. The issues of paternalism and social control emerged in conversations with African Americans regarding the preponderance of white-led organizations delivering services to the Black community, the lack of funding of Black-led organizations, and the lack of quality participation of Blacks in decision-making, leadership, or service delivery impacting the Black

community. Leaders of these organizations expressed great concern that not only are their agencies not valued but they are not included in the funding and service opportunities focused on service delivery in the African American community. One African-American executive contended, “I don’t believe Black organizations receive the same level of support that white organizations do. It’s as bad now as I have ever seen” (CBO Leader 1, 2016). Without this minimal funding, many Black-led organizations struggle to survive, have a limited staff, and need administrative support and training. Another leader of a Black-led organization stated, “It almost feels like a conscious effort to disempower” (CBO Leader 2, 2016). Whether or not this concern is accurate, there is a sense in the Black community that Black-led organizations are undervalued and discounted while white-led organizations are preferred. The fact that white-led organizations consistently receive most of the CDBG funding for community organizing in the Black community adds fuel to that perception, supporting the idea that the City channels funds to selected privileged organizations under the guise of community development.

African Americans are caught in the proverbial catch-22. Social welfare critics (Murray, 1984) argue that African Americans have become too dependent on government. However the government often funds white organizations to provide services to African Americans which has created a funding pattern the forces Black dependency on government and white-led organizations. African American residents and organizational leaders advocate for funding of Black-led organizations and direct investments in the Black community to empower the Black community. However, the efforts to increase Black reliance on government reflects a capitalistic approach in which

white–led organizations and government engage in a partnership to receive financial compensation at the expense of the Black community. The motivation for the maintenance of this subordinate relationship can be earnestly denied by government officials and leaders of white-led organizations. However, the motive is revealed through the use of a false narrative regarding Black inferiority; the seemingly well-intentioned efforts of whites to help African Americans but maintain the status quo, the framing of capitalism as a benevolent enterprise, and the maintenance of an exclusive worldview in which whites are superior, privileged, and powerful.

In contrast, the funding provided to the Southside's NRSA #2 is allocated to the Southside Community Center (SOC) to manage the NSPs. The SOC transitioned from being a white-led organization called the Southside Organizing Committee to the Latino-controlled Southside Community Center. The SOC which has a Latino CEO and a Board of predominantly Latino members serves NRSA #2, which is comprised of neighborhoods where the majority of the Milwaukee Latino population resides.

Competition for Funding

Many of the organizations funded by Community Organizing grants have received this funding for more than a decade through a Request for Proposal (RFP) grant process that appears competitive on paper but has remained fairly non-competitive in reality. Data drawn from public documents support the observation that CDBG has been a closed, non-competitive process. An analysis of the data indicates that the allocation process for the NSP areas has become more competitive and inclusive. In 2015, there was a competitive process for only 40% of the funding allocated for the NSPs in NRSA #1; in 2016, there was a competitive process for all 16

NSPs, the Community Partners, and the Community Prosecution Unit grants. In 2016, 15 organizations competed for these 18 grants. Two organizations each received 3 grant awards; 2 organizations each received 2 grant awards; 8 organizations each received 1 grant award, and 3 organizations did not receive any grant awards. Black-led organizations were among the agencies that received either one or no grant awards.

In this time period, one agency has received 40% of the total funding in the overall community organizing program, primarily through non-competitive processes. When in 2017 the city revised the Request for Proposal process for the Community Partners and Community Prosecution Unit funding, only the incumbent agency applied for the funds. Other organizations submitting applications were required to include a letter of support from Milwaukee HITDA and the Milwaukee Police Department. These law enforcement organizations are members of the incumbent agency's board along with the Mayor, County Executive, Sheriff, other law enforcement/ criminal justice leaders, and corporate entities, which gives the appearance that there is a conflict of interest and an implied preference for the incumbent. In this case, increased competition is suppressed even with the revised process.

In a capitalistic society, allocation and competition for funds help determine the winners, to whom the process allocates power and privilege, and the losers, to whom society assigns blame and penalty. The data above illustrates that the CDBG process is minimally competitive with the vast majority of funds allocated to white-led organizations serving neighborhoods that are primarily African American. The continued exclusivity of the process supports the perception that ensuring a competitive process has not been a high priority for the city in the allocation of these funds.

Although Black-led organizations are not the primary recipients of CDBG funding, many are part of an informal network of organizations that work in NRSA #1. However, some leaders of Black-led organizations that do not receive funding have indicated that they are asked to partner with CDBG funded organizations to increase resident attendance at meetings and to provide services at events. While they often contribute to these events, they receive no funding or recognition for doing so. A leader of a Black-led organization has often said that in community meetings, “the agencies that get the funding don’t do the work and the agencies that do the work don’t get the funding” (CBO Leader 4, 2016). This slogan has become something of a rallying cry, and many African American leaders of Black-led organizations repeat this slogan at meetings.

Policies, procedures, and priorities of the funder also can generate or suppress competition. Many organizations face barriers that prevent them from successfully competing for city contracts. Organization leaders who attended the presentation of Project Central Voice on March 6, 2018, suggested necessary policy changes to the process that include lowering the amount of insurance required to receive city funds and receiving timely reimbursements for services rendered. The federal government consistently has delayed funding the city for the CDBG program; the city may not receive the federal funds until the program has been operating for three to four months. Because the city expects funded organizations to operate the program at the start of the contract year, organizations may have to operate programs for several months before they receive payment. The delay in compensation creates a strain on Black-led organizations that receive city funding and dissuades others from even applying.

Jabril Faraj, a reporter from the Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service, interviewed several individuals who attended the Project Central Voice meeting and city officials as well. Steve L. Mahan, director of the city's Community Development Grants Administration, stated the city is in the same position having to operate the CDBG program without funding until it receives its award letter from the federal government. He said the process had been delayed for the last five years, adding, "I have no doubt that it's tough for smaller organizations, or larger ones for that matter" (Faraj. March 2018). This requirement serves as a financial barrier that precludes agencies from participating in city contracts.

Another major challenge Black-led organizations face is meeting the City's insurance requirement. According to Mahan, agencies that receive CDBG-funds must carry a minimum of $1 million in liability insurance and could be required to carry additional coverage depending on the type of work they do. Several leaders of Black-led organizations indicated this creates a barrier for smaller organizations to apply. Rogers stated that the Dominican Center paid $1,200 for liability insurance in 2017, including an additional $5,300 for workers' compensation insurance. Mahan said organizations do not have to carry insurance to apply for CDBG funds but must secure it before signing a contract. He said grants received from the Grants Administration could be used to pay insurance premiums (Faraj, March 13, 2018). Many small Black-led organizations do not have the funds to purchase the required insurance, especially in light of the significant delay in receiving their CDBG funding.

Many leaders of Black-led organizations have admitted that managing the administrative aspects of their organizations can be challenging. A leader of a Black-led

organization said, “We’re wearing too many hats. I much prefer to do services than record my financials” (CBO Leader 3, 2016). Leaders of Black-led organizations express confidence and pride in delivering direct services and interacting with residents. They identify the need to improve their organization’s administrative capacity in areas including budgeting, reporting, grant writing, and marketing. They also express a willingness and openness to learning. Another leader of an Black-led organization felt the problem was that “A lot of times the CDBG office only wants to deal with organizations who understand the type of paperwork that needs to be done… to send …back to the federal government saying this is what you’ve done with the resources” (CBO Leader 46, 2018). The lack of government’s willingness to engage in building the capacity of Black-led organizations signals a lack of understanding of the need to strengthen the Black community infrastructure and the value of investing directly into strengthening Black-led organizations. Reggie Moore, director of the City’s Office of Violence Prevention, said the biggest challenges for his office during the past two years were the “systems and processes” that make it difficult to work with smaller organizations. (Faraj, 2018). If addressed, these changes could empower the Black community, provide opportunities for Black-led organizations, and strengthen the Black community infrastructure.

While acknowledging that many Black organizations lack administrative capacity, African Americans also do not see a commitment on the part of the City to support their efforts to improve their administrative functioning. In a public meeting, Mahan indicated that the city had reduced the technical assistance it provides to nonprofits in part because of city staff’s assessment that too many nonprofits exist in Milwaukee. While

there may be an abundance of nonprofits in Milwaukee, I would argue that the existence of Black-led organizations is important to the development of the community. What is lacking is a commitment on the part of the government to invest in Black-led community-based organizations; rather, the powerful devalue the importance of African American leadership by failing to invest significantly in Black-led organizations.

While the city has not committed to providing technical assistance to nonprofits, specifically Black nonprofits, it has committed to funding the Nonprofit Center to provide technical assistance to CDBG funded organizations. The decision to provide technical assistsance to CDBG funded organizations results in primarily white-led organizations receiving city-funded technical assistance. A Black community leader indicated there was a double standard, one that privileged whites and penalized Blacks. He stated, "It's always convenient to say, 'It's too complicated' …when it impacts our community. But when it's reversed, it's done without thought" (Faraj, 2108). This reinforces the opinion of African Americans that they are treated as second class citizens who do not receive fair or equitable treatment and that mainstream does not readily consider issues of fairness or equity in its relationships with organizations and communities of color.

Failure to provide capacity-building opportunities to the numerious African American organizations in Milwaukee reflects the city's lack of commitment to building the capacity of African American organizations and to increasing their ability to compete for and obtain city funding so that they may have a greater affect in the community. The city has a track record of implementing innovative solutions that enhance white-led organizations. The city has provided funding to white-led organizations, such as COA, Sojourner Truth, and St. Anne's, to build or operate their organizations in the Black

community. The city approved millions of dollars in funding for construction of the Milwaukee Bucks' new basketball arena, despite criticism from many residents that it would not support the economic development of Black Milwaukee. City funding reflects its priorities, and its commitment to specific values.

Given their commitment to support white-led organizations in innovative ways, it is reasonable to expect that the city could allocate significant funding to strengthen the African American community infrastructure through the funding of and assistance in capacity building for Black-led community-based organizations. Implementing measures that support the development and strengthening of Black-led organizations would make the CDBG community organizing process more competitive and could increase the percentage of funding allocated to Black-led organizations, resulting in a shift in the power dynamics of the Milwaukee community.

A review of the racial composition of leadership in specific agencies funded to provide services in NSPs located in NRSA #1 and the racial composition of the residents in these NSPs demonstrates the racial mismatch present between organizational leadership and the residents served by these organizations. My analysis of the city's and agencies' records indicate that in 2014, an organization funded to provide community organizing services in an NSP Area indicated that of the approximately 9,800 area residents, 88% were African American; and 94% were People of Color. The executive director of the organization is a white male; the board composition was 64% white and 36% African American. During that year, another organization funded to provide services in an NSP area indicated that of the approximately 8,600 area residents, 79% were African American; 95% were

people of color. The executive director of the organization was a white female; the board composition was 82% white and 18% African American. In 2016, for the organization that received about 40% of the total funding in this category, the executive director was a white female; the board composition was 73% white, 20% African American, 3% Latino, and 3% Asian American.

Inclusiveness and diversity in leadership can be strategically achieved through the cultivation of funded partnerships and collaborations with Black-led organizations. However, the organizations that many funded agencies identified as their regular partners and collaborators were often white-led organizations and institutions. These partners included the City of Milwaukee and its departments, Milwaukee Police Department, United Way, Safe & Sound, and Children's Hospital, which reflects the white superiority and solipsism that pervades many white-led organizations. Expanding the role of Black-led agencies through respectful partnerships and collaborations would include fair compensation for the work of the Black-led organizations.

This failure to fund or partner with Black-led organizations creates a racial mismatch between organization leadership and community residents. Research strongly indicates that a racial mismatch often results in decisions and practices implemented by white-led organizations that do not serve African American residents well (Salamon, 1995). Funding for Black-led nonprofit organizations is important; these groups serve as intermediaries by facilitating interactions between the residents and governing systems, political processes, and institutions. A racial match between organization leadership and residents increases the likelihood that

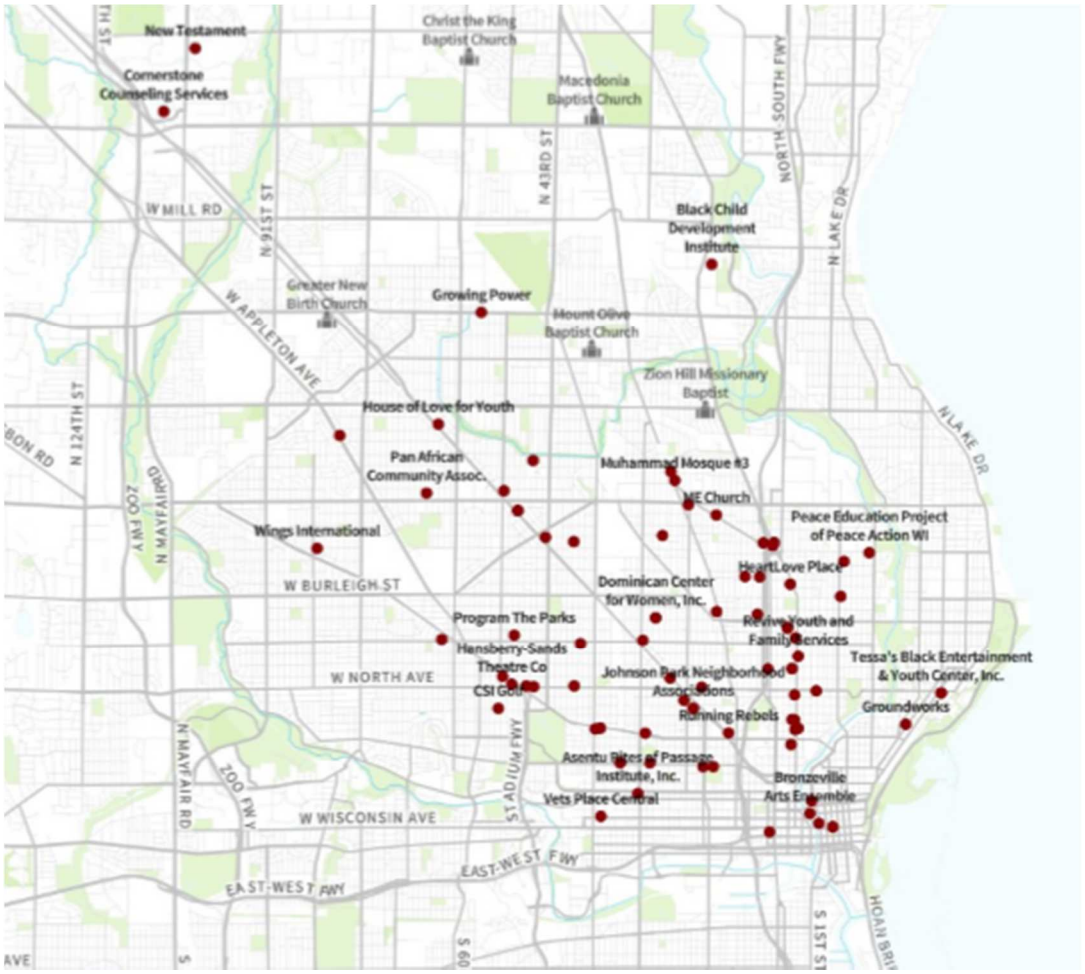
the political interests of the organization and residents converge. "Organizations are more likely to advance the political interests of residents when organizational leadership is racially reflective of the residents" (LeRoux, 2009). A white-led organization whose executive is white, and whose Board is predominantly white, is less likely to advance the political interests of African American residents. The need for more racially reflective representation in the African American community is an issue in Milwaukee. In a news article covering the March 6th presentation by members of Project Central Voice, reporter Jabril Faraj wrote that "The city needs to fund more Black-led, grassroots organizations to address issues such as poverty and violence, which are most prevalent in Milwaukee's Black community" (Faraj, March 2018). However, the city government has not addressed this issue, indicating its leadership is either unaware of the concern or does not consider the concern a priority issue.

A Network of Black-led Organizations

Does the racial mismatch among nonprofits serving the Milwaukee African American community exist because white-led organizations are benevolently filling a critical need created by a scarcity of Black-led organizations in Milwaukee? If this were the case, arguments regarding the need for increased utilization of existing Black-led organizations would lack credibility. This is not the case. Our research and networking identified more than 150 community-based organizations and churches primarily located in the NRSA #1 area, which confirms the existence of an underutilized infrastructure in the Black community. The map below illustrates that

the majority of Black-led organizations are located in NRSA #1. Some of the red dots denote more than one organization.

Figure 5.1. Map of Black-led Organizations in NRSA #1



Some of these agencies focus primarily on community organizing as their mission. Others, like many organizations funded by CDBG for community organizing, do not identify community organizing as their main mission but provide youth services, community development, and various other services. This network has existed for decades to counter racism, to support Black families, and to continue the African

American traditions of mutual aid, self-help, and collective responsibility. All of these actions are necessary to strengthen the African American community infrastructure.

While funding Black-led organizations to lead community organizing efforts in the Black community demonstrates respect for Black voices, knowledge, and culture, some residents would advocate for maintaining the status quo and continuing funding of the currently funded organizations. Some leaders of non-Black organizations may not see Black-led organizations as adding value or may not want additional competition for funding in an already competitive environment. An individual responded to the Faraj article about the need for the city to fund Black-led organizations by asserting:

> I'm not sure if your article was fair in labelling 'white-led agencies' as, ineffective and mono-cultural. The next time you decide to complain about some social service, arts, education group, or funder, remember they're committed enough to put a lot of time in for very little in return. They don't deserve constant criticism and brutal condemnation every time someone is dissatisfied or thinks they could do it better (Resident response to Faraj article, March 2018.)

The comment highlights how a legitimate concern regarding funding white-led organizations to provide services in predominantly African American neighborhoods elicits a defensive stance. The comment is intended to demean, delegitimize, and silence the counter-narrative. The commentator operates with a solipsistic, paternalistic world view, one in which white benevolence, power, and innocence are celebrated, not challenged.

Many leaders managing Black-led organizations discussed in my interviews and in public meetings the lack of funding for the work they did on a regular basis. They felt at times that their work was undermined by a funded, supported, organization that could send a paid staff member to their meeting, have a sign-up sheet for attendees to sign, and take credit for the work. In some instances, the Black organization had scheduled and publicized the meeting, and persuaded people to attend. This frustrated leaders of Black-led organizations who compete for the sparse funding available to them and work to build their organizations' reputations and standing in the community.

The lack of funding and utilization of Black-led organizations for community organizing perpetuates a system in which primarily white-led organizations provide service to Black residents in a paternalistic relationship. I assert that CDBG operates as a system of oppression fortified by long standing national and local processes of differentiation conveyed in discourses about African Americans. These false narratives provide the justification for negative categorizations of African Americans and the impetus to continue structures of domination (i.e., racism, capitalism, and paternalism). In many ways, the community organizing and crime prevention goals are counter to those of the African American community. The community organizing and civil remedies strategies employed by the funded organizions can function as survellance activites within the Black community. In essence, nonprofits can be used to monitor and control behavior, manage dissent, redirect activism, and maintain the status quo rather than challenge it. The narratives promulgated by Moynihan and city officials in the 1960s and today paint a picture of dysfunctionality and criminality

in the African American commmunity in a way that provides the government justification for its anti-Black remedies (Hattery & Smith, 2007).

The Ideology of Collective Efficacy

The CDBG Community Organizing Program utilizes collective efficacy and civil remedies strategies to decrease crime and to increase social capital in the African American community. I argue that these strategies as implemented by the CDBG funded organizations are not effective, fail to utilize the counter knowledge of African Americans, and conflict with community organizing traditions inherent in the Black community. Too often, negative discourses about African Americans form the foundation of the ideologies, strategies, and methods of service delivery systems for social interventions. Racialized discourse provides a frame for the implementation of practices that promote racialized social control. Also, the tendency of white elites to operate through a narrow world view can preclude them from appreciating alternative world views, ideologies, or methods. As an example of this, the city's Community Organizing Grant utilizes the criminological conceptions of collective efficacy and civil remedies to focus on the social disorder, disorganization, and crime under the CDBG category of community organizing. The choice of collective efficacy as an ideology and civil remedies as a method of implementation of community organizing for CDBG in NRSA #1 exemplifies racialized social control. Collective efficacy is an ideology utilized by some of the CDBG community-based organizations funded to provide community organizing services in NRSA #1.

Collective efficacy theory is based on the social disorganization paradigms in sociology and criminology that focus on social control and collective action. In this

model, social disorganization is defined as “the inability of a community structure to realize the common values of its residents and maintain effective social controls” (Sampson & Groves, 1989, p.3). This model stresses the importance of the relational nature of local community networks in achieving social control. Sampson and Groves indicate that the:

> local community is a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and of formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and the creation and maintenance of social capital, where social capital refers to a resource that arises from social relations. Social capital, in turn, facilitates social control. Thus, the systemic model of social disorganization posits that the structure and characteristics of these social networks determine the capacity with which a neighborhood can engage in the control of various behaviors, including crime (Sampson & Grove, 1989, p. 3).

In essence, collective efficacy focuses on motivating neighbors to exert peer pressure on other neighbors to motivate them to change their behavior. Therein lies a fundamental difference between the city’s community organizing with its collective efficacy and criminal remedies strategy and a more culturally based framework. Collective Efficacy utilizes social capital as the resources necessary to help individuals achieve their collective goals (Warren & Mapp, 2011, p. 24). In the cultural based framework social capital is used to assimilate Blacks and to maintain societal norms, status quo and existing resources to challenge white supremacy and existing power relationships (Warren & Mapp, 2011). While both concepts value social capital, they

differ in that collective efficacy works to maintain institutional power over Black residents; the cultural based framework motivates residents to leverage their power in interaction with public institutions (Warren & Mapp, 2011, p. 24).

A key difference between the city's organizing and culturally based, grassroots organizing is an understanding of resident centered collaboration. In the city's organizing efforts, the organizing is led by primarily white-led organizations, in grassroots organizing, the leadership would come from the community. However, according to an article written by Allison Steins for the Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service in 2016, organizational leaders in Milwaukee who use collective efficacy consider it to be "resident centered collaboration and the key to neighborhood safety." This ideology connects with some African Americans. In fact, an African American who participated in a project using collective efficacy and interviewed by Steins said, "Our neighborhood could be just like the neighborhoods in Brown Deer. But people bring down neighborhoods, neighborhoods don't run themselves down" (Steins, 2016). This statement is used to support the use of the collective efficacy model implemented by white-led organizations. Unfortunately, this statement reflects the self-hate that is produced when the oppressed believe the racial discourse that reinforces Black inferiority and white superiority. As implemented in the City's CDBG program, collective efficacy is focused more on the perceived deficits of African American communities than on resolving structural issues that impede the progress of Blacks.

Collective efficacy theory presupposes that African Americans do not know how to build social networks, to work effectively with each other, or to promote adherence to mainstream norms in the Black community. Supposedly informed white professionals

are needed to “teach, guide and motivate” African Americans to perform collective efficacy activities. Some experts in the crime and safety field view collective efficacy as the foundation for neighborhood safety; “It is the glue that binds neighborhoods together,” according to the National Institute of Justice (Waxman, 2017). This narrow interpretation of collective efficacy ignores the negative impacts of segregation, racial and economic exclusion, and resource deprivation have on the African American community. Sampson explains that the economic segregation of low-income African Americans intensifies the effect of cumulative disadvantage and isolates them from critical institutional resources. The alienation, exploitation, and dependency produced by resource deprivation hinder the development of collective efficacy. Thus, I argue that it is the entrenched economic segregation, social isolation, consistent disadvantage, and resource deprivation that need to be addressed and would be far more effective than meetings and clean-ups in achieving a healthier, safer, more productive environment where crime, poverty, and racism are low and community pride, employment and family health are high. Unfortunately, the city and its funded organizations focus less on the structural issues that plague the African American community and tout their version of collective efficacy as the remedy for crime in Milwaukee’s African American community, because they have the resources, power, and privilege, their strategies are implemented. This discounts and demeans the resilient actions Blacks have taken through American history to effect positive chance, to risk their lives to serve the Black and American communities, to set standards for behavior, to build community unity, and to organize the community to resist racism. There is a significant need for the history of African Americans to be conveyed to

provide a counter-narrative, to validate the need for Black voices at the table of power, and to promote funding of Black-led organizations.

Civil Remedies Methods

The method used to implement the collective efficacy ideology is civil remedies. Jan Roehl of the Justice Research Center identifies civil remedies goals as "reducing the signs of physical disorder, breaking the cycle of neighborhood decline and decreasing crime" (Roehl, 1998, p.2). Civil remedies strategy is similar to that of the Broken Windows Theory developed by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling in the early 1980s. The broken windows theory was a criminological theory that asserted that visible evidence of crime, civil disorder and anti-social behavior fostered an environment of increased in crime and disorder. Wilson and Kelling recommended that police target minor crimes as a strategy to instill a climate of order and lawfulness that would avert serious crimes (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). As with collective efficacy and civil remedies, the broken windows theory focuses on social control and normalizing of African Americans rather than advocating for resolution of structural issues and oppressive systems to ameliorate crime.

Similar to the Broken Windows theory, "civil remedies seek to alter criminal opportunities and prevent crime problems from escalating, similar to the goals of community policing" (Roehl, 1998, p. 2). These civil remedies fall into two categories. Environmental strategies such as neighborhood clean-ups and graffiti removal, and civil enforcement strategies such as nuisance abatement, drug abatement, use of local ordinances and health and building code enforcement, and the reporting of information to law enforcement. The implementation of civil remedies activities in these two

categories may meet the city's agenda regarding public safety and crime reduction, which are reasonable goals supported by most residents regardless of class, race, or gender. However, civil remedies activities should not be defined as and are not a replacement for investments in the economic development initiatives, community revitalization efforts, and work force development strategies that strengthen the infrastructure of the African American community. This conflation of economic and community development with crime prevention is a diversion of resources and a disservice to the community because it gives the illusion of development activities being funded by government to improve the African American community. The lack of significant positive change resulting from this "development" activity decreases trust and heightens hopelessness. Further, it negates the role of Black agency in efforts to revitalize the Black community, further positioning African Americans as powerless recipients of services.

CDBG funded organizations are required to implement the civil remedies activities detailed in the table below.

Table 5.8 CDBG-REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

1. Conduct and track door-to-door contacts with residents/businesses /stakeholders on issues; inform and provide resource information and follow-up.
2. In coordination with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD), establish and maintain block clubs, and neighborhood watches, and address criminal and other nuisance complaints.
3. Collaborate with City of Milwaukee Departments, including law enforcement and other community-based organizations and business groups, on crime prevention, neighborhood improvement efforts, community events, community organizing, and other collaborative projects.
4. Assist with coordinated clean-ups between residents, area stakeholders, and the City's Department of Neighborhood Services.

5. Conduct neighborhood meetings involving stakeholders (residents and businesses) to gather input on Community priorities.
6. Participate in CDGA-required training and workshops on community organizing strategies and techniques, and other training as mandated by CDGA.
7. Other neighborhood initiatives as mandated by CDGA.

Source: The Year 2015 Request for Proposals for Community Development Funding

Some of these civil remedies activities could more aptly be described as resident surveillance designed to identify criminals and to report criminal activity, supporting law enforcement's crime prevention work. It is an element of policing, but it is not community organizing based on African American traditions.

Some residents interviewed by the PCV team voiced opinions that mainstream strategies did not often align with the culture, opinions, or needs of Black residents. The approach implemented by CDBG's community organizing services, which establishes activities that CDBG funded agencies are required to implement, reflects Eurocentric values and culture. For example, one of the mandates of the city's CDBG community organizing contract is that funded organizations will collaborate with law enforcement regarding crime prevention, neighborhood improvement efforts, community events, and community organizing. This requirement ignores Milwaukee's history, specifically the relationship between law enforcement and the Black community. For example, the time during which Chief of Police Brier worked to terrorize and oppress the Black community is a part of the psych of many African Americans in Milwaukee.

Further, the focus on the behaviors of the Black body, as emphasized in the collective efficacy paradigm's identification of the social disorder of Blacks as the problem, lets society off the hook and by doing so displays the power and bias of white

superiority. The narrative of the Black body as criminal and inferior has been pervasive throughout American history and is not only utilized to justify racism but to justify the failure of society to address racial inequality.

The civil remedies requirement ignores the current police/community relationship, which has been further damaged by the killings of Dontre Hamilton and Syville Smith by Milwaukee police officers. As discussed in chapter 4, the relationship between African Americans and the MPD have been frayed and tense for decades. In recent years, the deaths of Dontre Hamilton and Sylville Smith connect Milwaukee African Americans to the past death of Daniel Bell locally, and the deaths of Black men nationally, including Maurice Granton, Jr. of Chicago, IL in 2018; Stephon Clark of Sacramento, CA in 2018; Alton Sterling of Baton Rouge, LA in 2016; Philando Castile of Falcon Heights, MN. in 2016; Walter Scott of North Charelston, SC in 2015, Michael Brown, Ferguson, MO in 2014; and LaQuan McDOnald of Chicago IL in 2014. The fear that the lives of Black men are considered expendable has galvanized African Americans in historic numbers to demand that the criminal justice system be held accountable for systemic oppression and violations of the civil rights of Black men. This is the issue that propelled Colin Kaepernick and other NFL players to take a knee in protest and incur the wrath of President Trump and other Americans. These deaths have also reinforced the view held by many Black residents that police departments across the country in general, and the MPD specifically, violate the rights of African American men without being held accountable. This long-standing perspective held by many African Americans reflects the tension and distrust between African Americans and the police.

The city's community organizing program and specifically its civil remedies strategy ignores the heightened level of community/police tension in African American neighborhoods. By requiring these interactions, "community" organizing becomes more about government organizing the community to align the behavior of its residents with government mandates and norms. Thus, this community organizing program consisting of activities prescribed by the government, implemented by mainly white-led organizations, and focused on reducing crime through neighborhood surveillance and informant and reporting processes, does not resemble traditional community organizing as practiced by Black-led groups. Black-led community organizing and crime prevention advocate for structural changes in the system and society rather than structural changes in individuals and families. As one Milwaukee resident indicated, "Grassroots people make an effort to prevent crime; the government makes you change." (Resident 12, 2016)

African American residents recognized the incongruency between what CDBG funded organizations and the Black community want regarding a community organizing initiative. Residents expressed concerns about the content and scope of the city's community organizing efforts. As one resident mentioned, "You can say you're organizing but doing the organizing is two different things. You know talk is cheap. I hear a lot of people talk, but no action. It's been like that for years. I think they just tell the Black community what they want to hear and they move on" (Resident 13, 2016). A leader of a Black-led organization said:

People think that's community organizing. Where did we do something

> that organized them to go and look at crime prevention in their neighborhood? They came to the meeting. What was the result? You look at community organizing as bringing people together, but not about building relationships and having the power to make a difference (CBO Leader 5, 2016).

Another resident said, "You have the city which is saying, 'Alright here, throw some money at it.' It's like they didn't think things through. It's like city staff comes to a barbeque, take some pictures, post them, and then they're done" (Resident 15, 2016). The preferences of African American residents differ greatly from the City's focus on collective efficacy and civil remedies. This divergence in perspectives and expectations continues, in part, because the voice of the oppressed is not always valued and the privilege of the powerful allows them to implement policies and practices that are counter to the population they purport to serve. Unfortunately, the powerful do not realize that this self-indulgence, this benevolent arrogance, distances them further from gaining trust, loyalty, or allegiance from the disenfranchised or from resolving the issues that the city program was ineptly designed to address.

African Americans interviewed for this research also expressed concern regarding citizen input into program design, implementation, and deliverables. One leader of a Black-led organization indicated that:

> If there were certain deliverables to say, ok, you have to have some sort of community involvement, and I get to say what that looks like, that would be so much more different than saying well you need to clean up your neighborhood, you need to do this, you

> need to do this. I don't have the flexibility to say how I'm going to do certain things; I'm just doing an activity to have an output, to create these measurable outcomes. This has always been an issue (CBO Leader 6. 2016).

The city's implementation of prescribed activities that do not incorporate activities that Black-led organizations identify as more appropriate for the Black community demonstrates how white superiority works. Criminological ideologies and strategies of collective efficacy and civil remedies negate the opportunity to utilize ideologies and strategies drawn from African American traditions, culture, and ideologies.

There is a sense that Milwaukee CDGA partners with white-led organizations more so than with the African American community, and that in community organizing programs these partnerships merely support city services, including law enforcement strategies for crime reduction. A Black community leader we interviewed asserted that "CDBG funding activities are extensions of city services; they are not building individual or collective power" (CBO Leader 7, 2016). The concept of community organizing has been co-opted by city leadership to implement a state-designed crime reporting system that establishes behavioral norms. Some of the activities that funded organizations are required to conduct include coordination with the city's Department of Neighborhood Services, and collaboration with other city departments and law enforcement or projects with the MPD. As a consequence, a major concern is the entrenchment of law enforcement in the city's community organizing strategy. However, African American residents resist oppression. A resident indicated that the residents come together when they feel challenged by the police, stating, "Yeah because the police do a different thing

than what the neighborhood would do" (Resident 14, 2016). Given local and national concerns regarding the issue of police brutality and questions of bias against African Americans in the criminal justice system, African Americans residents view police as possessing power and position but not always using these assets in the best interest of the Black community and not fostering quality relationships with the Black community. Thus, the strategies and agendas may appear to be opposed.

Racial inequality in Milwaukee is particularly manifested in African Americans' interaction with the criminal justice system, increasing distrust of the police and fueling racial tensions. Milwaukee has a well-documented history of controversial actions by law enforcement, which sparks public outrage and community organizing in the Black community. The African American community's relationship with the government and the police has not engendered trust. There is a sense that police do not take African American's complaints or calls for assistance seriously. One resident indicated, "No, the government doesn't want to step foot in my neighborhood. You hardly even see a police officer in my neighborhood. If you see a police officer, you write the data and time down in my neighborhood" (Resident 15, 2016). There is a sense that the police do not take African American's call for police assistance seriously; that the police have their own policing strategy and priorities that may differ from those of the Black community.

Does the reliance on collective efficacy and civil remedies enhance the relationship between the African American community and the Milwaukee Police District (MPD) or does it exacerbate their history of tension and conflict? The MPD is heavily involved in the implementation of collective efficacy and civil remedies methods in

CDBG community-organizing efforts. While the goal may be to enhance the relationship between the African American community and the police, the activities are more focused on reporting crime and arresting individuals than building positive community relationships. The community organizing component of the CDBG has become a vehicle for policing and surveillance rather than organizing.

Surveillance actions by the police breeds further mistrust in the Black community. The pattern regarding unlawful searches of African Americans at traffic stops is symbolic of the tension and distrust between Milwaukee's Black community and the Milwaukee Police Department. In 2014, a federal jury awarded a Milwaukee African American man $506,000 in recognition of his rights being violated by Milwaukee police officers who searched him without reasonable suspicion and wrongfully arrested him (Barton, August 7, 2014). In 2017, the American Civil Liberties Union brought a lawsuit against the Milwaukee Police Department accusing the department of violating the rights of Milwaukee minority residents by conducting traffic stops without reasonable suspicion of criminal activity. The ACLU claimed that from 2007 to 2015 minorities were seven times more likely to be involved in police traffic stops and searches than other drivers and that the unlawful searches are motivated by race (Rhodan, February 22, 2017)

In this racially charged environment, the Milwaukee Police Department is a key player in social service efforts, including CDBG community organizing. The Milwaukee Police Department is viewed as a leader in the implementation of the Community Prosecution Unit and works closely with the organization operating the Community

Partners component of the community organizing program. This further focuses the program on surveillance, stereotyping of African Americans as criminal, a disregard for the rights of African Americans. This is counter to traditional grassroots organizing.

Former City of Milwaukee Police Chief Ed Flynn's view of the cause of poverty ignited robust discussions on the subject. In many public statements, he expressed his view that crime caused poverty. Many residents disagreed with Flynn's view that crime caused poverty. One resident responded in an interview: "Contrary to Flynn's thought of crime leading to poverty, poverty is caused by a lack of jobs, lack of access, and racism. The approach a community selects to implement is often influenced by the ideology of the leader" (Resident 16, 2016). Another resident connected the negative framing of Blacks as inferior and criminals as contributing to criminal activity explaining, "If you feel like you're less than, you try to do anything to make yourself look bigger" (Resident 17, 2016). Still another resident indicated that the causes of crime were connected to a lack of employment in the Black community, stating, "No money, no jobs, nothing to do. Disrespect" (Resident 18, 2016). Another resident linked the crime to the need for structural changes, saying that crime was a response of "People reacting to the level of oppression they are forced to live under" (Resident 19, 2016). Another resident reinforced the importance of jobs, saying, "The employment piece has been a part of what spikes crime. When you have a large percentage of communities that don't have access to those livable wage-paying jobs" (Resident 20, 2016). The police view espoused by Flynn regarding the causal factors of poverty was significantly different from those expressed by African Americans, which suggests their approaches to fighting crime and decreasing poverty are often different.

In this context, it is inconceivable that community organizing in the Black community could be led by law enforcement using civil remedies methods and that government leaders support police leadership of social service initiatives. After all, the placement of law enforcement as the leaders of social service initiatives reconnects with an ideology fostered by the President Lyndon Johnson Administration merged the War on Poverty initiative with the War on Crime. T However, the questions persist as to whether a community organizing program dependent on significant involvement with the police and led by white-led organizations in the African American community sends the appropriate message to Black residents and leaders. Further, the use of collective efficacy and civil remedies paradigms, which are based on the assumption of Black social disorder and the view that the Black community lacks the skills to build social cohesion without the assistance of white-led organizations continues the framing of white superiority and Black inferiority.

This version of organizing reproduces a particular set of relationships within communities based on the need for the police to be involved in all affairs. It also reproduces the premise that the problem of economic development is crime, not deprivation of resources and economic disinvestment in the Black community. The city's version of organizing, including its outputs, produce a certain kind of citizenship, or relationship to the state, that is about participation, but not power to effect change. It's a semblance of democray but obscures the much more insidious insertion of police control and surveillance in all aspects of the process.

Rather than demonstrate a quality effort, Milwaukee's community organizing program demonstrates the ways in which racism, capitalism, and paternalism are used

to maintain white privilege by channeling funds to white-led organizations that implement strategies based on the eradication of social disorder rather than focus on community development. By always finding social disorder, they always reproduce the rationale for their "organizing" programs and more order-maintenance policing. Under the guise of benevolence, these CDBG funded organizations serve as intermediaries between the government and the Black community; these organizations act as conduits transmitting policing and community disorganization ideologies and intervention. The City's community organizing and crime prevention goals are counter to those of the African American community. The nonprofit system, rather than organizing government projects for social change, is providing surveillance of activites within the Black community, criminal and otherwise. Nonprofits can be used to monitor and control behavior, manage dissent, and redirect activism to support capitalism and the status quo rather than challenge it. In the short-term, mainstream America may benefit from this monitoring behavior and redirection of activism. However, the anger, frustration, and resentment felt by individuals who feel they have not been provided fair and equal opportunities can not be suppressed for long. Thus, the long-term effect of systems of oppression are negative not just for the oppressed, but for the oppressor as well. We all suffer the consequences of an unfair, unjust society.

CDBG Outcomes in Community Organizing

This allegiance to white superiority through implementation of collective efficacy is exercised through the funding primarily of white-led organizations and is reflected in the city's failure to invest directly into the Black community. Indeed, many individuals

we interviewed indicated that they were not sure what the CDBG funded organizations did. In fact, a city official stated:

> I don't see a lot of evidence of community organizing in my district. I have a couple of organizations that are Block Grant funded to do community organizing. I don't know what they do exactly. Presumably, they do something because they keep getting reallocated every year for minor amounts of funding (Government Official 1, 2016).

There is a consensus that community development and community organizing are necessary. There is also considerable agreement among residents, leaders of community-based organizations, and elected officials, that the current system of community organizing funded by CDGA is not effective, despite the metrics of success it produces. Some residents, organizational leaders, and government officials agreed with the view expressed by one government official that "the scope of work that community organizing is supposed to tackle is not being addressed with the structure that we have" (Government Official 2, 2016). While the priorities identified in the CDBG plan reflect similar priorities identified by residents, the city's plan has not resulted in significant improvement in poverty, employment, or crime in the African American community.

The city's stated goals to reduce racial disparities and to promote economic viability converge with the interests of African Americans. However, the city and African Americans have divergent strategies for achieving these goals. The outcomes accepted by CDBG for the Neighborhood Strategic Plan/Community Organizing/Crime Prevention are more outputs than outcomes. Their outcomes focus on the number of people involved in meetings, the number of block clubs started, or so-called civil

remedies, whereas community residents were much more interested in outcomes that could have a significant impact on the African American community. It is difficult to demonstrate that CDBG funded community organizing is effective because the outcomes accepted by the City do not demonstrate significant change. Without other data that demonstrates neighborhood improvements as a result of the City's community organizing efforts, Black residents do not see a significant improvement in their neighborhoods. But African Americans don't need government data to see real-life changes. The information provided by residents earlier in this chapter based on their perceptions of their neighborhoods demonstrated their view of how or if neighborhoods had improved, declined, or stayed the same.

However, government data can be used to confirm or provide evidence of improvements that residents may not have noticed or acknowledged. A leader of a Black-led organization indicated, "It may have worked, but we don't know because that's not what they're measuring. There should be more significant outcomes" (CBO Leader 8). Another leader of a CDBG funded organization indicated, "CDBG outcomes are transactional, what we need are outcomes that are transformational" (CBO Leader 9, 2016). Data confirms the fact that Milwaukee's community organizing strategy focuses more on short-term activities rather than long term-transformative outcomes. The outcomes identified below represent the activities of one CDBG funded agency over a four-year period, as reported in their annual reports to the city. These outcomes are in line with CDBG's overall goal of providing services that connect with HUD's objectives.

Table 5.9 Agency Outcomes of One Funded Agency from 2011– 2014

Activity	2011	2012	2013	2014
Conduct door to door contacts	302	430	292	101
Establish and Maintain Block Clubs	54	56	56	56
Clean up Neighborhood	16	5	10	6
Coordinate Community Meetings & Events	49	50	47	37
Total # of Residents Involved	244	639	431	367

Source: Agency's 2014 Report to the City of Milwaukee Community Development Grant Administration

In 2016, a white-led organization provided the following information regarding the agencies result in 2016 for their community-organizing contract.

Table 5.10 2016 Community Program Outcomes for CDBG funded Community-Based Organization

Activity	**Outcome**
Contact residents at front doors for conversation	3,300 residents
Engage residents' participation in community meetings and events	21,500 residents
Host community meetings and events	900 meetings and events held
Abate neighborhood nuisances	600 nuisances abated
Resolve external blight issues	250 issues resolved
Engage youth in events, meetings, programs	7,800 youth engaged
Hold meetings, events, and programs for youth	170 events, meetings and programs for youth

Source: Marketing Materials of CDBG funded the white-led organization

Researchers from the Medical College of Wisconsin evaluated to measure "collective efficacy," which a leader of a CDBG white-led organization defined as "social cohesi/on and shared expectation about how each resident will engage in the well-being of the community" (Waxman, 2017). The Medical College evaluation found that block clubs were an intervention most associated with improvement in collective efficacy scores. A key finding of the research was that the number of block club meetings showed the most association with changes in collective efficacy scores, with each block

organization indicated that regular interaction among the same group of people lead to significant changes in the neighborhood culture" **(**Safe & Sound, 2017). The evaluation also found that the number of issue-based events, such as safety task force events, block parties, and community events, and the number of general events, such as neighborhood clean-ups and block club events, were associated with the most improvement in disorder crime rates. The number of issue-based events held showed the most association with improvement in violent crime rates" Safe & Sound, 2017). This analysis oversimplifies the effect that meetings have on neighbors' ability to work together for the community good.

The City of Milwaukee provides an annual report that describes the activities and outcomes that demonstrate achievement of a HUD objective. For the Community Organizing/Crime Prevention category, the city and its funded organizations consistently overachieved in numbers of meetings, often exceeding the benchmark agreed upon by the City and HUD. Evidence suggests that the outcomes achieved as reflected in the chart above of one agency's outcomes and the chart below of information contained in a CDBG report are short term with little long-term impact. Also, these outcome achievements are more focused on activities and outputs than on impact or outcome.

Table 5.11 Comparison of Actual Accomplishments with Proposed Goals for the 2013 Program Year

Strategy	HUD Objective/ HUD Outcome	HUD Performance Indicators	2013 FY Benchmark	2013 FY Actual (# units)
Crime Awareness & Community Organizing				
Facilitate residents/stakeholders in community improvement efforts; crime prevention initiatives	Suitable Living/ Environmental Sustainability	Number of residents and Stakeholders engaged in community improvement efforts	3,000	5,610
Community Prosecution Unit				
Abate neighborhood nuisances and drug houses through prosecution	Suitable Living/ Environmental Sustainability	Number of properties and nuisances abated/resolved	100	1,938

Source: City of Milwaukee Year 2014 Final Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report

The allocation of millions of dollars over the years to achieve these outcomes appears to be a grave misuse of funds, an oppressive act that privileges white-led organizations to the detriment of the Black community. This is especially true when abatement is interpreted by some funded agencies to include loitering, drug dealing, and drunkenness. The operation of community organizing in this manner demonstrates the ways in which endemic racism works. The narrative of Black deficiencies provides the opportunity to reward primarily white-led organizations while achieving substandard outcomes, which diverts much-needed capital away from the Black community and

Black-led organizations. Thus, the resources allocated by the city and the outcomes achieved are not effective in that they do not address the critical, structural issues affecting the African American community and do not reduce poverty, unemployment, and crime. The current resource allocation does not place power with African American residents in Milwaukee, and it does not eradicate economic segregation or social isolation. Instead, the program financially supports white-led organizations that produce substandard outcomes and scapegoats African American residents for lack of substantive reduction in crime.

These inadequate outputs characterized as outcomes fuel the resentment, distrust, and alienation toward government initiatives in the Black community. As a resident asserted, “That’s how we’re always controlled… when the government steps in” (Resident 21, 2016). These outcomes illustrate a lack of commitment to achieving significant improvement in the lives of African American residents. The outcomes also demonstrate how the powerful can sanction mediocre outcomes in African American neighborhoods for years. The fact that the majority of organizations funded to provide community organizing are repeatedly contracted by the city to provide these services indicates the city’s satisfaction with the achievement of these outcomes, which is not surprising given the prevailing view of disorganization and crime. Unfortunately, this leads to the acceptance of strategies and outcomes that do not address the root causes of distress in the Black community. As designed and implemented these programs will necessarily find disorganization, count a picnic or meeting as ‘organizing’, and consider policing a necessary component. Many African Americans have called for control and abatement of crime in their community. Given this convergence of interests among

many different groups, it is plausible to expect that African Americans would identify a significant reduction in crime as an improvement in their neighborhoods. However as previously discussed by residents regarding crime improvement and decline.

Blacks and the city: Issues of Trust and Commitment

Residents' identification of neighborhood improvements and declines focused on specific elements that impact their quality of life. However, there is a significant gap in the level of trust that African Americans have in the government's ability to resolve critical issues impacting their lives. A resident stated that "People don't believe in the system. People in the neighborhood care about the neighborhood; the government skips past our neighborhood" (Resident 22, 2016). Another resident conveyed the lack of trust in frank terms, stating that the" City of Milwaukee is nothing but broken promises" (Resident 23, 2016).

Milwaukee's history of achieving goals based on the self-interest of the powerful and their white constituents was demonstrated during the implementation of urban renewal, the construction of Interstate 43, and the abandonment of the Park West Freeway, which contributed to the destruction of Bronzeville in the 1960s. Remembering how these and other community development projects decimated the African American community, a resident indicated "They tore houses down; people left, so services left. There were no banks, there were no clinics, and actually, there was no grocery store during that time" (Resident 24, 2016). The erosion of trust between the African American community and city government continues today. Many Black residents do not trust that the city is committed to improving the safety of residents. A resident said, "The government is not serious about eradicating crime.

That's just something that they tell us, and we believe it. That's something that we need to stop believing" (Resident 25, 2018). Also, African Americans see the chasm that has developed between the resources government allocates to white communities and the resources allocated to Black communities. An African American resident indicated that "The city is not going to spend the money in our neighborhood" (Resident 26, 2016). Another African American resident stated that "I believe that the government is not too concerned about crime until it reaches white people." (Resident 27, 2016). This assessment of government commitment based on race demonstrates the divide that exists between government and Black residents and between organizations funded to provide services as intermediaries in the Black community and African American residents.

While the government is not synonymous with white-led organizations, when these organizations are a part of a government-funded decentralized service delivery system, such as the CDBG, they become an extension of government. The CDBG-funded organizations have implemented a form of community organizing that does not engender trust among most African American residents. It is not representative of Black culture, focuses primarily on crime prevention, and centrally involves law enforcement, specifically the Milwaukee Police Department, in its community organizing programs.

Some residents and leaders of Black-led organizations indicated that many agencies funded by CDBG for the community organizing grant are managed by individuals who are not committed to the African American community**.** One Black resident stated that "Most organizations receiving CDBG funding…at dusk are trying

to get out of town" (Resident 28, 2016). Residents do not trust that the funded organizations are committed to the Black community, which is troubling when much of the work in the CDBG funded community organizing initiative focuses on preventing crime, reporting crime, and abating crime. These types of activities require trust.

Trust erodes further because residents feel that the city does not understand the African American community. As one resident stressed, "The government only knows what people tell them; it's not like they come to the community" (Resident 29, 2018). Many African Americans expressed their concerns about an environment that did not value their input or their leadership, programs that did not utilize their talents, policies that left them feeling minimized and marginalized. A consistent thread in the opinions expressed by residents was their sense of being excluded, treated as the "Other," and disrespected. One resident stated, "The imagery we have been spoon-fed. We are animals, subhuman" (Resident 30, 2016). These views highlight the effect of living in a society that not only oppresses Blacks, but frames its interventions as community organizing, crime prevention, and community development. The narrative cannot hide the system of oppression no matter how benevolently and innocently it is framed.

The maintenance of systems of oppression through CDBG funded programs not only erodes trust in government but also perpetuates hopelessness and fuels anger in the Milwaukee African American community. We can hear it in the voices of residents and leaders of Black-led organizations. A leader of a Black-led organization said, "I am upset that we've fallen for the okey-doke because someone had to be the guinea pig of programs for the budgets to keep going" (CBO Leader 10, 2016). Hopelessness

affects young adults participating in agency programs, leaders of community-based organizations, middle-class residents active in the community, and residents seeking social justice and change. Residents expressed the idea of hopelessness being demoralizing and negatively affecting the Black psyche. A Black resident stated, **"**We've become almost disempowered somehow. We don't believe that we have the power to make a difference; there's a hopelessness that permeates our community" (Resident 31, 2016). As demonstrated by the riots in Sherman Park in 2016, anger, distrust, and hopelessness brew just below the surface in Milwaukee's African American community. The level of commitment the African American community is seeking from the city and CDBG was described by a leader of a Black-led organization: "Do your efforts have the authenticity that truly represents the heart of the community and the interests of the community? If we begin to unify, not only will we do better work in terms of organizing to affect change in people's lives, but we will respect each other and respect what everyone has to bring to the table" (CBO Leader 11, 2018).

In contrast to how African American residents assessed the level of commitment government has shown to the African American community, many Black residents and organization leaders have demonstrated their commitment to their community by working to improve conditions for Milwaukee's Black residents. Committment is illustrated by the leaders of Black-led organizations working in NRSA #1. In interviews and meetings, African Americans talked about why they were invested in their community, why they had authenticity. Some had grown up in a household where issues of race were discussed, some were raised in the South and saw how Black communities demonstrated unity in the midst of terror, some had a parent who worked

for a community-based organization, some experienced the devastation government policies and ill-fated actions inflicted on the Black community. For others, their commitment came from a personal challenge; their family lived in poverty, they were dependent on government assistance, they had served time in prison, they wanted an opportunity to make a difference. One resident explained, “I served ten years in prison and was on papers for five. Now I want to give back; I want to talk with the young men standing on the corners. I don’t want them to make the same mistakes I did” (Resident 32, 2018). A leader of a Black-led organization indicated that ”We are trying to come together to get the bad stuff out and clean it out, to make everything positive. Because our kids are growing up and we don’t need all of this corruption around them. That’s what’s going to help them learn more in school” (CBO Leader 12, 2016).

Contrary to the mainstream narrative that Black adults are apathetic and lack commitment to improving their communities, African Americans are highlighting a counter narrative in their words and their work. African American residents see a Milwaukee ranking high in poverty, crime, and segregation, and they are concerned. As one resident said, “I hate to see Milwaukee labeled as the worst place to raise kids. I hate to hear that. I’d like to see that changed” (Resident 33, 2016). Although they are distrustful of key elements of government-funded community development programs, they support community development in the Black community. Some have a vision of what they want their community to be; for some, it is a return to the “good ole days,” the glory days of Bronzeville. An elderly resident stated, “It’s not as bad as it is in other places, but I can see it’s getting there. It’s moving in that direction, and I’d like to see that changed. And I’d like to see homeownership come back in my community because

the houses are beautiful. And I liked the way that it used to be. I guess I miss that" (Resident 33, 2016). To some Blacks, Bronzeville symbolizes an environment where African Americans had their businesses, social clubs, professional associations, recreational venues, even their own Mayor. It symbolizes self-determination, unity, and mutual aid, key elements to the Black home culture. Blacks demonstrated a double consciousness, an ability to navigate through the challenges of mainstream Milwaukee and to cultivate their home culture, racial identify, and racial unity in Bronzeville. Many African Americans understand that to navigate effectively and survive, they must operate with a double consciousness in the current environment as well.

Part of the value of Black-led organizations is that they support the maintenance of a Black home culture, which includes a mutual aid philosophy, a voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources, and services for mutual benefit. This interdependence among Blacks has existed for centuries due in part to the struggle for survival in a hostile nation and to respect for the home culture. A leader of a Black-led CBO asserted, "My model is that when you give, you get. So, when you get, give. I like that model of a next-door foundation that says, 'everything you need is right next door.' Start on the block. Then, if we need to reach out, fine, because goodness swells" (CBO Leader 13, 2018). Another leader supported this view, saying "I feel like as long as we talk to each other and motivate each other and encourage each other to sit down as a group and to come to an understanding, that's what builds a foundation. It is not just me; it takes all of us to get everything right" (CBO Leader 14, 2018). These comments reinforce the fact that African Americans value home culture and the African American traditions of mutual aid, collective responsibility, racial solidarity and self-help.

The goals of the Black community and CDBG community organizing conflict and have competing interests. While the government is focused on crime suppression, the Black community is focused on equality and opportunity. Historically organizers in the Black community work for structural change and social justice. Black community organizing often has focused on changing the system and holding elected officials accountable. Conversely, CDBG consistently frames African Americans as part of the problem and demonstrates the intent to change the behavior of African Americans using a Eurocentric strategy. It is not surprising that CDBG does not utilize African American cultural traditions. Ultimately the conflict revolves around control over the Black body: whether African Americans are marginalized, excluded, and exploited or whether they are valued and respected. The exploitation of the black body for capital gain in slavery, for demonstration of racial hatred through lynchings, acts of racialized control in the criminalization of Black men; this exploitation of the black body throughout American history is a legacy of shame and oppression.

The CDBG community organizing program is set up to ensure success for funded organizations, but not necessarily for African American neighborhoods. A city official acknowledged the need for change in the program indicating that:

> Community organizing looks completely different when you listen to community members about what they want. I support making the available community organizing resources more flexible, so people can conduct the type of organizing that is necessary for their community. Right now, the system isn't set up to incorporate that level of flexibility (Government Official 3, 2016).

Divergent Interest: Organizers Living/Working in Their Neighborhoods

Currently, in the CDBG community organizing program, funded organizations do not have to invest funds into the community and do not have to hire residents that live in the neighborhoods served. Feelings of anger, distrust, and hopelessness toward mainstream Milwaukee on the one hand and a commitment to the Black community and culture on the other are fostering the perspective that change is needed in the CDBG community organizing program. For example, many African Americans support community organizing led by members of their community and strongly prefer that organizers live in the neighborhood in which they work. This aligns with the Critical Race Theory that oppressed groups do not need a messiah. a well–intentioned white individual to rush in and rescue them. Thus, this idea of the Missionary complex where whites are the saviors is rejected by many African Americas. Rather Blacks identify with the fact that "all they needed was themselves, one another, and the will to persevere." (Ransby, 2002, p. 188) One resident indicated that there was room for improvement in government-led community organzing, stating that while there is a "white community organizer in the area, I would like to see a minority in that position" (Resident 34, 2016). A leader of a Black-led organization emphasized that "We really need to look at community organizing as a tool where we're using community folks to work on the changes within their communities. Who better is going to connect with other residents than individuals who live work and play in those areas?" (CBO Leader 15, 1018). Another leader of a Black-led organization said, "People want resources, and they're looking for someone that lives in their neighborhood on their block that they can say, 'Oh

man I don't know how to go about this, but I know you do, can you help me?' 'Or, what can we do?'" (CBO Leaders 16, 2016). Many attendees of a Project Central Voice presentation, including Alderman Russell Stamper, who heads the Community and Economic Development Committee, endorsed a "mutual aid" clause in city contracts that would require agencies receiving CDBG funds to utilize organizers who reside in the neighborhoods in which they work (Faraj 2018). Michelle Renee and Sara McAlister (2011) promote the alignment of residents who live and work in community to community organizing as strategy that increases the power of marginalized communities and empowers residents to act and speak on their own behalf. African American residents have a desire to exercise power as citizens, as one resident stated, "Grassroots provide an opportunity for residents in the neighborhood actually to be involved, to believe, to make changes and see our power base" (Resident 35, 2016).

While some leaders of CDBG funded organizations concurred with the residents, others did not see the value of having individuals living and working as community organizers in the neighborhoods in which they lived. A leader of a white-led CDBG funded organization indicated opposition to organizers working in the neighborhoods in which they lived, explaining, "We promote a work/life balance, so we don't want staff to work in their neighborhoods to help them avoid burnout" (CBO Leader 17, 2016). When hearing comments in a Project Central Voice meeting that indicated a work/life balance is needed, many Blacks considered this to be "code language" used to prevent Blacks who live in the neighborhood from being hired. Some Blacks suggested that this paternalistic view was counter to what the African American community values.

Some African American and white CBO leaders of CDBG funded organizations were concerned that a person's capacity and skills would not be valued and that a person's race would be considered more important in the hiring process. Leaders of CDBG funded organizations further indicated that the goal was to hire the best person for the position, to assemble the most professional and capable staff. A leader of a white-led CDBG funded organization observed, "Just because they look like you doesn't mean they'll bring you justice" (CBO Leader 18, 2016). This statement reflects a devaluing of the intelligence of African Americans by suggesting that the only criteria Blacks use in selecting someone is one's race, rather than one of several factors to be considered. While race is not always a critical factor, and often should not be a critical factor, in hiring, America's history is full of events where race was used to discriminate against Blacks in hiring and significantly limited their employment opportunities. What some individuals frame as a choice between qualifications and race, others view as an issue of access to job opportunities, community leadership opportunities, and control over the strategies employed in their neighborhoods. Some residents expressed the sentiment that qualified residents are available for these positions; a college degree is not necessary, and the necessary skills can be developed. For residents, knowledge of and experience living in the neighborhood, a strong commitment to and compassion for the community, a willingness and ability to form strong ties with residents, and the dedication to work hard to achieve important outcomes were key factors in selecting a community organizer. These attributes connect with the mutual aid philosophy and grassroots organizing that has been conducted by Black-led organizations for centuries. Community organizers have been involved in the Black community since the era of

slavery. Often these organizers did not have professional degrees, but they did possess a great connection with the community and understand the role of culture in community organizing in sustaining citizen participation (O'Donnell & Karanja, 2000). Research has identified that organizers who do not effectively evaluate their cultural proficiency can hinder the progress of communities of color.

The program fails to value and respect African American traditions, specifically the mutual aid philosophy and the grassroots community organizing framework used by African Americans. In alignment with the city, the funded organizations can frame the program based on perceived deficits of Black residents and can blame program failures on the residents' lack of social cohesion. However, my argument is not whether these strategies are valid. I acknowledge that in some environments collective efficacy and civil remedies strategies can achieve critical, quality, and sustainable outcomes. While the city and African Americans may have shared interests in a decrease in racial disparity and an increase in the prosperity of African Americans, the strategies that the city employs are not in alignment with a culturally competent framework of community organizing. I argue that many aspects of the city's community organizing program are not concurrent with the values of the African American community and thus, not positioned to achieve transformational outcomes. The funding and competition processes, the current ideology and strategies, and the lack of capacity-building opportunities for African American community-based organizations all further erode trust between Milwaukee's city government and the Black community.

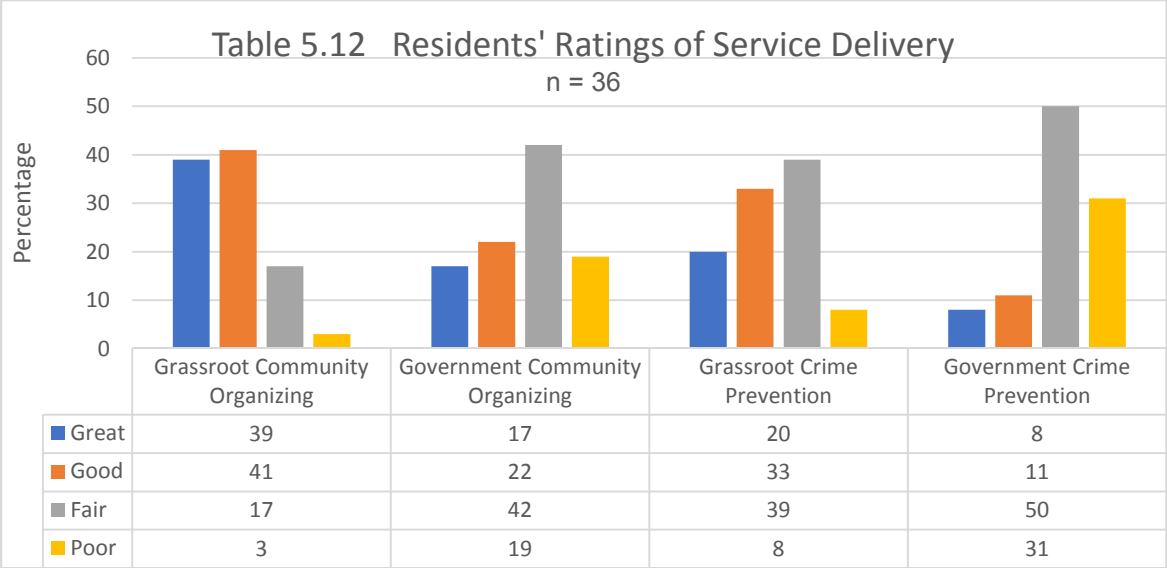
By maintaining a community organizing initiative in the Black community without funding primarily Black-led organizations, the city maintains a de-racialized and

ineffective program. African American neighborhoods mired in long-term poverty, unemployment, and oppression are dependent on city funded services provided by predominantly white-led nonprofit organizations that may fail to understand "the centrality of race within the context of urban inequality" (Bonds, Wolfe & Kenny, 2015, p.1080) The failure of these funded organizations to understand the impact of race can unwittingly perpetuate urban inequality and their own racial and class privilege. Thus, regardless of how well-intentioned the leaders of white-led organizations might be, there is no guarantee that their agendas converge with those of the Black residents (Bonds, Kenny & Wolfe, 2015). In essence, the program funded by the city and delivered primarily by organizations that do not represent or racially match the Black community contribute to what, I term, "the maintenance of benevolent oppression". I define benevolent oppression as the provision of well-intentioned, de-racialized services that perpetuate a climate of dependency and racism, undermine the Black community's efforts to utilize their counter-knowledge, values and culture, fosters institutional racism, and justifies the lack of direct investment into the Black community. Benevolent oppression serves to minimize white guilt, maintain white innocence, protect the white racial frame and worldview, and perpetuate the false narrative of white superiority/Black inferiority. This concept of "benevolent oppression" warrants further assessment, research, and consideration to determine if continued use has merit.

Grassroots Community Organizing and Government-led Organizing

Black grassroots or culturally based community organizing utilizes culturally appropriate methods, promotes leadership from within the community, and uses a hands-on approach. Grassroots organizing is driven by the community and

challenges the existing power structure. Government organizing is a top-down hierarchy that works to maintain the status quo. In discussing the difference between grassroots and government-led community organizing and crime prevention, the research team struggled to use a word that would distinguish a type of community organizing from government organizing, “grassroots” crime prevention from “government-led” crime prevention. While the research team agreed to use the word “grassroots,” we understood that everyone we interviewed might not know what we meant by this term. We also understood that some residents would not want to provide ratings. This was true. Only 36 of the 90 residents interviewed indicated that they understood what “grassroots” organizing is and were comfortable providing a rating. Those residents who indicated that they understood what the term “grassroots” means and were comfortable in providing a rating were asked to assess organizing efforts, on a scale of great, good, fair, and poor, with the following questions: 1) Rate how well you think these “grassroots” community organizing efforts are working; 2) Rate how well you think these “government-funded” community organizing efforts are working; 3) Rate how well you think these “grassroots” crime prevention efforts are working; 4) Rate how well you think these “grassroots” crime prevention efforts are working. Results from these queries are presented in Table 5.12. The ratings that these residents provided the different types of community organizing and crime prevention are illustrated below.



	Grassroot Community Organizing	Government Community Organizing	Grassroot Crime Prevention	Government Crime Prevention
Great	39	17	20	8
Good	41	22	33	11
Fair	17	42	39	50
Poor	3	19	8	31

Of the residents who had an understanding of grassroots efforts, 80% of them rated grassroots community organizing as “good” or “great,” while only 39% rated government-led community organizing as “good” or “great.” A large number of interviewees, 55%, rated grassroots crime prevention efforts as “good” or “great,” while 19% rated government led crime prevention as “good” or “great.” These ratings are in contrast with the way in which some CDBG funded organizations view their work. Several rated their organizations’ efforts in providing community organization as “good” or “great.”

Some view government-led community organizing as a method to control Blacks, with one Black resident saying that “The grassroots is for the people, of the people, and by the people. The government wants to control the people. They want the ‘say-so’ amongst the people” (Resident 36, 2016). Another resident who expressed an understanding of grassroots initiatives said, “Grassroots comes from the people and government led is more of bureaucracy that is not sensitive to the people and what their needs are” (Resident 37, 2016). A resident who rated grassroots community organizing

as “great” indicated that “I think we do without for each other” (Resident 38, 2018). Another resident who rated grassroots organizing as great indicated “ Neighborhood leaders empower the community. The community stands up for what’s right! There is a problem with trust between neighborhood and government. The neighborhood has a claim, stake, and ownership” (Resident, 39, 2106). Another resident rated grassroots community organizing as “good”, stating that “Yes there are people that come to your aid when things were not right. We help each other. Another resident indicated that “grassroots increases the unity in the community.” (Resident 40, 2016) These comments reflect the sentiment expressed by many residents and leaders of Black-led agencies that the Black community is subjected to racialized social control through seemingly benign, well-intentioned government-led community organizing efforts. A government official acknowledged that community organizing was difficult for the city, saying, “So the concept of grass roots governance, pure community organization comes from the neighborhoods and the streets. A bottom-up versus a top-down type of organizing was tried and failed mainly because of political reasons” (Government Official 4, 2018).

While some Blacks residents we interviewed had a strong understanding of grassroots efforts, many were not familiar with the term “grassroots.” Thus, they were unable to evaluate distinctions between grassroots and government-led community organizing and crime prevention efforts. Even as the word “grassroots” was unfamiliar to some interviewees, they were aware of the need to decrease forced dependency on government and to increase reliance on themselves. In fact, a resident who did know what the word “grassroots” meant said, “We’re always controlled when the government

steps in with programs. We shouldn't have to rely on the government for anything. We have enough resources that we should be relying on ourselves. That's as bad as the chicken asking the fox for some money" (Resident 41, 2018). Another resident stated a preference for , "Community doing for itself; neighbors coming together for one common goal." (Resident 42, 2016). While the word "grassroots" was not familiar to some residents, the concept of African American having control over and reliance on themselves and their destiny and less dependence on and control by the government were sentiments expressed by many African American residents and leaders of CBOs.

What became obvious in listening to African American residents is that they viewed government funded, police led efforts in a negative, oppressive way, while they viewed grassroots efforts positively. Regardless of what government and white-led organizations may document, frame or believe, many Black residents did not connect with government funded programs and services managed by white-led organizations. In regard to crime prevention, a leader of a Black-led organization indicated that "Government is reactionary; people are afraid of police and retaliation, especially by the police department." (CBO Leader 19, 2016) "Grassroots people make the effort to prevent crime; the government makes you change." (Resident 43, 2016). One resident indicated that the police are better equipped, and the government-led crime prevention has more power. A resident who did not provide a rating describe government crime prevention as dependent on the political season and climate, and it was expensive but not seen.

African American residents trusted grassroots organizing as a method to counter racial oppression. A Black resident stated, "Grassroots works with people in

the heart of the community, helps people know and understand, rather than have a hopeless feeling that there is nothing they can do" (Resident 44, 2016). While seldom embraced as a viable strategy in local government, Black residents and leaders reinforced the tradition of mutual aid, of Black community members helping each other. An editorial in the *Milwaukee Community Journal* (MCJ) validated the value of using Black organizations to solve Black community issues. In response to the work of Project Central Voice, the editor wrote,

> We've always maintained that Black organizations are best suited and committed to addressing Black problems. Not just because they are more culturally attuned to the constituency than non-African American organizations, but more so because they are generally compelled to bringing about the socioeconomic changes that improve the quality of life for our community. Although our assessment is generally shared by most in our community, it is not the guiding thought behind those who administer the allocation of federal Community Black Grant funds. (Mitchell, Jr., March 14, 2018)

The editor's opinions are consistent with the comments of the African Americans interviewed for this study and reinforced widespread views in the Black community regarding the need to fund and the value derived from funding African American organizations to lead the implementation of solutions to critical issues in the Black community.

As the editor of MCJ indicated, culture can galvanize community organizing. Warren and Mapp explain that valuing counter-knowledge and shared histories is

important in community organizing. While there are variations including the participants, methods and structures, there are also similarities in racial, ethnic and class backgrounds that provide insight for researchers. Warren and Mapp identify a similarity in how these community- based organizations operate (Warren & Mapp, 2011; Goss, 2015). Specifically, many Black-led organizations use a framework focused "on deconstructing white supremacy and internalized racism" and "the use of change initiatives that challenge the validity of the existing social structures and the resultant power relationships" (Warren & Mapp, 2011, p. 647). Donnell and Karanja (2000) explain that this framework is created as an outgrowth of the organization's cultural heritage, shared histories and identities that form the basis for community organizing. "Culture informs a group's value system. Culture determines, ultimately, how effective a group will be in meeting its stated objectives" (Donnell & Karanja, 2000, p.75). Unfortunately, this is information that the city and its CDBG administration either does not know, understand, or value. Or it is information that the city fears because community organizing in the African American is often focused on changing the status quo, eradicating racism and obtaining equality and justice for the oppressed. Thus, the city's failure to ensure culturally appropriate community organizing is likely by design, an intentional action substantiated by the fact that CDBG operates in an environment that perpetuates white superiority through its funding of primarily white-led organizations with limited competition and culturally inappropriate community organizing ideologies and strategies.

I propose that the CDBG community organizing program incorporate Black community organizing in NRSA #1. Many of the Black-led community-based

organizations in Milwaukee were developed because of the commitment of their leaders, their ability to operate on shoestring budgets, value African American culture, and be committed to racial equality and social justice. As the chart below indicates, there are several critical differences between the city's community organizing and traditional Black grassroots community organizing.

Table 5.13: Key Elements of Community Organizing		
Area of Focus	**City's Community Organizing**	**Grassroots/Cultural Based Framework - Community Organizing**
Hierarchy	Top Down	Bottom Up
Power	Maintains existing power structure	Challenges existing power structure
Leader	Leaders from outside the community	Leaders from within the community
Power	Government leadership and power	Constituent leadership and power
Leadership Development	Maintain existing leadership	Develop residents as leaders
Driver	Government Driven	Community Driven
Outcomes	Transactional	Transformational
Policy	Status quo and existing norms maintained	Policy wins, changes in norms
Causal Factor	Perceived deficits of blacks	Structural issues
Accountability	Lack of accountability (Scapegoating)	Accountability of elected officials et al.
Focus of Change	Change black behavior	Change Systems
Value of Culture/History	Lack knowledge of black culture/history	Teach african american culture and history

The chart illustrates contrasting methods, values, and ideologies of community organizing which are girded by conflicting goals. The city's community

organizing maintains the current social and racial order; the culture framework provides for the creation of a new social and racial order. The selection and implementation of one of these competing community organizing frameworks determines whether the discourse and practices influences institutional structures, processes and systems that either strengthen white superiority/Black inferiority tropes or creates the foundation for racial equality, equity and social justice. (Warren & Mapp, 2011).

Despite the potential that the city could fund Black-led organizations to provide community organizing in the African American community, issues of co-option and tension remain. Is it a realistic expectation that African American organizations could effectively operate in a racialized system of oppression created to keep African Americans in an inferior position in society? This depends on who defines the effectiveness of the operation. For the government, the effective operation is demonstrated by the city's continued and consistent funding of organizations that achieve outcomes that do not address critical issues in the Black community and support a flawed collective efficacy ideology and civil remedies strategy. The effective operation for African American residents focuses on change and power. As a resident indicated the government-led crime prevention is ineffective because "it puts band-aids on issues and is reactive, not proactive. Resident 45, 2016). Another resident indicated a lack of confidence in the sity effectuating change because "the city is stuck in time and behind where other cities are" (Resident 46, 2016). A tension exists created by competing political and eocnomic interests between Milwaukee city government and the African American

community. African American administrative leaders and elected officials are at times subsumed into the government structure, supporting policies, processes, and mechanisms for control, when they may have at times strongly advocated to rescind them. Will Black-led agencies be co-opted as well? Would this Insider position require Black-led organizations to accommodate the government's values, norms, and oppressive agenda regarding the Black community to maintain government funding, reputation, and privilege? Would this Insider position relegate Black organizations to the position of dependency, relying on government funding for sustainability and thus making them susceptible to co-option? A leader of a Black-led organizations thinks this scenario is likely, asserting:

> "I am gonna stay away from government funding. We don't want a penny from it. We don't believe in grants. They say those who pay into your vision, run your vision. So, if I'm doing an event and we need $2000, and this government program says here we'll give you $1500, they now own more than half of that vision. So, they can say, 'Hey, we're gonna give you this money, but you can't say this.' So, no, we control our own" (CBO Leader 19, 2018).

Although Black-led agencies struggle for funding and the City demonstrates a tendency to fund primarily white-led organizations to provide services in the Black community, the research of this study demonstrates critical reasons that development and support of Black-led organizations are important, despite serious concerns regarding cooptation. Critical Race Theorists "focus on African American residents as creators of knowledge and belief in their capacity to change the racial and social order inherent within the

system." (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 77) Aligned with this view, a leader of a Black-led organization stated, "I'm less of a believer in the fact that the system has the capacity to hold us back. I'm more of a believer in the power of us to be able to come out of it" (CBO Leader 20, 2018). This perspective suggests that two strategies are critical to eradicating systems of oppression and are predicated on African Americans continuing to operate with a double-consciousness as Insiders and Outsiders. First, African Americans must look internally to promote the functioning of their community while working to gain greater influence in mainstream society. African Americans must retain their culture and traditions of mutual aid and self-help; these are vital assets needed today. The investment in and cultivation of resources in the Black community to effect positive change are paramount in decreasing the Black community's dependency on an oppressive government and society for resources. At the same time, African Americans must be willing to become a part of the American power structure and act as agents of change inside mainstream institutions. This is challenging because past efforts to integrate have not achieved the goal of equality that many Blacks anticipated. As one leader of a Black-led organization indicated, "Integration in some ways killed us even though it got us at the table. The choices seem to be assimilation versus equal power. Challenging the system is difficult because often we believe that if we rock the boat, we'll lose something" (CBO Leader 21, 2016). This belief has been confirmed throughout the history of Blacks in America and Milwaukee. Still, African Americans must identify when their interest in racial equality converges with the interests of mainstream institutions, white constituencies, and other groups experiencing oppression and inequality. When interests converge, African Americans must build strong

connections and work in strategic ways with potential allies to affect change. The challenge is great. The issues are complex and difficult to address, and the inherent tensions they produce are hard to resolve.

Summary of Major Findings and Recommendations

Here is a summary of the data presented, key findings, and recommendations for change:

Finding One: Many African American residents possess significant experience in, knowledge of, and commitment to, their community.

a. African Americans have lived in NRSA #1 for years. The average residency in NRSA #1 of residents interviewed for this research was 33 years.
b. African American residents participate in neighborhood activities through CDBG funded agencies and other community-based organizations.
c. African American residents value their culture and traditions of self-help, collective responsibility, mutual aid, and unity,

Finding Two: While the city has made some minor improvements in program operation, it remains a flawed program.

a. There is limited and superficial involvement of African Americans in the strategic planning process and prioritization activities for CDBG.
b. The majority of CBOs that receive CDBG funding to provide community organizing services in NRSA #1 are not Black-led organizations. This funding pattern has existed for 40 years.
c. Most of the staff, board, and executive leadership of the CDBG funded agencies are white and do not live in the target neighborhoods. Thus, a racial mismatch

exists between the residents in the community and the organizations funded to provide services in these neighborhoods. The mismatch keeps African Americans in a subservient position and devalues Black agency and self-determination.

d. The community organizing and crime prevention dollars fund crime-prevention activities connected to the Milwaukee Police Department and the work of city departments; few dollars are invested in the African American community.
e. The City's community organizing strategy focuses on short-term activities rather than long-term transformative outcomes, perpetuating discourse and practices that marginalize and criminalize the African American community.

Finding Three: African Americans support community-based organizations that utilize African American culture and traditions to improve their community.

a. African American residents view grassroots, culturally based efforts as more effective than government-led community organizing and crime prevention efforts.

Finding Four: Black-led community-based organizations are involved in the community and are committed to providing quality services, and working to improve their communities.

a. Many of Milwaukee's African American community-based organizations are under-utilized and under-funded without a commitment from the city to provide capacity building opportunities for African Americans.
b. Many of the Black-led organizations acknowledge a need for capacity building and administrative training and assistance.

Finding Five: The city could support creation of a more inclusive community that values equality, equity, and social justice by implementing a CDBG program which supports Black-led community- based organizations that strengthen the Black community infrastructure.

The three main recommendations from these findings are:

1. Invest in community-based organizations that represent the African American community.
2. Invest in capacity building of African American community-based organizations
3. Eliminate the current CDBG funded community organizing program and invest in a culturally competent community organizing framework.

Recommendation One: Invest in Community-Based Organizations that Represent the African American community

a. Decrease the racial mismatch between community-based organizations providing services and the residents receiving the services.
b. Require greater representation of African Americans in leadership, executive, and board positions for community organizations receiving funding for NRSA #1.
c. Establish a priority for contracting with organizations whose staff and board live in NRSA #1.

Recommendation Two: Invest in Capacity Building African American Community Based Organizations

a. Increase utilization of African American community-based organizations.

b. Allocate resources to organizations that invest, not just operate, in the African American community.

c. Implement Programs that promote the support and development capacity building of African American nonprofits and community-based organizations.

d. Conduct outreach to identify African American community-based organizations; provide an opportunity for assessment of strengths and areas for improvement.

e. Provide coordinated training and support for African American community-based organizations in which operational issues are identified.

f. Develop an online directory of African American community-based organizations to increase government, funders, potential collaborators, and residents' knowledge of these organizations.

Recommendation Three. Eliminate the current CDBG funded community organizing program and invest in a culturally competent community organizing framework.

a. Utilize CDBG funds to directly invest in the African American community organizing organizations.

b. Invest in programs that increase equality, equity and social justice rather than on surveillance, criminalization, and control of African Americans.

c. Develop and enforce accountability measures for community organizing services that ensure achievement of transformational outcomes that address racial disparity and racial oppression in NRSA #1.

Section VI. CONCLUSION

Systems of oppression have operated in American society since its inception. Racist ideologies have justified the use of slavery, Jim Crow laws, lynchings, segregation, and discrimination in education, employment, housing, and the criminal justice system to oppress African Americans. This cruel legacy of American history is often ignored and minimalized. African Americans have been categorized as inferior, unworthy "Others" to justify the exploitation of Black bodies for labor and profit, the exclusion of African Americans from access to equal opportunities, and the maintenance of a racial and social order based on white superiority. Many of the oppressive actions and systems which exist today are ingrained in many American institutions, including the social welfare system. The American social welfare system based on the English Poor Laws, differentiates between the "worthy"' poor and the "unworthy" poor. African Americans were deemed "unworthy," excluded from participation in the American social welfare system for centuries. This differentiation was also grounded in the social construction of race as a tool to categorize African Americans in order to justify oppressive and racist actions.

Racism exists and has evolved, morphed into more acceptable forms: from slavery, Jim Crow and segregation to institutional racism. It has become less overt, seemingly more covert and passive; it is more benevolent in its presentation and form while still restrictive, debilitating, and degrading in process, impact, and outcomes. Racism is embedded into institutions and maintained by systems of oppression and structures of domination that adversely affect African Americans. Fundamental to the maintenance of these oppressive systems and structures of domination is the

entrenchment of the ideology of a white racial frame (Feagin, 2010) that justifies white superiority, validates views of black inferiority, and prevents white America from seeing beyond a racialized world view. Through discourse, whites are framed as benevolent, intelligent and superior and African Americans framed as dysfunctional, illiterate criminals. Based on this false narrative, white elites have operated through racial hierarchies to implement practices to maintain white superiority and relegate African Americans to the bottom rungs of society. Many Americans use these effective and popular tropes to justify the maintenance of second-class citizenship for blacks. This results in the maintenance of white self-interest that ensures white privilege, white control of major political, social, educational and economic institutions, and the use of capitalism as a tool of racial oppression.

Systems of oppression incorporate practices that protect the white racial frame and the interest of white elites. For example, in the history of Milwaukee, it is recorded that city government intentionally created oppressive, destructive, destitute environments in the segregated areas of Milwaukee in which Blacks were often forced to live. Evidence validates that not only were segregation, containment, and control evident in the policies and practices the city implemented, but also that these actions were taken with an intent to punish, demean and demoralize Blacks. This was true not only of city government, but also the white public which supported anti-Black policies, for example by protesting to block the construction of scattered site public housing in white neighborhoods. Many times what the City of Milwaukee policies and white Milwaukee residents supported aligned with their self-interest; to control Black population growth in Milwaukee, to segregate African Americans, and to maintain the

racial order and white superiority. These divergent interests have spurred racial oppression since the first slaves were brought to America.

The Milwaukee CDBG Program is an example of a system of oppression that has operated for decades, denying access to equal opportunity, thwarting Black-led community development and self-help, and controlling resource allocation under the guise of a benevolent public/private partnership. Previous significant national and local studies identify concerns regarding citizen participation, funding allocation strategies, impact of community input, decline in funding neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, and decreased commitment to build capacity in Black-led organizations. While city administrators have made some improvements, the program continues to oppress the African American community.

This oppression is demonstrated through an analysis of the ineffective design and implementation of the community organizing program which is managed by the city and sanctioned by the federal government. While making minor changes in the CDBG program, the city maintains a CDBG program design that maintains the status quo, politicizes the allocation process, maintains restrictive policies, and does little to mitigate persistent racial disparities. The city maintains a paternalistic, oppressive system over African Americans through its allocation of funds to primarily white-led organizations to serve in predominantly Black neighborhoods, its use of culturally inappropriate strategies and ideologies, its underutilization of Black-led organizations, and its acceptance of mediocre transactional outcomes that fail to eradicate long-term structural issues in the Black community. This is especially concerning given Milwaukee's high and consistent rating regarding segregation, poverty and

unemployment in African American neighborhoods. Further, the city fails to invest directly into the Black community and its infrastructure, choosing rather to fund white-led organizations to act as intermediaries between the government and its African American citizens.

The community organizing program is based on false narratives regarding social disorder and family disorganization and social capital in the African American community. A lack of cultural awareness in program design and a racial mismatch in leadership of this decentralized service system is evident. The community organizing methodology used by the city is a top-down process that uses criminological ideologies and is dependent on a partnership with law enforcement. The cultural framework for community organizing prevalent in the African American community is a bottom-up process that uses Afro-centric philosophy, culture and traditions and values mutual-aid, collective responsibility and cooperation among African American residents.

Generally those City of Milwaukee officials who were interviewed acknowledged some concerns about how the Community Organizing program operates. They expressed concerns about whether the strategies employed, the places in the neighborhood that organizers focused on, the lack of capacity for comprehensive coverage of neighborhoods. Some officials from the city and other government entities attended PCV feedback sessions, asked questions, expressed their opinions and interacted with residents. At the same time, City officials recommended incremental changes that did not address core programmatic issues identified in this research. Unfortunately, covert racism is so normalized in our society that it is difficult to detect even by those culpable in its perpetuation.

The need for substantive change in the level of racism and deprivation experienced in Milwaukee's African American community is substantiated by several reports including Levine's "The Shame of Milwaukee" which shows the deterioration of key employment, housing, and education indicators since 1970. However, while the city has been unable to reverse this negative reality, it continues to fund white-led agencies to provide inadequate services that achieve mediocre outcomes. This was a major finding of the Bonds study in 2004; it is a finding in this research as well. At the same time, city documents continue to frame the issue as Moynihan and others did in the 1960s by citing Black family disorganization, anti-social behavior, and neighborhood social disorder as the factors that reproduce poverty. The preference to frame the issue as one of Black dysfunction and deviance rather than one of racial oppression and the failure of government to effectively address long standing effects of racism is a part of the false narrative promulgated by the mainstream to deflect blame, responsibility and accountability.

History has shown that systems of oppression are resistant to change and that racism morphs into different forms at different points in history. Contemporary racism invades institutions in a covert, hard-to-detect manner than can cultivate hegemony. However, the African Americans interviewed did not accept the policies and practices administered through the Milwaukee Community Development Block Grant Program and its Community Organizing grants. The views of African American residents and African American leaders of community-based organizations are incongruent with the city's program data regarding funding, competition, staff selection, and outcomes. History confirms a high degree of Black agency in Milwaukee. While often striving to be

accepted and assimilated into mainstream Milwaukee, African Americans also worked to create a viable separate community and to resist oppression. Ultimately, they want their efforts and opportunities to enable them to live in communities where they can achieve economic stability, raise healthy and stable families, and, like most Americans, aspire to achieve the American Dream.

The issues raised in this research are at the crux of Critical Race Theory, examining the intersection of power, race, and the law in the context of society and culture. Critical Race Theory provides tools for analyzing data, for exploring the normalization of racism and the fabrication of false history and narrative, for identifying where interests converge and diverge, for acknowledging the intersectionality of race and class, and for documenting the silencing of the Black voice and the marginalization of the Black experience. Conversely the use of revisionist history and the chronicling the experiences lived and the opinions voice by Blacks give weight to the concept of counter-knowledge. These tools have provided powerful evidence that refutes government data, providing for an opportunity to debunk the official story presented by government in official documents and to unmask a system of oppression. Thus, critical race blends theory with practice with the intent of generating social change.

While the focal point of this research is the city CDBG community organizing program, Milwaukee does not operate in isolation. Rather it is a part of the American tradition of institutional racism embedded into the greater American society and into local government, corporations, and foundations. The research conducted for this dissertation was designed with the intent of generating positive social change. While there may be an opportunity for change, societal and systems change is a daunting

task. I advocate for further research on how institutional racism is deconstructed, on the impact of oppression on the oppressor and the oppressed as well as critical analysis of whether the term “benevolent oppression” is of value in explaining the significantly oppressive nature of acts, services and programs that mainstream America identifies as benevolent. I also advocate for a greater focus on the impact of organizations and institutions on the perpetuation of oppression in communities of color.

This dissertation was grounded in the real-world application of community based participatory research, utilizing the assets of our African American community, as trained researchers, resident experts, and committed organizational leaders. This dissertation is an example of the strength of community based participatory research and the power of Black agency. This is not a new topic; many Milwaukee African Americans, residents and leaders of community-based organizations had already considered it. Yet this project struck a nerve. African Americans indicated their support for bringing this topic to the surface for public consideration and discussion. Individuals who were interviewed expressed support for this project and appreciated our focusing on this issue. As one African American leader of a community-based organization told me, I can speak out when others cannot because of their fear of losing funding or losing status in mainstream Milwaukee.

As a result of the research, findings and recommendations in this dissertation, several members of Project Central Voice are creating a nonprofit, Mutual Aid Network, Inc. this year to provide technical support to Black-led organizations. The Milwaukee branch of the NAACP has agreed to house the offices of the Mutual Aid Network, Inc. in its office in NRSA #1. Operation of this non-profit will provide new opportunities for

research and social change. But more research is warranted: analyzing private foundations to assess their role in perpetuating systems of oppressions, assessing the stability of Black-led organizations and the factors that affect their functioning, and creating an in-depth framework for deconstructing racism.

The objective of this dissertation was to focus on the identification of systems of oppression and recommendation of actions that could deconstruct oppression. However, this effort is also about our democratic values and whether justice, liberty, and equality are meant for some Americans or for all. Our democratic values, the foundational beliefs and guiding principles, are communicated to us through the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States. Our nation's perpetuation of systems of oppression betrays these values and divides its people when we should be united. The Kerner Commission Report concluded that all Americans, regardless of race, will suffer the consequences of the ongoing, unresolved urban decay and that only with a tremendous commitment to comprehensive action can out nation build a future compatible with the ideals on which America was formed (Kerner Commission Report, 1968). This is the challenge that Milwaukee faces; this is the challenge of America as well.

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CBO Leader 11, Confidential Interview conducted by Project Central Voice Researcher, 2016

CBO Leader 12, Confidential Interview conducted by Project Central Researcher Voice, 2016

CBO Leader 13, Confidential Interview conducted by Project Central Voice Researcher, 2016

CBO Leader 14, Confidential Interview conducted by Project Central Voice Researcher, 2016

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- CDBG Year 2016 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds
- CDBG Year 2017 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds
- CDBG Year 2018 Funding Recommendations, Entitlement Funds

CDBG Community Based Organization Documents

- Community Development Grants Administration – Application Executive Summary – Funding Year 2015
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APPENDIX A:

Project Central Voice Interview Questionnaire For Residents

Introduction:
Hello, my name is __ and I am a volunteer working with Project Central Voices to help uncover and make heard the voices of the community. Thank you for allowing us to spend a few minutes talking with you, your time is valuable, and we appreciate it. Project Central Voices is trying to learn more about what residents in Milwaukee have to say about community based organizations and the work these organizations are doing around community organizing and crime prevention.

I will be asking you a series of questions to learn more about what you think. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your opinions about the community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood. We want to know about what types of community organizing and crime prevention activities are taking place in your neighborhood, your involvement in these activities and your view on how well these efforts are working? We are interested in knowing what improvements you would suggest that would improve the results of these efforts. We will also ask you a few questions about yourself.

You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Also I want to remind you that this interview is being recorded as was indicated in the consent form which you signed.

We also encourage participants to attend a community feedback session where findings from this study will be presented. After you complete your interview, you will have the opportunity to provide fill out a contact information form so that you can be notified of the data and time of the community feedback meeting and dinner. You are also welcome to complete a contact information form if you would like to attend the meeting but not participate in an interview.

The comments that you provide in this interview will be considered anonymous comments unless you specifically tell me that you want them to be attributed to you. Our process is that we separate the names of the people we interview from the comments and information we receive during the interviews. The interview will take anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour to complete. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Let me tell you a little bit about myself first, I'm from city and have lived in Milwaukee for number of years. I currently live in the __neighborhood. I work as a ___ (list type of occupation, not title or place). My favorite thing about Milwaukee is __.

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. How many years have you lived in Milwaukee?
3. Which neighborhood do you live in?

4.Can you tell me about your neighborhood?
5.Can you tell me about any improvements you've seen since you've lived in your current neighborhood?
6.Can you tell me about any declines you've seen since you've lived in your current neighborhood?

Community Organizing

7.People talk about community organizing, what does community organizing mean to you?
8.How would you describe "grassroots" community organizing?
9.Are you aware of any "grassroots" community organizing efforts in your neighborhood?

No- Skip to question 14 Yes-Continue

10. Who leads these efforts?
11. What issues are they organized around?
12. Have you had any contact or involvement with them? If yes, please explain.
13. Can you rate how well you think these "grassroots" community organizing efforts are working?

1- Poor
2- Fair
3- Good
4- Great

14. Can you tell me a little more about your choice?
15. How would you describe "government led" community organizing?
16. Are you aware of any "government led" community organizing efforts in your neighborhood?

No-Skip to question 21 Yes-Continue

17. What organizations lead these efforts?
18. What issues are they organizing around?
19. Have you had any contact or involvement with them? If yes, please explain.
20. Can you rate how well these "government funded" community organizing efforts are working?

a. Poor
b - Fair
c- Good
d- Great

21. Can you tell me a little bit more about your choice?
22. Is there a difference between "grassroots" organizing and the City of Milwaukee's community organizing efforts? Please explain.

Crime Prevention

23. People talk about crime prevention, what does crime prevention mean to you?
24. How would you describe "grassroots" crime prevention?
25. Are you aware of any "grassroots" crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood?

No- Skip to question 29 yes- Continue.

26. Who leads these efforts?
27. Have you had any contact or involvement with them? If yes, please explain.

28. Can you rate how well you think these "grassroots" crime prevention efforts are working?

a- Poor
b- Fair
c- Good
d- Great

29. Can you tell me a little bit more about your choice?
30. How would you describe "government led" crime prevention?
31. Are you aware of any "government led" crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood?

No- Skip to question 34 Yes- Continue.

32. What organizations lead these efforts?
33. Have you had any contact or involvement with them? If yes, Please explain.
34. Can you rate how well you think these "government funded" crime prevention efforts are working?

a- Poor
b- Fair
c- Good
d- Great

35. Is there a difference between "grassroots" and "government led" crime prevention? Please explain.

CDBG Community Organizing and Crime Prevention:

36. Do you think community organizing efforts should be combined with crime prevention efforts?
37. Have you ever participated in the following activities:

Select all that apply.

_Acquire/Rehab/Sell a home or rental property
_Block club
_Block clean up
_Drug house reduction program
_Graffiti reduction program
_Lead reduction (pipes or paint) program
_Neighborhood planning program/meetings
_Reported nuisances
_Other:

Thanks for your comments. Now I'd like to collect some demographic information about you to provide a more complete picture.

Demographics:

38. Please circle your ethnic origin/race.

White
Hispanic or Latino
Black or African American
Native American or American Indian
Asian / Pacific Islander
Other: _____

39. Please circle your gender.

Female
Male
Other: _____

40. Please circle your age group.

18-24 years old
25-34 years old
35-44 years old
45-54 years old
55-64 years old
65-74 years old
75 years or older

41. Please circle your household income.

Less than $10,000
$10,000 to $14,999
$15,000 to $24,999
$25,000 to $34,999
$35,000 to $49,999
$50,000 to $74,999
$75,000 to $99,999
$100,000 to $149,999
$150,000 or more

42. Please circle the highest level of education you have completed.

Some schooling, no diploma
High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
Some college credit, no degree
Trade/technical/vocational training
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree
Professional degree
Doctorate degree

43. What is your employment status?

Unemployed
Employed (working for someone else)
Self-Employed
Other:

44. Please circle your housing status.

Owner
Renter

Other:

45. What is your zip code?

END OF RESIDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRE

APPENDIX B:

Project Central Voice Interview Questionnaire For Organizations

Introduction:

Hello, my name is __ and I am working with Project Central Voices to help uncover and make heard the voices of the community. Thank you for allowing me to spend a few minutes talking with you, your time is valuable, and we appreciate it. Project Central Voices is trying to learn more about what residents in Milwaukee have to say about community based organizations and the work these organizations are doing around community organizing and crime prevention.

This is a community based participatory research project funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. It is also a part of my dissertation research for my doctorate program in the Urban Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). I am the Project Leader working with Katie Pritchard, former CEO of the Planning Council, Fred Royal, CEO of the NAACP and Clayborn Benson, CEO of the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. Also we work with a 10 member Citizen Board that has been involved in all phases of this project.

You were selected for an interview because you have applied for and/or are involved in the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant or other related government activities. I am very interested in hearing your opinions and insights as an agency or government leader.

I will be asking you a series of questions to learn more about what you think. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your opinions about the community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood. We want to know about what types of community organizing and crime prevention activities are taking place in your neighborhood, your involvement in these activities and your view on how well these efforts are working? We are interested in knowing what improvements you would suggest that would improve the results of these efforts. We will also ask you a few questions about yourself.

You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Also I want to remind you that this interview is being recorded as was indicated in the consent form which you signed.

We also encourage participants to attend a community feedback session where findings from this study will be presented. After you complete your interview, you will have the opportunity to provide fill out a contact information form so that you can be notified of the data and time of the community feedback meeting and dinner. You are also welcome to complete a contact information form if you would like to attend the meeting but not participate in an interview. The comments that you provide in this interview will be considered to be anonymous comments unless you specifically tell me that you want them to be attributed to you. Our process is that we separate the names of the people we interview from the comments and information we receive

during the interviews. The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Let me tell you a little bit about myself first, I'm from city and have lived in Milwaukee for number of years. I currently live in the __neighborhood. I work as a ___ (list type of occupation, not title or place). My favorite thing about Milwaukee is __.

1. To begin, let's start with some questions about you. How long you have worked in this field and how did you decide to make this your career?

2. Can you tell me about your organization and its mission?

3. Can you tell me about the neighborhood your organization sought and/or received CDBG community organizing/crime prevention funding for?

Community Organizing

4. **What is your organization's vision or philosophy about community organizing, what does community organizing mean to you?**

5. **What are some of the key community organizing efforts that your organization has implemented?**

6. How would you rate how well you think your organization's community organizing efforts are working?

a - Poor
b - Fair
c - Good
d - Great

7. Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well your community organizing efforts are working?

8. What are the top three key organizations that you partner with in your community organizing efforts?

9. How much do you feel like your organization is a part of the community where you provide community organizing efforts?

a - Not at all
b - Barely
c -Moderately
d -Very much

10. Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well your community organizing efforts are working?

1. How could you improve your organization's community organizing efforts?

11. What barriers prevent you from implementing these improvements?

Crime Prevention

12. What is your organization's vision or philosophy about crime prevention, what does crime prevention mean to you?

13. What specific safety and crime prevention efforts is your organization engaged in in the CDBG area?

14. Can you rate how well you think your organization's safety and crime prevention efforts are working?

a - Poor
b - Fair
c - Good
d - Great

15. Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well your community organizing efforts are working?

16. What are the top three organizations you partner with in your organization's safety or crime prevention efforts?

17. Can you rate the level of safety in the neighborhood your organization serves with the CDBG community organizing/crime prevention funding?

a - Not at all safe
b - Slightly safe
c - Moderately safe
d - Extremely safe

18. What type of evidence do you use to rate how well your community organizing efforts are working?

19. How could you improve your organization's crime prevention efforts?

20. What barriers prevent you from implementing these improvements?

CDBG Community Organizing and Crime Prevention:

21. Has your organization ever led the implementation of any of the following activities:

Select all that apply:

_Acquire/Rehab/Sell a home or rental property
_Block club
_Block clean up
_Drug house reduction program
_Graffiti reduction program

_Job Training program
_Job placement program
_Lead reduction (pipes or paint) program
_Neighborhood planning program/meetings
_Reported nuisances

22. In your experience, what causes poverty?

23. In your experience, what causes crime?

24. What do you think is the link between community organizing and crime prevention?

Thanks for your comments. Now I'd like to collect some demographic information about your agency to provide a more complete picture of your organization.

Demographics:

25. Do any of your board members reside in NRSA #1?

26. Do any of your staff reside in NRSA #1?

27. Do you reside in NRSA #1?

28. How important do you think it is that people who work on these efforts live in the neighborhoods this initiatives are implemented in?

29. What are the addresses of your organization's offices?

30. What is the demographic breakdown for your Board, CEO, management, staff and clients?

31. What type of decision making and leadership activities does your organization have that community residents participate in?

END OF RESIDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRE

APPENDIX C:

Project Central Voice Interview Questionnaire Government Leaders

Introduction:

Hello, my name is __ and I am working with Project Central Voice to help uncover and make heard the voices of the community. Thank you for allowing me to spend a few minutes talking with you, your time is valuable, and we appreciate it. Project Central Voices is trying to learn more about what residents in Milwaukee have to say about community based organizations and the work these organizations are doing around community organizing and crime prevention.

This is a community based participatory research project funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. It is also a part of my dissertation research for my doctorate program in the Urban Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). I am the Project Leader working with Katie Pritchard, Executive Director of Data You Can Use, Fred Royal, CEO of the NAACP and Clayborn Benson, CEO of the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. Also we work with a 10 member Citizen Board that has been involved in all phases of this project.

I appreciate the opportunity to interview you because of your government role you play regarding the Community Development Block Grant process and/or the City of Milwaukee's role in implementing community organizing/crime prevention related policies and services. I am very interested in hearing your opinions and insights as a government leader.

I will be asking you a series of questions to learn more about what you think. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your opinions about the community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood. We want to know about what types of community organizing and crime prevention activities are taking place in your neighborhood, your involvement in these activities and your view on how well these efforts are working. We are interested in knowing what improvements you would suggest that would improve the results of these efforts. We will also ask you a few questions about yourself.

You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Also, I want to remind you that this interview is being recorded as was indicated in the consent form which you signed.

We also encourage participants to attend a community feedback session where findings from this study will be presented. After you complete your interview, you will have the opportunity to fill out a contact information form so that you can be notified of the data and time of the community feedback meeting and dinner. You are also welcome to compete a contact information form if you would like to attend the meeting but not participate in an interview.

The comments that you provide in this interview will be considered anonymous comments unless you specifically tell me that you them to be attributed to you. Our process is that we

separate the names of the people we interview from the comments and information we receive during the interviews. The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Let me tell you a little bit about myself first, I'm from *city* and have lived in Milwaukee for *number* of years. I currently live in the __neighborhood. I work as a ___(list type of occupation, not title or place). My favorite thing about Milwaukee is __.

1. **To begin, let's start with a question about you. How long you have worked in this field and how did you decide to make this your career?**

Community Organizing

2. **What is your government organization's vision or philosophy about community organizing, what does community organizing mean to you?**

3. **Can you rate how well you think the community organizing efforts of the City's CDBG funded organizations are doing specifically in NRSA #1?**

a - Poor
b - Fair
c - Good
d - Great

4. **Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well the City's community organizing efforts are working?**

5. **How could you improve the results achieved by the City's CDBG funded organizations in providing community organizing services?**

6. **What barriers prevent CDBG from being more effective in providing community organizing services?**

7. **To what degree do you feel like the voices of the residents are heard and their views incorporated into the implementation of CDBG?**

8. **Can you provide some examples of this?**

Crime Prevention

9. **What is your organization's vision or philosophy about crime prevention, what does crime prevention mean to you?**

10. **Can you rate how well you think the crime prevention efforts of the City's CDBG funded organizations are doing specifically in NRSA #1?**

a - Poor
b - Fair
c - Good
d – Great

11. **Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well your community organizing efforts are working?**

12. **Can you rate the level of safety in the NRSA #1 neighborhoods served by CDBG funded organizations that provide crime prevention services?**

a - Not at all safe
b- Slightly safe
c - Moderately safe
d- Extremely safe

13. **Can you tell me more about that rating? What type of evidence do you use to rate how well the City's community organizing efforts are working?**

14. **How could you improve the results achieved by the City's CDBG funded organizations in providing community organizing services?**

15. **What barriers prevent CDBG from being more effective?**

16. **To what degree do you feel like the voices of the residents are heard and their views incorporated into the implementation of CDBG?**

17. **Can you provide some examples of this?**

18. **In your experience, what causes poverty?**

19. **In your experience, what causes crime?**

20. **What do you think is the link between community organizing and crime prevention?**

END OF RESIDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRE

APPENDIX D:

Project Central Voice Follow-Up Interview Questionnaire for Organizations

Introduction:

Hello, my name is __ and I am working with Project Central Voices to help uncover and make heard the voices of the community. Thank you for allowing me to spend a few minutes talking with you, your time is valuable, and we appreciate it. Project Central Voices is trying to learn more about what residents in Milwaukee have to say about community based organizations and the work these organizations are doing around community organizing and crime prevention.

This is a community based participatory research project funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. It is also a part of my dissertation research for my doctorate program in the Urban Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). I am the Project Leader working with Katie Pritchard, CEO of Data You Can Use, Fred Royal, CEO of the NAACP and Clayborn Benson, CEO of the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. Also we work with a 10 member Citizen Board that has been involved in this project.

You were selected for an interview because you work in the African American community and have either been interviewed previously as a part of this project and/or have attended a Project Central Voice informational meeting where the project was discussed. I am very interested in hearing your opinions and insights as an agency leader.

I will be asking you a series of questions to learn more about what you think. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your involvement in the community, what motivated you to get involved, what successes and obstacles you have experienced.

You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Also I want to remind you that this interview is being recorded as was indicated in the consent form which you signed.

The comments that you provide in this interview will be considered to be anonymous comments unless you specifically tell me that you want them to be attributed to you. Our process is that we separate the names of the people we interview from the comments and information we receive during the interviews. The interview will take about 30 minutes to complete. If at any time you feel uncomfortable continuing with the interview, we can take a break, postpone or end the interview. Do you have any questions before we get started? To begin, let's start with some questions about you. How long you have worked in this field and how did you decide to make this your career?

1. To begin, let's start with some questions about you. How long you have worked in this field and how did you decide to make this your career?

2. Can you tell me about your organization and its mission?

3. What or who motivated you to get involved in community work?

4. What community need or issue did you see that encouraged you to get involved in community work

5. As you have worked in the community, what obstacles have you encountered?

6. What successes have you had?

7. How do you know your work is worth it?

8. What kind of support is needed to build the infrastructure and capacity of African American leaders doing work in the black community?

9. How do you know your work is worth it?

10. What additional information would you like to add?

APPENDIX E: PCV Service Provider Letter

Dear _____,

Project Central Voice, a research initiative funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, would like your input. Over the last fifty years, nonprofit organizations led by leaders of diverse races and ethnicities have received government and philanthropic funds to provide social services to residents of Milwaukee's northside central city. Our project team is gathering information regarding the impact that funding and service systems have on the provision of social services in general and specifically community organizing and crime prevention activities in Milwaukee's northside central city.

What is your assessment of the impact of funding and services on the residents of Milwaukee's northside? What is your perspective regarding the degree of progress we have made over the last fifty years because of the changes in funding and delivery of social services? Do you have suggestions that would enhance the current system?

Our goal is to better understand the various elements of the social service delivery system and how this system impacts our community. As a provider of these services in our community we would like to invite you to participate in an interview to assist us in increasing our knowledge of these services.

Please contact _____ at _____ to schedule a time for us to have this conversation. We look forward to speaking with you to gain your perspective on these topics.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX F: PCV Civic Leader Letter

PROJECT CENTRAL VOICE

Dear _____,

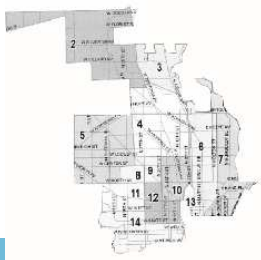
Project Central Voice, a research initiative funded by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, would like your input. Over the last fifty years, nonprofit organizations led by leaders of diverse races and ethnicities have received government and philanthropic funds to provide social services to residents of Milwaukee's northside central city. Our project team is gathering information regarding the impact that funding and service systems have on the provision of social services in general and specifically community organizing and crime prevention activities in Milwaukee's northside central city.

What is your assessment of the impact of funding and services on the residents of Milwaukee's northside? What is your perspective regarding the degree of progress we have made over the last fifty years because of the changes in funding and delivery of social services? Do you have suggestions that would enhance the current system?

Our goal is to better understand the various elements of the social service delivery system and how this system impacts our community. As an individual knowledgeable about our community, we would like to invite you to participate in an interview to assist us in increasing our knowledge about the impact of these services.

Please contact _____ at _____ to schedule a time for us to have this conversation. We look forward to speaking with you to gain your perspective on these topics.

Sincerely,



2620 West Center Street Milwaukee, WI 53206

APPENDIX G:

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Project Central Voice: Study of Social Service Delivery to Milwaukee African American Community

Person Responsible for Research: Name of PI and Deborah Blanks

Study Description: The purpose of this research study is to assess the inclusion of the community in decision making processes concerning the Community Development Block Grant's (CDBG) Approximately 275 subjects will participate in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview about community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your community. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your opinions about the community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your neighborhood. We want to know about what types of community organizing and crime prevention activities are taking place in your neighborhood, your involvement in these activities and your view on how well these efforts are working? We are interested in knowing what improvements you would suggest that would improve the results of these efforts. We will also ask you a few questions about yourself. This will take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

Risks / Benefits: Risks that you may experience from participating are discomfort, anxiety and privacy concerns from sharing personal opinions. You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions.

We also encourage participants to attend a community feedback meeting and dinner where findings from this study will be presented and discussed. You can provide input regarding the findings at that meeting. After you complete your interview, you will have the opportunity to fill out a contact information form so that you can be notified of the data and time of the community feedback meeting and dinner. You are also welcome to complete a contact information form if you would like to attend the meeting but not participate in an interview.

There will be no costs for participating. Benefits of participating include contributing to the better understanding of community organizing and crime prevention efforts in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. You will also receive a $5 gift card at the completion of the interview.

Confidentiality: Identifying information such as your name will be collected for research purposes including signing this consent form and a receipt for payment. Your responses will be treated as confidential and all reasonable efforts will be made so that no individual participant will be identified with his/her answers. Data from this study will be saved on password protected computer in a locked room at the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. Only research staff will have access to your information. However, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review this study's records.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

Who do I contact for questions about the study: For more information about the study or study procedures, contact Deborah Blanks at dcblanks@uwm.edu and/or 414-807-3678.

Who do I contact for questions about my rights or complaints towards my treatment as a research subject? Contact the UWM IRB at 414-229-3173 or irbinfo@uwm.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must be 18 years of age or older. By signing the consent form, you are giving your consent to voluntarily participate in this research project.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you are aware that the interview will be recorded and are agreeing to have your interview recorded.

_____

Printed Name of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

_____ _____

Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative Date

APPENDIX H:

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: Project Central Voice: Study of Social Service Delivery to Milwaukee African American Community

Person Responsible for Research: Name of PI, Jenna Loyd, and Deborah Blanks

Study Description: The purpose of this research study is to assess the inclusion of the community in decision making processes concerning the Community Development Block Grant's (CDBG) Approximately 275 subjects will participate in this study. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview about community organizing and crime prevention efforts in your community.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview about your community work in Milwaukee's African American community. The types of questions that will be asked focus on your opinions about your organization, its mission, the work you do and the successes and obstacles you have experienced doing community work. We will ask questions about the needs and issues affecting the African American community and what support can be provided to build capacity and infrastructure in the community. This will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

Risks / Benefits: Risks that you may experience from participating are discomfort, anxiety and privacy concerns from sharing personal opinions. You can stop the interview at any point if you find any of the questions in the interview process unsettling to you. We recognize the sensitive nature of the questions and want to ensure that you are comfortable responding to the questions.

There will be no costs for participating. Benefits of participating include contributing to the better understanding of community development, community organizing and crime prevention efforts in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Benefits also include providing information that contributes to a better understanding of community needs and community work in the African American community.

Confidentiality: Identifying information such as your name will be collected for research purposes including signing this consent form and a receipt for payment. Your responses will be treated as confidential and all reasonable efforts will be made so that no individual participant will be identified with his/her answers. Data from this study will be saved on password protected computer in a locked room at the Wisconsin Black Historical Society. Only research staff will have access to your information.

However, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, the Institutional Review Board at UW-Milwaukee or appropriate federal agencies like the Office for Human Research Protections may review this study's records.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

Who do I contact for questions about the study: For more information about the study or study procedures, contact Deborah Blanks at dcblanks@uwm.edu and/or 414-807-3678.

Who do I contact for questions about my rights or complaints towards my treatment as a research subject? Contact the UWM IRB at 414-229-3173 or irbinfo@uwm.edu.

Research Subject's Consent to Participate in Research:

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must be 18 years of age or older. By signing the consent form, you are giving your consent to voluntarily participate in this research project.

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you are aware that the interview will be recorded and are agreeing to have your interview recorded.

_____

Printed Name of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative

_____ _____

Signature of Subject/Legally Authorized Representative Date

APPENDIX I:

Project Central Voice: Phase Two Research

Inventory of Human Assets: Milwaukee African American Community

The Project Central Voice Team is developing an inventory of the human assets, specifically those African American individuals and organizations that provide positive services to our African American community. If you feel that you provide services that benefit the community, please complete the information below.

Name: _____ _____

Organization: _____ _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

What type of service do you/your organization provide to the Milwaukee African American community?

Would you be interested in attending a meeting to discuss how African American organizations are involved in positive change in the African American community?

Yes No

If you are aware of other individuals/organizations providing positive services to our African American community, please provide their names and contact information so that a survey form can be provided to them.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Deborah Blanks at deborhblanks26@gmail.com or 414-807-3678 (call or text).

Thank You!!!

APPENDIX L:

CURRICULUM VITAE

Deborah Clements Blanks

Place of birth: Decatur, IL

Education:

B.A., University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, May, 1973
Major: Recreation and Park Administration

M.Ed., University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, August, 1974

M.A.PA., University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, May, 1982

Dissertation Title: Project Central Voice: Assessing the Congruency between African American Perspectives and the City of Milwaukee's Community Development Block Grant Practices.

Teaching Experience: University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, School of Education, Educational Policy and Community Studies Department. Assistant Professor, 2013 – 2017. Lecturer 2017 -